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TRANSCRIPT OF DAY 1 – WURREK TYERRANG BLOCK 2

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**MS SUE-ANNE HUNTER, Commissioner**  
**DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR MAGGIE WALTER, Commissioner**  
**PROFESSOR THE HON KEVIN BELL AM QC, Commissioner**

**FRIDAY, 20 MAY 2022 AT 10.11 AM (AEST)**

**DAY 1**

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Yoorrook Justice Commission

CHAIR: Good morning. We welcome everybody present today at Charcoal Lane with others watching via the live stream. Today we are commencing block 2 of the Yoorrook wurrek tyerrang, the public hearings, with some truth telling from Uncle Larry Walsh and his daughter Isobel Paipadjerook Morphy-Walsh. I would like to invite Commissioner Hunter to give an acknowledgment of country.

COMMISSIONER HUNTER: Thanks, Chair. I would like to note we are streaming from the lands of the Wurundjeri and pay my respects to Elders, specifically Uncle Larry for attending today to give his evidence. I would like to recognise and acknowledge all those that have come before us to get us to where we are today. And may Bunjil watch over us as we do Aboriginal business. We would like to start today by giving a minute's silence for those that have gone before us.

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CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you all. Thank you. Ms Fitzgerald.

MS FITZGERALD: Chair, I welcome Uncle Larry Walsh and his daughter Isobel Paipadjerook Morphy-Walsh to the hearing room today. They are supported by Hannah Nayook Morphy-Walsh and Victoria Morphy. Chair, as a preliminary matter today, I would like to make an application for a restricted publication order under section 26(1)(b) of the *Inquiries Act* in respect of paragraphs 17, 18 and 40 of Uncle Larry Walsh's Balert Keetyarra on the grounds in section (2)(b) that the nature and subject matter of the information in those paragraphs is sensitive.

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CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Fitzgerald. I confirm that the order will be made in the terms sought and published on the Yoorrook website.

MS FITZGERALD: As matters stand, we are not intending to lead any oral evidence from Uncle Larry in respect of those restricted matters today, but if we do get into that territory, we would rely on the Standing Order that you made under section 24 of the *Inquiries Act* at the start of hearing block 1, and we would then temporarily adjourn so that the live stream could be paused if Uncle Larry did wish to cover some of that territory or Isobel did wish to cover some sensitive territory.

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CHAIR: Thank you.

MS FITZGERALD: Welcome again, Uncle and Isobel. You know me. I'm Counsel Assisting this Royal Commission and my name is Sarala Fitzgerald. The young fella over there, our ceremonial officer, will ask you to each make an affirmation to speak the truth.

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**<LARRY WALSH, AFFIRMED**

**<ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH, AFFIRMED**

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MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, will you introduce yourself to the Commissioners.

LARRY WALSH: My name is Larry Walsh. I have - unfortunately, my mother's passed. I never got to meet my father because he died in 1968, a year after the - actually on the same

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Yoorrook Justice Commission

month a year after the '67 referendum, and I still have a brother out there that I've never met. I discuss that in the papers, but it's important. Alan, I'm nearly 70. You are already 70. It's time we met. I know why we haven't. I know the promise you made. That promise died six years ago. It's time we met.

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I always wanted to know who you are and what you look like and what your family is. I've never had that opportunity in the last 69 years. If you hear this or your children are hearing this, I will ask Yoorrook, you folk, to pass on my contacts. I think 69 years is a long time. It's enough. Let's have that discussion we should have had maybe 15 years ago. Why I say that at the beginning is because it's true.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It's been on your mind, hasn't it?

LARRY WALSH: It has for most of my life, wondering where he is, who is he? How he was raised.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: And all of this testimony preparing it all swells together. So - - -

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LARRY WALSH: So I want to get that out first, because from now on, it won't be about other people. It will be about my - my life and that. But I do make it clear it's not his or his father's fault, my father, or my mother's reasons for it. I understand. I accept it, after finding out 10 years later. This is what happened. It's time. And, first of all, I would like to say, I would like to thank you for having me. There's been a lot of anger that I've kept under control for many years because I find the more you complain about what's wrong, the less you do.

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So I made it my thing to not complain, to just try and create change. I never created any change by myself because people don't realise what I do because as soon as I do it, I move on. I am perhaps the third-best networker in this state. I am perhaps the third or fourth-best at planning something in this state when I get the data. I have always been lucky that family members of mine and other people are - including the friends throughout Victoria and families throughout Victoria - have always recognised that with me so when my family need a hand they give me a call to come down.

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And this is how, in some cases, I got involved in a lot of the state issues of those times. I was asked to join in because my family knew my skills and they knew, as a networker, I could judge people's skills and see where they could fit into the team we were trying to form to get things done. I'm underutilised because I am also slightly eccentric. By slightly eccentric people sometimes say, "Oh, man, he's out there." And sometimes people go, "You know, we didn't know whether to believe you or not because what you were saying sounded out there. But it turned out to be true."

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It's always true -- the minute you are like, no, no, I don't believe it anymore. The minute you are like, no, he's pushing it too far, the applecart is not going to go, it's going to tip over, the minute you think that, that's when exactly what he said comes to fruition and you're proven wrong. All, like - yes.

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LARRY WALSH: It's only because I have such a concentration level.

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MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, we are talking about - you were talking about how it is always true. One of the things that I should do before we get too far is just confirm that what you've put in your Balert Keetyarra is the truth.

5 LARRY WALSH: It is. It is all true.

MS FITZGERALD: You have been through that with - spent a lot of time with your daughter, with me. Are you happy to confirm that what is in that is the truth?

10 LARRY WALSH: It is all true but - it is all true, but it's - the inside and outside stories that are never mentioned, you know. It's always someone's made the head of something or someone is the spokesperson or someone is the leadership. But it's like when we first started our Stolen Generations, I would go in the pub to have a beer with the boys and girls of the park, some of them will walk up to me and go, "We can't do this --" but then one said to me,  
15 "I can't go and do it -- I would refuse to talk. But I tell you what, I have a couple of media contacts, I will set them up for you to talk to."

So everyone assisted in ways, little ways that might not mean much to everybody else, but when you're considering, with street groups, you have differences, but at those points, they  
20 always rallied. The Elders always backed me even if they didn't quite understand what I was up to. The parkies always backed me because we had been in the same backgrounds. And when I would ask for help, they gave it. And some of them are the unsung stories.

For instance, in there you will notice I talk about helping change a few different Acts or a few  
25 different Constitutions. It was never me alone. There was always others. So what I'm getting at is despite this evidence here, it's correct that it's always those little people - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Could I just interrupt.

30 LARRY WALSH: - - - that we don't hear.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Could I just interrupt and say, by parkies, dad is talking about a specific identified community within our community and so our  
35 community will know who we are talking about but people outside our community might not know who we are talking about.

MS FITZGERALD: Who are the parkies?

ISOBEL MORPHY-WALSH: The parkies are the people who live in the parks. That are  
40 black. The homeless.

MS FITZGERALD: Is that just around Fitzroy or is it everywhere?

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Not necessarily.  
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LARRY WALSH: Fitzroy - in my day, Fitzroy, Collingwood, Flinders Street, St Kilda and a couple of other areas because when I was working with the Aboriginal Legal Service, that was my job, to reach out to all those groups.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I suppose the other point I wanted to make about dad's connection to a lot of parkies is that - I mean, (a) he spent time being a parky, so, you know, I remember that in my youth when dad left home for a while and lived as a parky. I remember mum bringing us to see him and he had a - a electric cord tied around his waist as a belt. So the parkies is a lived experience for my father but, more than that, the parkies are disproportionately made up of foster care kids, of kids that are wards of the State. The new parkies. The young parkies, the State

And so I suppose the reason my dad identified and also fell into that community so easily - or that subsection of our community, which is important, so easily, is also because, disproportionately, these fellas - and, primarily, they were fellas - of course there is some beautiful parky women too, strong women - but it's because they came from the same places. Sort of not a mistake actually. It's not a - no mistake that the parkies are all - have state - ward of the State backgrounds.

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, I was just going to - just so we don't miss out on it, I wanted to talk to you about your early life, just so we capture some of what your daughter was just talking about in terms of your early life in foster care. You have given us some documents. And the one that I just wanted to start with, because it is so powerful, is the order to admit you to the care of - under the *Children's Court Act*, that you have managed to obtain the order that took you from your mother, and it's at page 119 of the 298-page PDF. If I can just have it brought up so we can see that.

LARRY WALSH: You see, my mother was in the hospital at the time. My father had left with my older brother, the one I've never met. This is things I find out later. He had left. My mother was in hospital, and so myself and two of my sisters ended up before the Magistrates Court sentenced with a criminal conviction at two and a half to - in need of care and protection and given a criminal conviction. When I used to talk about it, like even during Stolen Gen's inquiry and even after they formed the Aboriginal Bringing Them Home office, and I think - I won't mention the Chair at the time by name, but he, at the time, said to me, "I don't know if you're right there."

And then when - he was also assisting with Woor-Dungin. Woor-Dungin helped me find what I had been claiming since I was 15, because every time I went to court, every time, I would be arguing back. Because I didn't mind having argy-bargy with - - -

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, I might bring that up so we can prove it today.

LARRY WALSH: With the prosecutor, but every time that was used by the courts -- that I was - - -

MS FITZGERALD: Yes. If we can bring up page 64.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I also just want to say really briefly that this is the basis of fundamental changes to my father's life and also to the intergenerational trauma that that's handed on. So one really tiny example that comes from this very story is the one thing that dad did know, and especially all throughout my childhood. So we have gathered information as we have gotten older. A lot of those FOI request, and, in fact, that FOI request came when I was in my 20, so in the last decade.

This is all new information that we're able to get about my father. So we've always kind of thought and known but never has been confirmed. And, like, one of the even little things - we always knew, one of the stories that had always travelled down before we got the documents was that my mother's - my dad's mum was giving birth to his brother and that's why the three  
5 of them were back in the humpy, with an aunt.

So, you know, our fear of hospitals, which we have and we discuss a little bit later on and then, you know, it's reinforced by a whole bunch of other things, but it actually even stems from this basic moment where, you know, the basis of my father's first interaction with the  
10 medical system is knowledge that it can be used to take either himself or his mother away.

MS FITZGERALD: And we have that document in the materials. I will just quickly move from this one because this form was impossible to read.

15 LARRY WALSH: Yeah, it's just - I want to say about that, that nobody believed it. I believe the only other one apart from me that was raising this was Jackie Charles and another cousin of mine, who is better known as challenge of no jurisdiction Edwards. I seem to have a few characters in my family from those orphanage foster days. And it's developed some of them into the people they are now, because once they start learning more about themselves, they  
20 realise it was the system that gave them all their problems. And to quote my cousin, "Governments, you made me the criminal I am."

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: So he's an institutional made. That's your - that was Uncle --  
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LARRY WALSH: Yeah --

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, we can see on this document - it's very hard to read so I'm going to read my version. But the very first entry on your criminal record there, was recorded in  
30 Mooroopna, and the court is the Mooroopna CC, the Mooroopna Children's Court, on 24 May 1956. So next week will be the anniversary of that date.

LARRY WALSH: Yes.

35 MS FITZGERALD: And your crime was that, at two and a half years old, you were - the offence is listed as - I can read this and it would be good for you to confirm that I'm correct. It says "child in need of care and protection."

LARRY WALSH: That's correct. And at the same time, my two sisters were also put under that Act. We were then moved to Turana which back then was the babies home. It was not  
40 Turana Youth and Training Centre as we call it today. It divided into Baltara Turana, which became Youth Justice, and Baltara for kids in need of care and protection 12 and under. So I was in there when it was just, if you like, the passing through place. You were sent there, they then sent you on to other places.

45 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It's always gotten up my craw, this particular - once - okay, so to be completely honest, this is a shame job on me. I didn't believe dad. So I - when I hit uni, I got into law, and I studied that for eight years and I came out with no formal qualifications, but I studied for eight years. And, initially, what the law teaches

you - and it's totally colonial - is that the law teaches you, essentially, to believe in it. To believe in its ability to protect you. And to believe in its ability to right injustice.

And I didn't believe that the law could be so unjust as to give a child a criminal conviction.  
 5 So I didn't believe him. We fought about it, because I - you know, he raised - my parents raised me to have a voice, and I know they regretted that when I hit about 14. And, in fact, they used to say it to me sometimes. But, you know, they raised me to have a voice. So I didn't believe you. You knew I didn't believe you. And, you know, when I did - when he correct and I - you know, shame on me for not believing him.

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And I read all of this. You know, it's not just the criminal conviction that gets up my craw. It's the actual - like, the actual words in the conviction. You know, my father was living, yes, on a - in a humpy by the banks of the Goulburn River. My father's family had been living in humpies on the banks of rivers for hundreds and hundreds of years. He was in no more  
 15 danger than any other child who was raised in that way, of which some of our community were able to hold on to their kids and raise them in that way.

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You know, the very fact that, you know - even those words listed, the idea that dad wasn't cared for, his mother was not physically present at the time and they had a caregiver, because  
 20 she was giving birth. What - you know, what - what indication - - -

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MS FITZGERALD: Isobel, that's what we see and you get that from in document, don't you. "At the time the children admitted, the mother was in hospital receiving the treatment and the children were being cared for by her mother" and those other descriptions. This is where you  
 25 find that out.

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LARRY WALSH: Yes. Yeah. And - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Aunty Vera was there. That's not on there, but Aunty Vera was there. So that's like - - -

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LARRY WALSH: That was the other sister.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: She's the last one. She's the last one still left that's still alive in nan's generation.

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LARRY WALSH: She was mum's sister, and her and nan were caring for the three of us. So - - -

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: She was 14.

LARRY WALSH: So it wasn't my nan was doing it alone.

MS FITZGERALD: Yes. So although there is the record in the removal order earlier says  
 45 "mother not able to care for the child", in fact, she was in hospital at the time.

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LARRY WALSH: Yes.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: She was literally not able to care for the child because she was giving birth, so she got in touch with her mother, who raised her, to

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care for the child. And her sister also came along who was 14, and, as we all know, 14-year-olds are pretty good babysitters, especially when they've got extra adult supervision. I was.

5 LARRY WALSH: So, for me, yes, everything you will show is true. There is some evidence that I believe would show a pattern of me requesting help from the authorities for my own - I had a rage problem that almost made me kill people. A few times, I had to be stopped. In there, my report, it talks about two.

10 MS FITZGERALD: You are speaking about some records in this material from Turana where you get to speak to a psych or a social worker about your rage issues?

15 LARRY WALSH: Yes. But there is also another one. I had a previous FOI, which Phillips Fox, the lawyer, asked for me for a copy of to see if they could do something about it. And I can't find that one. But it also mentions that the other one, if we can ever get it - someone sue Phillips Fox for it - it mentions that the welfare worker, social worker, whatever they were, after what happened on my eighth birthday, he thought I was having panic attacks and I needed help. But nothing done.

20 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: So dad provides testimony in here about his eighth birthday party, his only birthday party, and his first panic attack and - I've lost my point. I'm sorry, dad --

LARRY WALSH: It was recorded.

25 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, it was recorded. So, basically, what dad is saying is after that, Ms Noakes, who was dad's foster mum for the largest period of time, she noticed the panic attack and thought that she would report that to the authorities or whatever. And the social worker actually came out, did an investigation of it, did a write-  
30 up - and this file is still sitting in Phillips Fox's possessions because we weren't given it back after they rejected it and told dad that he didn't have a case. They didn't give us the files back.

35 And there is an actual file in there where the social worker notes that Mrs Noakes thinks he's having panics, that his face - that he got all sweaty and his face went white and she said that in that, "I believe Larry is displaying signs of distress and needs further assistance." So there are also documents that we know exist that we don't have access to that, in this round of files, when we were - we asked for them, they were redacted. Because also the files that we have been unable to provide - that's only half of them because half of them have been redacted.

40 And the reasoning that we mostly are given for why they are redacted is that they might have someone else's name on them. So, for example, I know they redacted one of the files because it has - it's about both my father and his sister Patsy. So that gave them licence to redact all of it from us. But there is other things that also are still in here, and particularly the  
45 psychologist's reports from his prison systems. They have always been redacted when we've gotten those.

50 So, you know, my dad's complete file picture isn't there, and I am, at this point, incredibly suspicious of why, because everything that we have found so far basically shows to me that the State knew exactly what they were doing and - well, not that what they were doing, but they knew exactly the homes and the scenarios that they were placing him into.



COMMISSIONER WALTER: Can I ask, so these records are all with the State?

LARRY WALSH: Yeah.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, these are State Government records. So the State Government has them. Phillips Fox has some that we don't have. And it's interesting, the Phillips Fox - the reason Phillips Fox comes up - and we are a little bit suspicious with it this and we don't 100 per cent know what the go is - but dad went to them or they came to dad and said - - -

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LARRY WALSH: They came to me.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: - - - "We will help you work out if you have case to sue the government for Stolen Gens." They got the FOI, his first FOI, with all the files it it. Suddenly they said, "Dad, you don't have a case." Then it turns out they were actually providing the government advice on what was - what should be given to people in dad's position, what should be given out on an FOI request. So we have become fundamentally - and maybe nothing has gone wrong.

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However, those set of circumstances make, like - make me - it's fishy. Something is fishy and - and considering the way this country has tried not to take account for Stolen Generation survivors, or compensate them for the clear, clear infringements upon their human rights that were placed on them by the State, it just makes me think that (a) the State is waiting for them all to die so that they can't get any compensation and recognition, or (b) they are covering it all up until they die so that they can't get any recognition.

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And I am just so lucky that I happen to come from one of the ones who has survived thus far. You know, I have uncles and aunts who haven't survived, whose kids won't even get a look in, who the continuation of trauma in those families don't even get a look in terms of the political conversations that occur.

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LARRY WALSH: But, again, we will go into that later. My point is that whilst this says I have a problem, it is not the first time the government has written that. And it won't be - well, hopefully, it is the last time, but it shows that they recognise something was wrong and did nothing. And that rage, that anger, I had to learn to control it. I had to be stopped four or five times before I did kill people, I must admit. I am not going to pretend to be a good man.

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My early life was not good. It was filled with rage, anger, and I would overstep the mark. But, you see, I didn't try ever - all I wanted was peace, but people would keep trying to fight me, and I would keep trying to say to them, I didn't want to. And then one hit later, once I got struck, that was it. I would lose it completely. My - I would be just a red haze in front of me with their fate in my hands or their face being busted with my hands. Me trying to throw people into trains.

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Me trying to throw people under trams. Me trying deliberately to kill people and no one - no one in the system when I said it would help. So I had to learn to control that rage all by myself. Every now and then I used to go away, just to fight trees, just to fight walls, just to let that rage out because I would come back - injuries would heal overnight. I may have broken metacarpals in my hand, I may have had other injuries I caused myself.

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But it was the way to get it out until I learnt another way of controlling it. I had to learn that myself. Every now and then, sometimes when people bother me too much, I let them see a peek of it. And then everyone backs away from me.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Can I contextualise?

LARRY WALSH: No, but I have to say that. It took me 40 years to learn how to use it to tell people no. Before that, I would have to go away or someone would get hurt. Or someone would end up in jail - and likely me. So I believe in my heart, in my head, that the system failed me, not just by giving me a childhood conviction. It failed me time and time again when I requested help, when social workers wrote something was wrong, I was not getting any. The fact that I'm here and not using my anger anymore and haven't used my anger for 30 years to harm someone, the fact that now and then I would come home covered in blood - - -

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Can I contextualise please, Dad?

LARRY WALSH: My daughter noticed one night, she woke up.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Can I contextualise, Dad?

LARRY WALSH: When I was getting home - yeah, I'm just saying, when I was getting home just for me to go and have a shower to wash off all my blood.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I promise if I move on, you can interrupt me and tell me - I just want to say just to contextualise this stuff, in his statement around 30, 31, and one of the particular things that he says that I think is particularly relevant, is he says, "These were not the choices that I wanted to make but these were the only choices I had at the time." And I want to talk a little bit about my father's violence because I have a very different view of it, and it's possibly because I'm a child of his, but I actually think it's because I'm not him.

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Because he is caught in a situation, he often feels shame and guilt about things that I do not think he deserves to feel shame and guilt about. He often feels shame and guilt and - that has been placed upon him. Right? You know, my dad is talking about these violence incidences. What he hasn't told you is about the fact that my father was the only Aboriginal person at the - in the towns that he was in. In - well in the suburb, in the communities.

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In the schools he was in, he was banned from fighting and what that meant was that every kid was able to hit him, but if he hit back, he was told he would immediately be sent back to the orphanage and out of - out of his foster care environment and away from any friends that he had made. You know, my father wasn't given - like, it's not like - when he's talking about violence, it's not like my life. When I grew up in my childhood - not all of it, but for the majority of my childhood I got to - I got to choose if violence was a part of my life or not.

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There are a few instances where I didn't, but for the majority of my childhood, I got to choose. My father didn't. Violence was a part of his everyday existence and it was a part of him. And then there was no one talking to him about how to move through that. There was no one providing him solutions. And, in fact, he also talks about it in here, his foster parent at the time responded to this situation by saying, "Okay, I will teach you how to defend yourself."

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And, essentially, he was a veteran, and dad has - again, you will read this and you will see dad has so much more empathy that I am capable of in this scenario. He was with - he was - he was placed with a veteran who was - had PTSD and was alcoholic and substance abusing. Was beating my father and his wife. And so when dad was banned from fighting, his response was then to teach my father holds and choke - like, and choking positions that could cripple a person very quickly. The only way he knew how to teach that to a human - and my father doesn't say this explicitly either - the only way that was taught to my father was by having that done to my father.

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So this is the model he's getting at home for how to resolve this, and then he's going into schools and he's going into - and when he gets to Turana and there is fights at Turana he's saying, "I'm distressed. I'm distressed" and no point - - -

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MS FITZGERALD: Isobel, can we go to this piece of evidence. This is just a beautiful reflection of what you are saying. Youth - youth - youth - I think that's Uncle Larry. Youth was taken into the Noakes' home at the age of six years. He committed this offence when he had run away from home. He's very conscious of his colour, stating this causes too many fights. He states he hates fighting. In his own words, "Have you ever won a fight and gone home and cried?"

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: But also, right, what - I know that the world has moved on in terms of psychology, in terms of how we treat kids and all of those kinds of things. But in what world is that a happy and well little boy? In what world are you a case worker looking over that little boy and get that notice and go, "He's perfectly fine. Leave him where he is. Let's not even ask the question." Dad is empathetic. So dad has - dad lives with the Noakes'.

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He, you know, cared for Mrs Noakes until she died and for Mr Noakes. And they were gone by his 30s, before I was around. He has compassion for them because he lived with them for over - you know, he was involved in their lives for over two decades, and he also understands that Mr Noakes had PTSD, which no one else understood at the time. But I don't - I can't have that compassion because the State knew. The State knew.

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MS FITZGERALD: Isobel, one of the other things I wanted to talk about with the Noakes', is, in particular, Mrs Noakes' ambivalence about Uncle's Aboriginality and search for his continuing questions.

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LARRY WALSH: Yeah.

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MS FITZGERALD: If I could just bring up page 12 and then there's quite a few of these social work notes where this first one, if we - the background - "Larry often seems to be teased because of his background."

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LARRY WALSH: One thing I want you to notice about most of those reports, you notice they do not refer to me in the person in the room. Most of these reports are my foster mother's opinions. Not any of mine. So, again, the social workers were very bad at their job. They should have interviewed me separately from my foster parents, but they never did.

45

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: That says, "Ms Noakes says is Larry is becoming" - sorry, I haven't read this bit. I mean, I've read all of them, but sometimes you miss bits. It says -- "Ms Noakes said that Larry is really becoming a teenager. He wants to grow his hair long." You have managed to now.

5

LARRY WALSH: I managed to the minute I got 15. Never got it cut again.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Well, maybe that's why I've had any restrictions surrounding my flowing locks.

10

LARRY WALSH: So what I'm saying is please take into account, when you are reading most of the transcripts supposedly between the welfare, my foster parents and myself, you will notice a lot of the times, there is very little conversation with me. And one of the biggest problems was, I already knew I was Aboriginal. And yet they kept trying to deny it.

15

MS FITZGERALD: So it says, "The social worker asked if Larry knew of his racial background (this had been a problem before). Mrs Noakes said that she had told him she thought he was quarter caste. She said - - -"

20

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Lie.

MS FITZGERALD: "- - - she is not sure about this and Larry would really like to know. Mrs Noakes has pointed out that he should not worry about what the others say, because there are plenty of European boys in his class who are as dark as he is."

25

LARRY WALSH: Yeah -- Maltese.

MS FITZGERALD: Now, this seems to be after - in earlier notes, I think Mrs Noakes is flat out denying --

30

LARRY WALSH: Yeah.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yes, she does. Earlier notes says that there's things where Mrs Noakes - like, it's just not relevant to dad.

35

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, she does.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I'll let you talk on it, but the only thing I will say - because I know it's your story, dad. But the only thing I will say is that, you know, I cannot believe the - the surreal nature of an unformed prefrontal cortex brain of an 8-year-old who is being hit at school for being a black bastard, I cannot imagine what it would do to that 8-year-old's mind to go home, or to every major authority around him and say, "I'm Aboriginal" meaning, like, "I'm being hit for being black, so let me connect with anything black. Let me be black then. If I am Aboriginal" - because that was also why dad was asking, because he wanted to be with his people. Even then, he knew he wasn't with his people.

45

LARRY WALSH: I also kept asking questions about parentage and family.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: And they would always tell him he was unwanted.

50

LARRY WALSH: And they would always tell me lies.

5 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: They would always say to him that he  
was - the reason he was there is because he was unwanted, that none of his family members  
requested information about him or asked about him and his mother had never been heard of  
again. We found out years later - and we wrote it in dad's testimony, and it is actually  
something that I believe affected my nan's relationship with all of her children who were  
taken. The lies around this. It turns out that my nan wrote basically monthly, maybe not that  
10 frequently, but basically she wrote a lot to dad, to Joylene, to Patsy and to the authorities,  
trying to gain photographs.

I've seen a letter where she tried to get a photograph, where she tried to gain access to them,  
custody. There is even letters where she was asked - they asked dad and tried to apply  
15 pressure on her to give dad away for adoption, and she refused to sign the form that allowed  
dad to be adopted. And all the while dad's told, "She's not communicating at all with you."  
And then she's told in response, "Your son doesn't want these letters. He doesn't want  
anything to do with you."

20 You know, can you imagine how heartbreaking it was for Melva in that scenario? You know,  
because also she was a disenfranchised woman living in a time when she had less power  
because of the actual very dark nature of her skin and - and you don't believe that stuff, but  
when you hear that stuff for 20 years and some of your kids don't come home.

25 MS FITZGERALD: Isobel, I'm going to take you to page 100 first, and then I will - I found  
in the documents those exact moments that you have spoken of. I will just close off on this  
searching for Aboriginality which keeps getting shut down. At the bottom of page  
100 - firstly, I have to take you to, I think, a little bit of above it. If we can scroll down a little  
bit more, so we can get the very bottom of the page. Perfect. We can stop there. Now, really  
30 just because it's revealing, you see there Mrs Noakes felt - the social worker pointed  
out - there was a concern that Larry was going to leave.

Mrs Noakes was incredibly attached to Uncle Larry. And it seems as though was very  
concerned that his mother would, in fact, come back and take him and was obviously not  
35 wanting that to happen and undermining that eventuality. So the social worker pointed out to  
Mrs Noakes that, "It is unlikely that Larry wants to leave them. Like boys of his age he  
probably wants somewhere to himself, like a cubbyhouse. Or tree hut, etcetera." Mrs Noakes  
felt that because he's part Aboriginal, he wants to go walkabout.

40 However, social worker pointed out that Aborigines learn this behaviour by living together  
from each other. "Larry has not had a chance to learn this as he only lived with his family for  
about two years." And then social worker also discussed the fact that Larry does not know he  
is part Aboriginal. So at this point she hasn't even given the lie of a quarter caste.

45 LARRY WALSH: But here's the thing, you are in - you are in orphanages with (a) your  
sister, me up until 5, 6. Known in the orphanage as Aboriginal. You go to another place  
because they separate boys and girls. Known there as Aboriginal. Known there in the boys  
home associating with his cousins as Aboriginal, although we didn't know it back then. And  
yet I get to foster homes and everyone is trying to deny what I have always been said of in  
50 every home, in every orphanage.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: The other thing that this document is actually an indication of is what's going on around it, which is that dad is currently at this time learning holds and how to punch people quickly. And by that I mean Mr Noakes is currently - this is also the time period that that began and stepped up because of Mr Noakes's alcoholism and PTSD.

LARRY WALSH: Started to --

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Started to run untreated. So the other piece of context for this document that they're talking about Larry wanting to go away, actually, dad did want to leave at this point in time. He was very unhappy and he was trying to runaway repeatedly. And instead of anyone asking dad what was going on, why his behaviour was exhibited like this, they made pretty racist assumptions, as you can see.

MS FITZGERALD: There is also a record of Larry - - -

LARRY WALSH: By the way, can I say something about that too.

MS FITZGERALD: - - - hiding things in the backyard --

LARRY WALSH: Can I say something about that. You will notice earlier from one of the others, where I talk about him hiding his flagons of red wine and whiskey in the garden. Odd that he could find that stuff so quite readily, my so-called stash of food. Yeah. Maybe I was indicating something else. But nobody ever asked me. I mean, I was putting the fucking food right next to his fucking plonk. What else was I indicating? Maybe I was indicating he should leave.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Dad didn't have language for a lot of this stuff.

LARRY WALSH: No, but - yeah, I didn't have the language.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Even though now we are starting to get into a little bit of a time when dad is more articulate - you know, he's moving out of childhood and he's getting into teenagerdom and stuff - he still didn't have the language for any of this stuff, and he didn't have anyone in his corner who was remotely interested in providing him that language or discussing it with him or - the closest he had were other Aboriginal foster kids that he knew that he was being discouraged from being around because they were considered bad influences and making him think he was black.

COMMISSIONER HUNTER: Can I just ask, were you the only child in that --

LARRY WALSH: Yes, I believe the real reason they fostered me was not so much about me, as to save their own marriage. Look, they were an older couple. She was from -- the foster mother. The foster father, his father and his brothers moved out here after the First World War. Got - what do you call them, soldier settlements, even though they were English soldiers. They fought in - they came out here. That was the deal the British made. They became big landowners.

5 So he - at the time when he was fostering me, not only did he have his own small business, but he owned land in South Melbourne, Chelsea - I could name a few places, but he had to sell them off every time to pay for his court cases. So from a man who came from a very middle class background, and more -- because one the views of him - he had a great library of English classics, American classics, European classics.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: That's where dad learnt to read.

10 LARRY WALSH: And other things, and I would read them for something to do.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: So I have dyslexia, and I can't spell for crap. And but my grammar - my - I can put a sentence together with a nice -- or as my father - it's like the opposite. He - whereas so we write well together because I will put a nice little sentence together and he will make sure it's all spelt correctly and using, like, these big words from novels that I am astounded by.

LARRY WALSH: I don't read much - - -

20 MS FITZGERALD: If I can take you to page 163 I would just like some appreciation of the beauty of your father's handwriting at 17 years old.

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, you notice I don't write like that anymore. If you ever get a letter from me it's in capitals or in, what do you call it, script.

25 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: So the story of how dad ended up at the Noakes', the story for that goes that there was a veteran involved in orphanage that dad was in at that stage.

30 LARRY WALSH: The Salvation Army.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: The Salvation Army. And dad had been kicked in an out, like, sent to a few different homes, all failed, and it was assumed that he would continue to kick around the orphanage until basically adulthood. So there was a veteran that was a vet that was in Mr Noakes' regiment that was somehow involved in the orphanage, and he came to Mr Noakes and he said, "We've got this kid and if he doesn't get out of here soon, that's it. He's going to become - like, he's made for prison" because he too could see the pathway between foster care into the prison institution.

40 So that's why the Noakes' initially became interested in dad, because their marriage was on the fritz. Mr Noakes identified with characters who could potentially - like, you know, dad was always seen so unfairly. Dad was always seen for his potential for the bad things he could do. At that time, no one looked at him for the potential for the good things that he had and that he could do. And I think at that time Mr Noakes actually identified with the darkness in dad. Because Mr Noakes was pretty dark himself. And I think he thought he could save this child but, ultimately, his PTSD and his alcoholism - - -

LARRY WALSH: Got him.

50 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: - - - got to him and then once he began to beat Mrs Noakes reliably in front of my father and to beat my father, you know, you - - -

LARRY WALSH: Don't worry.

5 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He doesn't seem to - like, he's - I don't know, you just can't - you don't respect that father parental figure. So - I don't know.

10 LARRY WALSH: No, but you've got to remember, I got my revenge. Somewhere in the thing, I mentioned that I got sick of him hitting his wife so I put a plan together where I was going to punch into him and then bob out the back door and as he bolted out after me, I used a piece of wood. And told him - yeah, on him. And told him never hit her again.

15 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: But see, some people think this is just a story of gratuitous violence that my father is telling, and that is not what is going on. My father is telling this story because he had no other choice at that stage in his life. His choice was to continue to watch his mother be beaten - - -

LARRY WALSH: Foster mother.

20 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Sorry, foster mother be beaten or - and be beaten himself or to enact a piece of violence. My father - one of the most heart breaks parts of my whole father's written testimony, he writes about violence bringing him peace. And the dichotomy, the horrible trap that that felt for a teenager, for the only way to know that I am going to be safe from being physically harmed for the next three weeks is if I commit an egregious act of violence. You know, dad doesn't put it that way. But that's because dad's had to be strong. He's had to live a different life from the life I've had to live.

25

LARRY WALSH: Look, in plain simple terms I never wanted to fight but if I was going to fight - - -

30 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: You better do it well.

LARRY WALSH: - - - you got hurt. Then I would be left alone for a couple of weeks. Because nobody else wanted to risk being hurt. So I broke someone's arm in football or I did something that hurt a couple of people. A few punches were a few weeks of no trouble.

35

40 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: The last thing I will say on dad's violence is this. This is something that - this is one of the reasons he's gotten me here, because this is very challenging for him to talk about. But my father carries physical injuries from - as a result of his childhood. So there is scarring - and I know this because I'm my father's primary carer and so we do a lot of doctors' appointments together because also we find medical institutions often quite racist and disenfranchising, and when we don't do it together our care isn't often as competent. So we do it together.

45 So I'm acutely - I know 100 per cent what is going on with my father's body. And I can tell you that he has scarring on a muscle tissue level all throughout his shoulders and back down into his hips. So, you know, usually when people - they think about old people and their pain and their backs and their joints - it's joints, yeah, and arthritis. That's the kind of pain you are imagining. That's not going on with dad. With dad, his - all of his muscles at some point in childhood have been expanded so far that they have actually ripped and scarred.



And it's happened repeatedly throughout childhood. And the only people - when we went - when this was finally diagnosed, because this took a long time, actually, to get diagnosis. They had to do MRIs. They had to do - you know, you had to do all sorts things to actually work out. They didn't think it would be what it was, because this scarification, the most two common types of people that exhibit this type of scarification through muscle tissue is child soldiers and child slaves.

So I'm not trying to insinuate my father was either a child soldier or a child slave. I'm not. What I am trying to say is the level of violence and physical harm placed on his body repetitively over the - before his body was developed, has - we can see it. Doctors can see it. He can't lift his arms up beyond here now. Maybe I'm being a little bit dramatic, but - you know, most people - and this will be a shock for any of our community that's listening, that hears this today, or for most of you, because my father, one of the things that his trauma has done to him is that he needs to be strong and he needs to be tough.

And that's also partly why I'm so proud of him for this and for him allowing me later to testify about intergenerational trauma, because he's humbling and - he's making himself vulnerable. And to allow me to say this about his body is also him making himself vulnerable. And I say this not to be "Oh, poor fellow me" but I say this because isn't that shocking? Like I believe that because I live with him and I know, basically, dad can't reach any cupboard.

I know that basically dad can't - like, we have whole different systems in our house so that dad can access all the things he needs. And it makes me so angry in - sometimes on his behalf because that was a gift given to him from his childhood. You know. From being hit so many times. And, like, our doctor - our GP, that we actually developed a relationship with that - over a couple of years that they have diagnosed this, she cried when she got the report. She cried at us.

It's not the first time we've had doctors cry at us. But she cried because she - and she apologised, and I think many other doctors probably owe dad an apology, and possibly community members if they'd realised how much pain this man carries. But she apologised to him because she was like, "I was not dealing with your pain levels appropriately before. I thought it was joint and skeletal issues. I'm sorry, Uncle Larry." You know, the amount of pain that this man has had to carry and also the fact that people just repeatedly do not believe him until - until the - until irrefutable evidence is placed in front of them?

I mean, how - why would you not repeat a - why would you not believe a man who says "I can't move my shoulder. I'm in so much pain." Why would you not believe in? But eventually it does. Thankfully, eventually, you find a good soul.

LARRY WALSH: You know why, it's because I've always maintained no matter who hit me, no matter what was used on me, I would never show a reaction. Despite my pain, I would go to things and never show a reaction. People thought sometimes that I was a bit off my face pacing up and down the back of a room in a meeting. No. If I didn't move, the pain would get worse and someone might see it.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It's also another reason I get so -

LARRY WALSH: With panic attacks, it was the same thing. I was having them, I knew they were coming, but I would not let anyone see me have one. I would not let anyone see me have any pain. I would not let anyone see me have anxiety. I would not let anyone - because I was there to help mine. And if mine were in pain too, I could handle mine. Lately, I have  
 5 days where I can't move. I am frozen solid because of pain. But I never let my pain be seen in public.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: The other thing I have to say -

10 LARRY WALSH: They used to say in my younger days, no one had ever, ever seen me cry until I turned 40.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I have to also say to my father's credit that actually he's now publicly discussing panic attacks.

15

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, it's actually time for us to have a cuppa.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Okay, but I just want to say this. The reason dad is actually now discussing panic attacks and this level of - so there's two-fold  
 20 reasons he wanted to discuss these: (1) because we are insistent. We know this still going on and we want to be - we hope this process is a part of addressing that and making sure that our future generations don't continue to feel it. But (2) my dad is now speaking out about these things because these are things that his children's generation - and including me - are facing.

25 My father has spoken out today about his panic attacks which have been his big secret his whole life because I am now - because over the last four to five years, I - my - I have been diagnosed with complex post-traumatic stress disorder and I have panic attacks. My father has started to choose to label these things which make him feel scared and vulnerable, because of me and for me. And I know he wants to walk away and he wants to stop, and  
 30 that's okay, and we will stop in just one second.

But I just think it's important to understand that the reason he's doing this, the reason he's crying about it, is he wouldn't have done it 10 years ago. Five years ago. Before I got  
 35 diagnosed, my father would not have told you about his panic attacks. It would have been the rest of the narrative. The - you know, he wouldn't have gone into the actual trauma. But he's only doing this because he realises the cycle is perpetuating and he wants it to stop. And I want that on the record because that is something that gives me immeasurable pride in him.

MS FITZGERALD: Is that a convenient time, Chair?

40

CHAIR: Thank you.

MS FITZGERALD: For our break?

45 CHAIR: Yes.

**<ADJOURNED 11:15 AM**

**<RESUMED 11:34 AM**

50

Yoorrook Justice Commission

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, before we get off with some more - get on with your testimony, you provided us when we came and visited with some photos that I would like to show because they address moments that you've discussed in your evidence so far. And the first I would like to show is a photo taken of you at your 8th birthday party.

5

LARRY WALSH: Yes.

MS FITZGERALD: That you mention in your witness statement. Am I right in saying you're over here -

10

LARRY WALSH: I'm that dark one next to - I can't remember who he is.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He's the one going like this.

15

LARRY WALSH: -- because -

MS FITZGERALD: In the white shirt.

LARRY WALSH: Yep, I'm the one in white shirt next to the -- he's -- Italian Australian. That was - he lived four doors down from me.

20

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: But point out you, dad.

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, okay. That one lived four doors down from me. That one was two doors up from me, the Italian parents. That one was directly opposite. German parents.

25

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: The reason he brings up the parents because only the migrant kids would talk to dad, not the Skits.

30

LARRY WALSH: Yep. The -- I think because their dad was the same -- because it was soldiers from dad's foster father's group were all living in the same area. So some of their kids were the kids I could play with.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: And where did we get this photo?

35

LARRY WALSH: That was my 8th birthday that was sent to Joylene. And Joylene, my sister, had kept all these photos that I didn't even realise existed. Luckily, I sent them as a kid and then forgot about them and so years later they come back to -

40

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: The other interesting thing about the photo - and the note says they chose this to be the happy snap that they took from this event - is this was actually my father experiencing his first panic attack. It's actually been documented right here. You can see it on his face. Do you want to talk more?

45

LARRY WALSH: No. It's - we cut the cake, and just after I cut it, the panic attack happened. I turned as white as a ghost, collapsed, vomited, and that was the end of the party, hey. Good way to end a party. You have a panic attack.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Why did you panic though, Dad?

50

LARRY WALSH: Well, you have got to remember, I already know I'm banned for fighting. I already know it's restricting where and who I can associate with. So I'm mainly stuck in with the people in the same street as me, rather than - and it was funny but all of the people that were being bullied or being afraid of being bullied always hung around with me because I was never scared of anybody and I was never worried about what was going to happen or not going to happen.

A lot of people say I have always looked indifferent to everything. When I was asked questions, I was always indifferent. No, it wasn't that I was indifferent. It was just that no matter what I say to you, you are not going to listen to me, so why bother? So that was that age I developed all that. I developed an awareness that I was alone. I developed an awareness that there was no one else going to protect me but me.

I developed the awareness that the only reasons these people were at the party was they all lived in the same street and they were all friends of the foster parents. It doesn't necessarily mean they were my friends. I just - it just reminded me I was alone. And so I don't know why that might have brought it on. The panic attack. You know, were they really friends?

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I mean, it's interesting because this is also the first documentation my father has through the State about his mental health, actually, so this is the file that we've referred to that Phillips Fox is in possession of that we were not given back. That the social worker actually commented on this because Mrs Noakes - because this was quite - this is early on in dad's placement with the Noakes'. It was - this party, this was one of their sort of like - and their only celebration of having dad enter their family unit.

So this is the - so it was very early on. So Mrs Noakes did actually report Dad's panic and unease. So this photo represented - represents a lot. Not just, you know - represents that but it also represents the most powerful part of it, I think, - the pleasantly most powerful part of it -

LARRY WALSH: It was also -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: - was that Joylene held the photo for 60 years.

LARRY WALSH: And it also says something else for me. It says this was the start of me not being able to trust anyone.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: And I look at him and it breaks my little heart because he's tiny and I was tiny and I look like that, and he has such dark beautiful caramel skin and then you think how could they tell him he wasn't a black fella? Look at that face.

MS FITZGERALD: Speaking of look at that face, there's one other photo of Uncle Larry when he's a child with Santa Claus, that -

LARRY WALSH: I was 6, I think, in that one.

MS FITZGERALD: - is a little bit earlier.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yes, so Joylene kept this - Joylene kept all these. So dad and Joylene - because they remembered each other. It's in the testimony. Because they remembered each other. They got separated at 5, so they would always ask questions about each other or ask - or ask to write letters, and most of them were denied, but  
5 it looks like three letters actually went through to Joylene. And she kept absolutely every single photograph and part of that. And we didn't even know that until her son Steven Rowell, my cousin, who is a photographer, was sort of re-scanning in all the old images that his mum had, and, you know, making good quality, and then that's how we found them.

10 COMMISSIONER BELL: Counsel -

LARRY WALSH: And if you notice there, look how good looking I was and look at me now. Look at me now compared to how good looking I was back then. I was a good-looking kid. What happened? No, no, no. I'm just saying it's sort of like life influences how you look in  
15 the end from your life. You know. The person that's had a hard life, you can read it on their face. The person that's had a good life, you can read it on their face. There was a kid that didn't have distrust. There was a kid that didn't have hate. There was a kid who was just finding other new life. And even then he looks like he's got a bit of a cheeky grin. But I would say there's the innocent me.

20

COMMISSIONER BELL: The moving words just spoken by Uncle Larry make it clear we need to be able to identify this photograph when we come back to it. So is this in the information pack?

25 MS FITZGERALD: It is not.

COMMISSIONER BELL: It isn't? No.

MS FITZGERALD: These are newly - I would like to tender these if you're - if you are  
30 happy for us to do that.

LARRY WALSH: I'm okay with it. I'm okay.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I'm happy to tender nicer photographs as  
35 well as the photographs.

MS FITZGERALD: A better copy, yes.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Because we have digital versions.  
40 So -- but, Sarala, we just showed her the physical copies when she came in. So that's why.

COMMISSIONER BELL: They are lovely photographs, thank you.

MS FITZGERALD: Yes. So I will identify them, though. They will end up being - the  
45 photograph of the birthday party will end up being Annexure B and this will be Annexure C.

LARRY WALSH: And there's a third one, isn't there?

COMMISSIONER BELL: Thank you.  
50

LARRY WALSH: And there's a third one.

MS FITZGERALD: There is a third one.

5 LARRY WALSH: That's when I was 21, I think.

MS FITZGERALD: Can we bring that up?

10 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: My father just had his accident on his fingers with his guillotine. So this is after his - the tops of his fingers got dropped off when he was 21 and he sent it to Joylene to be like, "Still living." So you might notice my dad's fingers are a little bit different. It's funny because one of my favourite teachers in school had exactly the - he clearly must have cut his hands in a guillotine too.

15 LARRY WALSH: No, if you worked in either meat works or metal works, it was common. Back in the days when there was no guards.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I liked him before he even opened his mouth, that teacher, because he had the same finger as you.

20 MS FITZGERALD: If you are happy to provide us this as well, we have this as Annexure C.

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, but, again, you can see I was dark and you can see in me younger photos, I was dark. And yet -

25 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It's very hard to imagine that this man is not an Aboriginal man.

30 LARRY WALSH: - up until 17, 16 - no, 15, there were all these denials and then I got sick of the crap and so I went no, I went under my proper name, which was Walsh.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Not Noakes.

35 LARRY WALSH: I refused to be a Noakes. Even in the secondary school, every time the teachers wanted me to write down my name, I would write down Walsh rather than Noakes. Which by the way, helped me get out of trouble, because there was the only Larry Noakes in the school. So whenever some teacher wasn't sure of my name, I would just write Walsh. So I got out of trouble here and there again.

40 COMMISSIONER HUNTER: Can I ask a question. Did they officially change your surname to -

LARRY WALSH: No.

45 COMMISSIONER HUNTER: No, it was still Walsh initially, but -

LARRY WALSH: But because of them being foster parents -

50 COMMISSIONER HUNTER: They enrolled you as -

LARRY WALSH: I had to go under their name.

5 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: No, Malva was asked and, in fact, it looks like pressured to give dad - and the others but, you know, I'm going to talk about dad because dad's my dad and that's the story I know and that's what I have been here to talk about. It looks like nan was pressured quite considerably to sign the forms which meant - because dad was quite young - that he could be adopted and she refused to sign the forms saying he could be adopted, saying, "I want my child back." And I don't know what happened with the others or - because I haven't looked at their files because - you know, I'm his daughter not Auntie Patsy's or Auntie Joylene's.

LARRY WALSH: But there is very much similarities because she didn't try for one. She wanted the three back.

15 MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, this is a letter of 10 September in which there are quite a few records noting that your mother was very regularly being requested to sign you over for adoption. If we could go to the very bottom of this. It - the letter indicates, "On Larry's return to the institution, a couple took him for holidays." And they were interested in adopting you. "Because of this Mrs Walsh was approached and interviewed by the local police at Woorinen, near Swan Hill."

LARRY WALSH: Woorinen. It's on the border just up from Swan Hill.

25 MS FITZGERALD: "She stated at this time she did not want any of the children adopted, that she was living in a de facto and intended to apply for return of her children." So the police get sent out to ask in these situations, obviously, and she said no then.

LARRY WALSH: And you've got to understand, back in her days, because of the way she was raised, re citizenship, police had full authority.

30 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: For - - -

LARRY WALSH: And so for her to resist the police would have been a very big act, in them days, of defiance.

35 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, for nan to actually say, "No, I want my kids back", would not have been a safe thing for her to do. And because of the fractures that existed - again, I only speak for me on this, not even for dad, but because of the fractures that existed within the relationship, because of the pain around being taken, none of this was actually able to be resolved in her lifetime. So she died before all of her kids really realised that she fought for them.

45 She died before she realised that her kids had fought for her as kids as well. You know, she died before any of that pain was actually - actually resolved and I - you know, I feel for her. I feel for - you know, I don't have - I didn't have a relationship with my nan, but I - it's sad. It's sad for her too.

LARRY WALSH: Also - also on that -

50 MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, this is a police form from that. This is a Victorian Police form.

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LARRY WALSH: Also on that, there's another thing to take into account. Her son, my younger brother who died in a police cell, wrote the letter in 1965 - I can't find it; I think it's on that Phillips Fox file - telling me about his mother's birthday, and I'm reading this letter wondering what the hell is going on here. Well, it's a funny incident. In '68, I went back into Turana, and when I got in there, I said, "Hey, I'm a citizen now, are you going to let me out or what?"

And they called me in the office two days later and presented me this letter which had been written - now, we are talking 1968. This letter was written in 1965. And it was addressed - and I am quoting verbatim from memory because it was the first time I knew I had other brothers and sisters and I had a mother. So that's why I'm saying it's always tucked in my memory. It goes - it's addressed to Larry Walsh, care of Turana Children's Home. Because when my mother knew, it was a children's home.

"You don't know me but my name is . Last night was my mother's birthday."

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, I know from the statement you were concerned not to mention your brother's name. Would you like us to pause that on the -

LARRY WALSH: Well, leave that name out for the moment. So, "You don't know me, my name is --. Last night was my mother's birthday. And we held a party to celebrate."

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, I'm not very good with the technical matters but I think to pause the live stream so that your little brother's name isn't mentioned, I need to do something a bit disruptive.

COMMISSIONER HUNTER: Emily, is just going to tell them.

MS FITZGERALD: Okay. So do we continue or -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: This story is not a secret one, is it?

MS FITZGERALD: No, it's just the name, yes.

COMMISSIONER HUNTER: They can do it.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Because this story has been told before. The first time dad told this story publicly was about - was actually with one of Sue-Anne's cousins, Stacie Piper at the museum in her first exhibition, the 1967 referendum exhibition she did, dad told that story and was video recorded and included in that exhibition.

LARRY WALSH: Anyway, so the brother sent the letter saying, "you don't know me", his name, and:

"Last night was my mother as birthday and we had a party to celebrate her birthday. Mum burst into tears and she wouldn't stop crying. She went into her bedroom and locked the door and kept crying. In the morning when mum came out of bed, we asked her, why were you so upset? And she told us about you. And so I'm writing here to inform you of - and I am your brother and here is a photo of your other brothers and sisters and a photo of your mum."



ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He sent one of him, didn't he?

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, that's what I said, all your brothers and sisters:

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*"And here is a photo of your mum. And so I decided to write here where mum thought you were in the hope we could reach you so that mum could get to see you."*

And the address was in Swan Hill. I had - - -

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MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, how long had that letter been sitting on the Turana file?

LARRY WALSH: '65, and this was '68.

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MS FITZGERALD: For three years.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Three and a half years at that stage.

LARRY WALSH: Three years later. Because I now was a citizen, I was allowed to see it.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: But I thank Bunjil for that, Uncle. I thank Bunjil for that case worker who went back and thought about it. Because that's where my dad's story as a stolen man differs from many other stolen men and women, is that dad knew he had a home to come back to and where his home was earlier than a lot of other stolen people found out. You know, they knew they were stolen, they knew they had homes to come back to, but dad actually through his brother and that letter was able to find his home. You know, so he was able to return home in his teens as a result of that.

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LARRY WALSH: It took a lot of paperwork back in them days.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Well, not return home fully but he was able to get a relationship.

LARRY WALSH: Go visit. Then mum told me about - then when we finally had conversations, she told me about - that she couldn't find Joylene or Patsy. She told me - they're alive - sorry. That she couldn't find my two sisters. So I went and seen my social worker. I said, I already know one and told her about Joylene. And so I went and seen my social worker, and we had a conversation. I said, "I believe I've got another sister I don't know much about."

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And he opened my file - this was the social worker. He opened my file and suggested that maybe he make me a cup of tea. And I was okay with it. But he left the file open, and I think he wanted me to sneak behind the desk and read it. So I did. And there was my sister's name and her address. I knew the stress it caused other people finding out that they were fostered or adopted, so I contacted the family. I made arrangements to meet the foster father.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: More respectful than me. I would have gone straight to - so he's good, my dad.

LARRY WALSH: Well, I didn't know whether she knew or not and I didn't want to be the person to set in motion a train of events that I had seen in other friends and families. So I contacted them. I told them who I was. We met up, had a couple of beers. But after work. Back in them days, 6 o'clock swill. So it was just one or two beers before the end of the day.

5 You should have been in the pub between 5 and 6 to see how many beers people would like up just to get that one hour swill, back in the day. But we had a couple of beers and discussed it and he said he had never discussed it with her. Blah, blah, blah. So I gave them the chance to talk to my sister about it.

10 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Gracious.

LARRY WALSH: I actually got to meet her by pretending to be a friend of family and to enforce - to make sure that they were letting her know because I then met her and discussed that she had brothers and sisters and a mother and so forth and I let Joylene know. I went and said to Melva, Mum, at the time, "She's not ready yet. It might take me another six to 12 months." My baby brother, I guess under mum's instruction, had a peak into my address diary. You know, how you carried a little notebook with addresses on it. So she shot down there to tell - tell the sister she was her mother, and the sister wasn't ready for it, as I said. And so the sister ran away for a couple of years. Finally, she got to accept it.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Was going to say, not very long.

LARRY WALSH: No, just a couple of years.

25 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Only long enough to process it.

LARRY WALSH: Process her -

30 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It's such a big thing to process, finding out your family isn't your family, and you have a different family and reconceiving what the concept of family is.

LARRY WALSH: So I waited for her to come to terms with it herself before we had the next discussion. Mum didn't mean to, but she put it back an extra year than it needed to be because Mum was finally going to get the chance to see this daughter that she hadn't seen since a baby. And understanding it was no other reason than her wanting to see her baby at that time. Because she only seen that baby before it was taken.

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40 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Well, that aunt was a proper - like, dad was 2 and a half and he was the middle child. So Joylene was a tiny bit older and Aunty Patsy was younger. Even younger than 2 and a half.

LARRY WALSH: And the other one was a couple of years younger, so she got taken without knowing that she was fostered or adopted or anything. So -

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Also kudos to nan who had, like, four babies in four years.

50 LARRY WALSH: But what I'm getting at is that mum - and it's not a blame to mum. Mum was so excited at finally getting to see the last child that she had lost, she jumped the mark. I,

as I say, I don't hold that against her. If I had been in the same position, I might have done the same thing. But, for me, it put it back a year or two because she had to come to terms with being fostered and adopted but not knowing that she was Aboriginal and not knowing that she had other family.

5

But for some people, that does take a while because one - one my biggest things was that other people, because of what I was doing, and they knew that I was helping get my family back together, some other families would talk to me about it. And it was like one time I went to visit - mum decided to take me to visit one of her sisters. And we got there, and her kids had returned. They were, oh, I think 20s.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Do you mean Uncle Choc and Aunty Eva?

LARRY WALSH: Yes, I think they were 20s. And I walk in the door and Aunty Teresa gives me a hug and everything, and she says, "Look who I've got." And we look at each other. "G'day Choc." "G'day Larry." "G'day Hu." "G'day Larry." "Do youse know each other?" "Yeah, we were all in the same places." How is that? We were cousins and we didn't know it. We were in the same places and we are from the same family lines. But we didn't know it. Yet we got along. It was funny. So blood ended up being thicker than water, in a way.

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And we'd also heard of each other in other places through our reputations we had. Like Cousin Choc set the record for weights and running and all these physical activities. I set the record for how many cigarettes that you couldn't find that I might have, and how much marijuana I might have been smoking in Turana. Here was a funny thing. I also escaped from Turana a few times, but they kept putting me in this bloody maintenance job which means that I kept having the run of the place, and so I had lots of hiding spots and I could go for a walk when I liked.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, but give the boys a chance. Don't rat out their spots.

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LARRY WALSH: I'm not ratting out their spots. I'm saying so we all had reputations in their own ways for the way we did things, you know. Choc was a very smart fella and very, very athletic. I was always made captain of the volleyball team because I was always making sure we won. You know. Like one time, screw joined their team and we were losing and I told the screw did he mind shutting his ears for a couple of minutes. I had a few word to say to the team. And he said, "Okay."

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So he walked away a little bit. And I said, "What the fuck are you guys up to? I got three packets of cigarettes on this game and one packet is for you if we bloody win." "You mean, we're getting cigarettes too? Yeah, right, we are winning." And the screw said, "I heard all of that." So they kept searching and searching to find my three packs of cigarettes which they never found. And I was accused of always having strange incense around me, which was code for, "We know you are smoking marijuana and we wish we could catch you."

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But what the hell. It was their fault. And even in one, it says that they asked me would I escape. And they said, "You looked indifferent. You said, 'I don't know yet. Depends on how I feel.'" And yet they kept letting me into jobs that allowed me the freedom to, if I wanted to - which I did a few times - one hot day, go for a walk, get a Coke, buy an ice cream. Relax. But by the time I got back they reported that I had gone missing.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: They also never bothered to follow up on any time that Dad went missing or escaped from either foster care orphanages or youth training centres, because he did escape from all of them.

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LARRY WALSH: Youth training centres. But I don't - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Stories my dad tells me about before those times, there's always some large incident that then results in his desire to leave and Dad taking matters into his own hands and doing so.

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LARRY WALSH: Because I didn't want to kill anyone.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: And at no point does anyone - - -

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LARRY WALSH: I had people come up, big tough boys - one kept having a go at me. I said, "No, I don't want to fight." He kept punching me and I just kept walking towards him saying, "I don't want to" and then as soon as my eyes changed colour, I was grabbed and one of his mates just went like that, and all he would say, "Did you see him? He was going to kill me. He was going to kill me. Did you see him?" And that was the toughest bloke in the place. So I would leave so I wouldn't kill him.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Also that would - you know, so - - -

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LARRY WALSH: But I wasn't going to discuss that because - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: That's another tough incident, but the incidents I'm thinking of are more like - you know, what I'm trying to say, every time dad escaped or left, no one ever asked dad. And maybe this is like - maybe this is just my folly to think that if a kid is acting out and regularly running away from somewhere, you might ask them, hey, is something going on. But no one ever saw my dad's repetitive behaviour of running away as anything other than him being non-compliant and causing amok.

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LARRY WALSH: But I also object to "running away". Because I never ran.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He just left.

LARRY WALSH: I just casually would stroll out. If that meant I was going down the road to the shops to get a can or bottle of Coke, an ice cream or whatever. Yeah, one day I disappeared for six days, but that was a good party. We won't go into that.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I'm glad you pulled that document up as well, because that document is an incredibly - sorry to flick back but that's an incredibly healing document because most of Melva's kids didn't realise that - you know, it took many years to realise that she put in this amount of - - -

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LARRY WALSH: Effort.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: - - - effort in the face of great violence - potential violence.

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LARRY WALSH: And me - - -

MS FITZGERALD: This is a police officer who has interviewed her.

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LARRY WALSH: Yes, and me and my sisters being raised, being told they didn't want us.

MS FITZGERALD: And the officer saying she seemed quite definite.

10 LARRY WALSH: Yeah, but we grew up believing we were not wanted. Because the authorities kept lying. And it's - one of the ways the authorities used to tell the foster parents about, "Oh, if they ask about their background just say that their parents didn't want them or their parents are dead. And stuff like that." And after a while, you do start to believe it because it's the only story you are hearing. You are not hearing any other. So - - -

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: And the thing you learn - or the thing I've learned over time - - -

LARRY WALSH: So what you learn - - -

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: - - - is no child is unwanted. Even children who end up in foster care scenarios or without their original parents, no child has no value. No child is unwanted. And no child should be unwanted by society and should we allow that to be a narrative in our society.

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LARRY WALSH: But the whole point was, the government authorities won't admit even that they were giving advice to foster parents to say these things. And so the government sort of wipes its hand of responsibility of making young people feel worthless. You know, "Oh, no, no, no, your parents didn't want you. That's why you're here." How does that - as a kid - how would that make you feel? Of course, you are unwanted. Nobody wants you. Your own family didn't want you.

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MS FITZGERALD: And, Uncle - - -

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LARRY WALSH: And, yes, I still get angry about that.

MS FITZGERALD: This was seen as a problem, that you wanted to find your family. You can see at the bottom of this letter in the last paragraph there is a sentence which talks about - - -

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COMMISSIONER BELL: Can I stop you again, is this in the information pack as well?

MS FITZGERALD: This is in Annexure A at page 142. Sorry.

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COMMISSIONER BELL: -- if you identify them because it will be very difficult for us to locate it later.

MS FITZGERALD: Yes, to keep track of it. Apologies.

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COMMISSIONER BELL: I will remind you of that.

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MS FITZGERALD: I had just sneakily texted the screen operator the page number and the words didn't come out of my mouth. So that is page 142 at the bottom of the page, and you will see there that a social worker is - sees your - what she calls "relentless desire to track  
5 down your family." She says:

*"The main problem may be Larry's relentless desire to track down his family. But according to Mrs McCray, they can offer so little there is little point in opening up this avenue."*

10 So it was obviously shut down.

LARRY WALSH: Yeah.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Correct.

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LARRY WALSH: That's correct. But it's - that - what they and still, I believe, today do not realise that one time when I was up home visiting rellies at Cummera, old Uncle Colin Walker said this to me, he said "You know, they took a lot of kids on the belief that the parents - because they had no fridge or no cupboards, that the parents couldn't look after their  
20 kids." Well, the parents would have fresh fruit and vegetables from where they were working, so you were being fed fresh fruit and vegetables.

25 People were still going out and fishing and rabbiting and gathering meat fresh rather than we didn't have fridges. People were being fed, but because the welfare workers would see no cupboards and no fridge, they would assume that we were poor. But we had jobs and we were able to supplement from what we knew of fishing, rabbiting, hunting, some of the plants we still knew that we could use, and so the whole construct of taking people was based on a European standard of living which didn't apply to itinerate workers.

30 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: And also didn't apply to our cultural world view which, at that time or in Melva's time - - -

LARRY WALSH: Families looked after each other.

35 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: - - - family and the - making sure your family had resources was as simple as putting them on a river. You know, she - they were on a humpy on the Goulburn for a reason because they were resource plenty there. You know, she left the kids with her mum and her sister there for a reason. Because there was no danger in them running out of food or shelter or appropriate things that they needed to care for  
40 themselves. I suppose it wasn't seen that way by the State.

LARRY WALSH: The State were judging by where they lived in Melbourne, not where - - - -

45 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: We should talk about your criminal convictions soon though.

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, let's go there --

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, I have that as the next thing that I would really like to make sure we cover, is you went into Turana, I think it was, at 14 years old from for a minor burglary a offence.

5 LARRY WALSH: Yes.

MS FITZGERALD: And I wanted to talk to you about what you think the impact of the fact that you had that criminal record from 2 and a half had on that trajectory, how you ended up there.

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LARRY WALSH: Well, I don't know about the - whether it had an effect on the Turana one. But it would have been noted by whether it be the Children's Court or the judge. It was only when it started appearing on a regular basis whenever I got arrested and taken to court about having childhood convictions going back to 1956. Police were using - even for my first conviction, were using a record that I wasn't even aware existed from 14 onwards. And every time I tried to challenge it, the judges wouldn't listen.

15

I would go - you know, there was one court case driving without a licence and - "And, your Honour, he's got convictions going all the way", just because they wanted me to seem guilty of the charges, but I refused to, because I didn't do them. "I admit to the driving offence, yes." See, that's the other thing. Sometimes I got off charges because my record was when I go to court, if I did the offence, I pled guilty. If I didn't, I would fight.

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And I would sometimes say to the judges, "Look at me, judge, every time I have been here, when I've done something wrong I pleaded guilty." You know. So I use my own arguments and my pleas, whether it was guilty or not, to defend myself when I knew I was innocent. But every time it always came up, "And, your Honour he has convictions going back to 1956." And when I would say to the judge, "How would I know? I was only 2." The judge must think I have been cheeky and added extra little bit to my sentence.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: So I just wanted to point out that at - in dad's statement, paragraph 32, he clarifies how his first offence that led him to Turana was affected by his early childhood criminal conviction. He says:

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*"I was committed to Turana when I was 14 for minor offences, doing time for breaking into a house and stealing an electric shaver, transistor radio and some money from a money box. The reason given on court order was that I -"*

The reason he was given that he had to receive a custodial sentence on the court order was that he was likely to lapse into a life of crime.

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MS FITZGERALD: I will just, just if we can move a bit further down, this is page 78 of Annexure A. And we can see down on lower on that page "likely to lapse into a life of crime" is, in fact, the charge.

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LARRY WALSH: Yes.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Well, there you go. I thought - sorry, I misread it wrong. I thought it was a commentary on it. There you go.

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MS FITZGERALD: Charges.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: You know, so Dad was - and why was he likely to lapse into a life of crime? Because he already had a previous criminal conviction.

5 And his involvement with the police, which is sort of separate from by the time he got to Turana, because he was involved with - he was getting involved with the police for many years before Turana actually happened - his involvement with the police all stemmed from an incident when he was 8. Tell that story, Dad.

10 LARRY WALSH: Well, I had been down to the local shop. Now, I don't know if you know the Hadfield Glenroy area, but it was surrounded by North Street, South Street, East Street, West Street. And within that was all of what was known as Hadfield, which was part of Glenroy. So I was walking along North Street from the milk bar to - which was three streets over from where I was staying in Hadfield. I was walking along. A copper seen me and they  
15 pulled me over and said, "What's your name?"

And so give them my full name. "Where do you live?" I give them the address. And they said, "Have you ever been in trouble before?" And I said, "No." So I walked off. Coppers drove off. I walked off heading towards I was living. They came back, threw me in the back  
20 of a divvy, called immediate a liar and I had criminal convictions and took me up to the cop shop to give me a beating. They didn't even read how old I was when I got the criminal conviction. I just - and at - you know, I'm 8. And they are taking me up the cop shop giving me a beating for being a criminal.

25 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: So it took Dad all the way from 8 when he started to get accused by police officers regularly and beaten by police officers regularly for doing crimes, it took all the way from 8, it took him six years of being told that he was a criminal before he actually committed a crime.

30 LARRY WALSH: No, I actually started -- at 10 or 11, because the truth was I was getting picked up and beaten and questioned for things that were being done that I had no involvement.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: That's three years, then. That's three years  
35 of the police beating you before you actually committed a crime.

LARRY WALSH: Had no involvement on anything. So I thought, well, I'm going to get beat up for not doing them, I might as well do them. And let's be honest, if you are in my situation, you're being accused and beaten up for things you haven't done, what is your  
40 reaction going to be?

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Also just, like, taking a, like, brief - my sister just pointed this out to me. Look at dad's prior convictions there. Dad has a prior conviction for breaking and stealing from his own home. What? Can you break and steal  
45 from your own home? Like, how intense is the State's need to criminalise my father that taking something from his own home is considered an offence.

MS FITZGERALD: And the earlier offence of loitering, do you remember what that was about?

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LARRY WALSH: Yeah, yeah. So it was - I think it was second form, no, it might have been the start of third form - no, it was second form.

5 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: That's 14, hey?

LARRY WALSH: Yeah. Yeah. Let's just say me and some of the teachers had incidents at school. Like, I've been accused and someone told my daughter down there this, Hannah, of - well, back in them days, teachers could belt you. I unfortunately wouldn't stand still when getting the belt. I was known to shape up to them and even strike back. I was not afraid of  
10 anyone, adult, cop, you name it. Because I always had the view, well, if they're going to hurt me, fine. But I'm going to hurt back.

So I decide to - well, the school play was on. I was not very popular with some of the teachers and quite a few students, so me and a couple of people went down to the school play  
15 was going to be at Cockburn Town Hall. You know, there was Brown's pub on the corner. So me at 14, I could pass - well, let's just say no publican ever questioned me age until I was 30. It was the first time I was ever asked, "Are you old enough to drink here." I was 30.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It's similar to me. I have started being IDed  
20 now and I do not understand it. It's like, by all means, it's very flattering. Very flattering.

LARRY WALSH: But I went there. I went there, had a few beers, me and a couple of others. We went to go into watch the play. Some teacher took offence to the fact that I walked out of the pub to go to the play and some argument ensued. He threatened me. I said, "Come ahead.  
25 Let's have it." So he went back inside and phoned the police about me drinking in public land. And then when I - after that one, I went to school, and he was trying to get me expelled and I've gone, shit, you're too late, mate, I've already quit. He was a long-haired dude who imagined himself with intellectual, and I just considered him a wanker and - - -

30 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: The teacher.

LARRY WALSH: Yeah. So whenever he taught, I wasn't interested. It's funny, but everyone talks about me this way, that way. I will admit, in my time, I set the record in secondary school for wagging in that secondary school. I still passed subjects. I never did homework. I  
35 never did assignments, and yet people were telling me I was going to be a - especially dickheads like him, that I was going to be always a labourer and that anything else I was dreaming of I was dreaming.

40 But I hated people telling me what I was going to be or what I could or couldn't do. Because that had been the basis in orphanages, in foster homes, and in government welfare. So as far as I was concerned, even by 14 I had become the person who would go, "You say I can't? Fuck you, I will. You say this will get me in trouble for doing that? Well, let's see how much trouble it will get me into." It's - the attitude and shape by 14.

45 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: But you do mean for the future generations coming, you know, tomorrow that doing your homework and not wagging is a great ace thing, hey. You have learnt from that, hey.

LARRY WALSH: For me, it was about what they were teaching. They were not teaching  
50 in - you know, like - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Protest colonial education.

5 LARRY WALSH: Well, from primary school onward, we were savages and we were thieves  
and we were only good at football and boxing or thieving. Well, thank you very much, I don't  
like what you're teaching about me. Because you're causing me fights in schools. You schools  
are causing me fights because you're saying I'm a primitive savage who will steal or bash  
you. You're saying to me and to all these kids that I am a savage. You're saying to me, and all  
10 these kids are repeating it, that I - and they may not have used the word bastard, but the kids  
did. Oh, you know, I was an orphan.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Bastard means something different to dad  
than it does to me. Bastard seems to be the biggest insult that was hurled at him, like, being a  
black bastard seems to have been like the child go-to for him at the time. There is a  
15 difference - the go-to insult was different in my generation.

LARRY WALSH: And schools were not helping by what they were teaching was actually  
making other kids think I was the dangerous one.

20 MS FITZGERALD: And, Uncle - - -

LARRY WALSH: When, in truth, they were the dangerous ones.

MS FITZGERALD: You can see it in these notes that that - exactly what you were  
25 expressing now was something that you were really strongly expressing then at the time.  
These notes are amazing, when there's the discussion of your family history and your  
awareness - it says:

30 *"He's bitter about having been brought up in boys' homes where he felt Aboriginals were  
discriminated against."*

And you make this wonderful ironic comment down under Employment. He says:

35 *"Like Aboriginals, I'm too lazy to advance."*

You have given yourself your own principal's synopsis of yourself. And - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: That's also tongue-in-cheek, to be fair.  
They might not have read that that way, but I know that's my father also being like, "Oh,  
40 you've told me repetitively I'm too lazy and now you're asking me to do this thing. Sorry, I'm  
too lazy."

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, it's like - - -

45 MS FITZGERALD: Sorry, I should mention this is page 113 of Annexure A. This - - -

LARRY WALSH: Well, you've got to remember it's - for me, there was always something in  
me that refused to believe that they were right. There was something in me that just always  
was, "Oh, I'm going to see if that's true or not." It's why I say sometimes I'm one of - I'm one

of - not the best - but one of the best -- because I'm very thorough. I don't leave any stone unturned if I'm looking into something. Even if it hurts me, I don't care.

5 Even if it makes me want to sometimes feel like rubbish, I don't care. It's got to be done. I refuse to not. And it's where - it's one of my greatest skills that I have a concentration level that borderlines on being insane because I can walk past you in the street because I'm so concentrating on something, I don't even see you.

10 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: So, yeah, I walked up to him on a train once and he was, like, so deep in thought, I was like, "Dad, Dad, Dad, Dad." And it was only when I touched him that he was like, "Bella, what are you doing?" I was like, "I have been calling you for 10 minutes." Whatever. So he can get deep in his thoughts.

15 LARRY WALSH: People walk up to me and go, "Didn't you see me the other day?" I go, "No, why?" "Because I was waving at you."

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He's not - you're not deliberately a snob, are you?

20 LARRY WALSH: No, if I'm on to something, that's all my concentration goes into. I can do - I can - I think I know quite a few that maybe have the same ability to when they are concentrating on getting something done, they will put all their mind and effort into working out how to do it. See, I'm not one - even though it shows I can read or write, I'm not one to write a plan until I work out every detail in my head. You know, whether it be I'm having a  
25 discussion with someone about the plan and they're helping feed the information on the plan, it's like one I'm working on now, I have been working with a couple of friends on, and I'm - when the time comes I will bring them forward as part of the team.

30 It's just that they have asked me - and this is a of the one thing that really shits me about people, especially today's Elders - and I have got to say this with all honesty. Some of these people who are Elders have been very skilled in the areas they are good at. You know. But the minute they get Elder, they think they can interfere in other bloody areas that they know nothing about. And I usually - whenever the parkies or some of the other members of my family go, "Oh, I'm an Elder now, hey."

35 And I go, "Yeah, as long as you don't ever interfere in my effing business." Because I have a way of operating, and it's different to everyone else, I must admit. But I make sure I know every fact. I do not say yes or no to joining into doing something unless I'm aware of the whole facts. I will not join a team unless I have some say in the selection criteria because I  
40 know what people's skills I need.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It's a decision-making model.

45 LARRY WALSH: I look for those people to assist me in what I need done, but I also look for them to sometimes lead it because I know they have that skill, they just need people who, like some of the Elders did with me, encouraged me and helped me bring those skills out.

50 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Can I also just say with this document, that Sarala has got up, and I know, Sarala, you want to ask a question because I can see your lovely face making those motions, but you can already tell the kinds of assumptions that are

made. Like, my dad's potential, you know, it's very, very clear what they think of Dad's potential in here. Dad's telling them about prospects - in that base paragraph - about prospects he has for work and their end assumption of that is that his future prospects aren't high. You know, that every encounter you come up against there is an assumption that dad will not do well for himself, become a criminal.

You know, it makes me incredibly proud - you know, something I wrote on Facebook when I was reflecting last night, when I was reflecting on this whole process, this whole process just makes me feel so angry, sad and weary. But the only thing that gives me sort of like something else from it is that I feel pride at - I'm able to see resilience in action through my father. You know, especially through understanding intimately his story. This is resilience in action.

LARRY WALSH: I see it differently. I just see it as one person's story. You see, for me - for me the truth is every - which is one of the problems with being a Stolen Gens is my pain is not the same as the next person in the Stolen Gen's pain.

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, I am going to take to you the Stolen Generations. One thing I really want to capture before we leave this topic is one of the subjects that you spoke about with me which I think both you and your daughter really felt saved you, and you were talking about Elders. And the thing you spoke about as being incredibly powerful was that when you came back you had been chosen to have a really particular role in your community, really quite soon after birth. And so when you came back into your community, you immediately had responsibilities and something to do with the community. And I just wanted you to tell us about what that is, how you were chosen and what it meant you had to do.

LARRY WALSH: Well, I will have to start it as a story because it is a true story. One day after - I was 17, and this was after going 14 and then once I hit a certain age I didn't need no one's permission to do anything. So I thought I'd go visit family. Anyway, we were in a pub having a few beers. A slight argument broke out, which we won. But we got banned. So we were walking back to their - my aunty's place, their mum, and they are getting told off and I'm going, "Sweet, I'm under age. They are my older cousins. They took me to the pub. I'm the under age, so I will just sit back while they get told off."

And after they told them off they turned to me and said, "And you, you're their effing elder. Why didn't you stop them?" I was looking at my cousins going, "What the fuck"? And one them said, "That's why every time you come to town I pick you up so we can go to the pub. Because if I was with you, it didn't matter if I got into trouble as long as you -- then I would be safe." So I found I had some responsibility. But I didn't want it because I had bad - you know, I still had to learn to control my rage and anger.

I - but some of my cousins from then on would always, if I was around, take a back seat or look sheepishly guilty when I came around. But I never used any of it until I was 30, and I have always kept it quiet, who I am in the family. Some of my other family members - well, like an example was there was one bloke who was head of an organisation and he thought I was from some other family branch of the Walshes, and then his older sister said, "No, he's actually from the larger branch of the Walshes and he may have a say in this."

So all of a sudden that bloke decided better to talk to me than keep fighting with me. He kept losing anyway, so - into these arguments. But he - and I just said, "Look, no, I'm just who I

am." Because I have never claimed publicly my eldership that I've had from a very young age. Because up until 30, I would have been a terrible leader. You know, too much anger, too much hate, too much rage. And if no one else was helping me to control it, I had to learn to control it myself. So I couldn't accept in my own heart the leadership role until I could actually control myself.

I have never gone out of my way to say it, but because some of my cousins were some of the parkies that caused trouble, whenever I came into town and all of a sudden when my cousins seen me, they would get all antsy, and so some of the other parkies who were mates of theirs started seeing me as their Elder too, although I never mentioned it. Because, for me, I see a difference between Elder and leadership, and I see too many of people confusing leadership and eldership.

And I believe this is what is causing a lot of problems within our communities today, these wrong misconceptions of a system that existed for many generations, and thanks to European intervention has broke down a lot, but now it's got out of hand because, shit, you turn 56, you're an Elder. I'm sorry, I even worked with Elders - well, no, Mrs and Mrs' during my travels around Australia, and some of them were damn well younger than me. And - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Dad has this whole thing, right, and apparently it comes from the old ones, like the old ones when he was a young one. And it's before my time, so I will just have to believe him, and it's definitely not what my generation are doing, but that's - maybe we should, maybe that's a conversation - is apparently in order to refer to some of the old aunties and uncles after we were colonised, in order to give them a way to be respected, still referred to as an Elder, they were called Mr or Mrs.

So the Mr - so an example that's well-known around Melbourne will be Barak. Some people would have called, particularly in the white circles, would have called him Mr Barak to try to indicate great - you know, and so when, I suppose, Dad is referring Mr and Mrs is in reference to when we were under a colonial construct and not allowed to use our own language. And so that was a way to try to create our own language or instill some notion of eldership within it. So that's what - so he has this whole thing of Mr and Mrs, right.

LARRY WALSH: I will give it easier. Before William Cooper become Uncle William - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: That's the one I was thinking about. It's all William, but he's Mr.

LARRY WALSH: Before, he was always introduced as Mr William Cooper. Back in the day when Aunty Marge Tucker was one of the women leaders, she was always referred to, as respect, Mrs Tucker. Leadership, there's only me and two blokes that joke with each other about it, and I don't want to mention one of them on character because he might chin me. That would be -- what he would say. You know. Let him joke about Mr, because for us it is - it is respect.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It's interesting, because I've had this conversation - - -

LARRY WALSH: And we try and practice it between each other rather than the rest of the community because, oh, my god, if the rest of the community practice it, we would have 10,000 leaders.

5 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: But also, Dad and I have discussed this many times and, like, language changes throughout the generations, and like, I will be fucked before I'm called Mrs, no matter how old I get. Like, no.

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, but it's that thing - - -

10

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Not that I'm saying - suggesting I'm an Elder, I'm not. But I'm saying maybe there is others who are also in that scenario who don't want to be a Mr or a Mrs.

15 LARRY WALSH: But it is an important thing to remember that the systems we are doing today have been forced on us by European civilisation, and, you know, to them what an Elder means? They don't know. You know, they have elders in churches. They have elders of this and that, and they have people in old homes they call elders. So Euro has no respect for the idea of what an elder is, and it's creeping into our community where anyone who thinks  
20 they're an elder can have a say on bloody things that they know nothing about and they keep interfering in my effing business.

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, I feel as though that is a beautiful place to stop.

25 LARRY WALSH: Yep.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I would like - I'm going to leave that statement right with him. That's - - -

30 MS FITZGERALD: We have to get some T-shirts made.

LARRY WALSH: Well, it is a point of view that I have because I have worked with some great leaders, men and women I still - even though they passed on - admire. And they were great leaders, and they were Mr and Mrs. They weren't uncle this and aunty that. They were  
35 Mr.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: But I will add, uncle this and aunty that, is - is - the same attempt to install a cultural phenomenon into a language that is not our own. So aunty and uncle is, again, a more modern attempt, the same way Mr and Mrs is, to place in  
40 some form of respect lines - and I'm not saying anything on what Dad said because that's his prerogative to - I'm not in that stage of the arena of the world where I can comment.

LARRY WALSH: Well, I still have people walk up to me, from some of the parkies that are my age and/or older, and they still use the term Mr. So they use it out of respect. No other  
45 time will they ever say Mr or Mrs to someone unless it's someone they respect.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, well, it's funny, maybe - - -

LARRY WALSH: Yes, it may be old school - yes it may be old school, but we need that type  
50 of thing again.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Maybe it's - - -

5 LARRY WALSH: I need the differentiation between the 40, 50, 100 leaders we have got to  
 actually who are our leaders. I do not mind people being respected for living a long time. I do  
 not mind - it's like, you know, someone once said to me about my cousin. And I said to him,  
 "Look, no matter his life, in the last 10 years he has been a great role model for those young  
 who are getting in trouble the same way he was." There's another one in the western suburbs I  
 have great admiration for because he - him and his wife have fostered a few kids, but more he  
 10 was someone who learnt from his mistakes and teaches young people today about those  
 mistakes so that they don't do them.

And some people call him Elder out there, and I'm one of them, because I see what he does is  
 what makes our community stronger. That they are pointing out to young ones in a gentle,  
 15 soft way of mistakes they made that they hope that the next generation don't make them, but  
 also they help and now their children help to raise Aboriginals in foster care. Those are the  
 type people that deserve a leadership role. And maybe they are not recognised because they  
 are just uncle or aunty so and so, but, for me, they are much more important than anything I  
 have ever done.

20 And Isobel has seen me when I see them, hugs. As I always say, these people, what they do is  
 more important than me. Because without them, the strength of our community would die.  
 Without these people wanting to help the young not make the same mistakes as them, without  
 these people admitting what they did wrong, to help other people not make the same  
 25 mistakes, that's a leadership role. It's just not recognised anymore, because you are just  
 another foster carer. Or you're just another parent. No. It's - the little things that make leaders  
 not the big things.

30 If I was the leader that some people claim me to be - I don't - if I was the leader, I would be  
 doing what they do. But instead at times I've had to take a bigger role and I prefer that role.  
 It's like I have taken kids living in my area out and I fostered and brought them to ACCO  
 meetings. Brought them to ACCO family stuff. And people sometimes ask me why haven't I  
 adopted or fostered. No. My criminal record was one reason, but the other thing is that I have  
 even found it difficult just raising my own kids.

35 Because how do you treat people when the way you have been treated but you don't want to  
 treat them that way? So for me - for me, the question that still hangs over, that no one teaches  
 what a leadership role is. And I'm very lucky. I had good teachers because they knew where I  
 was at. They could see I finally got control of my temper and they took me to things. They  
 40 introduced me to people. The first time I ever spoke - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Is that a good note to get to move on?

45 LARRY WALSH: No, the first time I ever spoke at the Advancement League was on request  
 from one of my uncles. Not I got up and spoke. It was, "Ah, I want to introduce my  
 nephew -" not my - I wasn't his blood - "because we've had a discussion about this. Nephew,  
 talk". And it was time he took me to different meetings to learn the way things worked and  
 then when he thought I was ready he said, "You're talking today." There was another one that  
 did that to me at the Legal Service once but I forgave him.

50

MS FITZGERALD: Chair - - -

LARRY WALSH: That's what I mean about leadership.

5 MS FITZGERALD: Shall we break now? Uncle, we have a beautiful lunch catered here today. If the Chair considers it's an appropriate time to break, we might have that.

CHAIR: Yes.

10 <ADJOURNED 12:51 PM

<RESUMED 2:02 PM

15 MS FITZGERALD: Thank you, Uncle. I realise - I was reminded by one of my very observant Commissioners, we don't, in your statement, have a statement of who your people are, Uncle.

20 LARRY WALSH: I am of the Nirai Bulluk clan of the - I prefer Daung Wurrung, whilst they call themselves Taungurung. That - the difference is I was doing it before they were born, most of the ones that ended up calling it the Taungurung. I prefer Daung Wurrung because I believe it to be the proper spelling like Woi Wurrung, Boon Wurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung,

25 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: The spelling is controversial and even within our clan, neighbours - like, dad and I vary in how we spell our clan names -- because we both spell our nation's name. Language is a - - -

30 LARRY WALSH: And I joke that Nirai Bulluk means cave people. That's what it says. Lived in the hills or mountains. So I joke that it means actually I'm a original hillbilly. An Aboriginal hillbilly before they -- but my family grew up thinking they were Yorta Yorta because of where we were placed - or they were placed, which is on Cummeragunja. So half my family are definitely Yorta.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: They married.

35 LARRY WALSH: My mum and my grandmother did not marry into any of them lines so we were - our family ended up only being the only ones - it's like uncle - an uncle of mine came up to me and said, "Don't worry, nephew, youse are covered in our claim, Yorta Yorta." I said, "I can't be, Unc. Mum didn't marry one of youse, nor did Nan. So we can't be one of youse." But then they checked, they've gone, "Shit, you're right. But you're our relly." I said,  
40 "Yeah, I will still say you're a relly."

45 MS FITZGERALD: I thought we will start on a really huge topic while we are all fresh and it's the work that you did in setting up the Stolen Generations Inquiry. And could you tell the Commissioners about how that work started and how the whole idea of the inquiry started?

LARRY WALSH: Well, before the inquiry and anything got off the ground, I had at the time been working with a QC named Ron Merkel through the Legal Service days. And I had discussed with him and another brother of his who passed away - I -- say that but I won't mention their names - and they both were aware. Now, they were called up to a conference in  
50 the Northern Territory where it was a legal service conference the Northern Territory Legal

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Service organised. And up there, Ron Merkel heard the people from the Northern Territory, including the woman Cubillo, Francesca Cubillo, and all the other older people.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Jacqui Katona.

5

LARRY WALSH: No, no, I'm not thinking of her. I'm saying the older people. Uncle Fred Kruger, Aunty May Briggs. Not Aunty May Briggs, but Aunty May Briggs up there. And about three other people and then the Northern Territory Aboriginal Legal Service representative and a woman who now works at the VU named Jacqui Katona. And she was their - Jacqui was a sort of either public relations or legal analysis for them. And so we had a meal and they found they weren't getting the gravity in Northern Territory of acceptance.

10

So we were talking about it, and me coming in dressed like a lout, while they're all wearing shirts, ties, whatever, looking good while I'm looking like I just was dragged off the street.

15

Isobel was with us and her mum, and we sat and had lunch and we said, okay. And they told me about what they wanted to do and I turned around to them and said, "Okay, I think I can help. What do you want? Do you want to make it a national thing or?"

20

They said, "Well, we think it needs to be a national thing for us-" because most of the Northern Territory was under Commonwealth control, "For us to get it, there has to get up to a national level." And I go, "Okay, I can handle that." They all looked at me dubiously because of the way I was dressed and everything, and I mean this, they looked dubious, and Jacqui Katona who had dealt with me and my cousins when we were getting into National Deaths in Custody, and they looked at her and she turned around and said, "Yes, he can do it. We trust him. He can do it."

25

So I went to some meetings. Back in them days, the organisations had a community meeting. Everyone was entitled to go and everyone was entitled to ask a question. So I put me hand up about Stolen Gens. Within two weeks, SNAICC come up to me, because they had been up in the Northern Territory conference, and said to me, "Look, you are right, this needs to go national". So they took me up to Watson where the New South Wales SNAICC headquarters was, and we had a discussion there. I came back down to Melbourne because the other organisations, like VACCA had decided to get someone and the Health Services decided to -- I think that was the start of campaigning. But to get the inquiry - - -

35

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Can I interrupt, dad, and just read this out from yours and then I will shut up: "In the meantime, more Stolen Generations" - this is from dad's testimony at 59:

40

*"In the meantime, more Stolen Generations were raising their voice as well, for example, Lyn Austin and Neville Austin. There were others too, of course."*

And then further on he notes that he may have forgotten due to names but that is only due to time not due to the efforts that the impact of other members of the community had.

45

LARRY WALSH: So as it started grounding - you know, grinding out that, yes, there was a lot more people it happened to, the organisations decided to have a few community meetings about it. Again, at each one I always spoke up. So you've got to understand my role, then. And this is what a lot of people in the organisation never understood. They always see me as the street punk. They always see me as one of the parky leaders. And that meant - well, I'm

50

not going to mention the name of the woman because she's got Alzheimer's, but you have already interviewed her.

5 She said to me back at the time, "Larry, the organisations are never going to trust you enough because your loyalty to the parkies. And that scares them." And it wasn't my loyalty to them. It was their loyalty to me.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Solidarity, yeah?

10 LARRY WALSH: It was both ways. It was not one or the other. So we raised it. I raised it with what was ATSIC, and the Chair of ATSIC at the time and I were - to put it politely, we sometimes argued over what was right or wrong. I will give him credit. He was one of those people that, as soon as the government give him a rulebook of behaviour, he will work out a way to use it. So I will give him credit. The organisation he ran at the time, he knew how to  
15 make sure it worked to the government's satisfaction.

He thought I belonged to a certain branch of the family, Walsh, because there are a few scattered branches. There is some in Swan Hill, for instance. There is some in Gippsland.

20 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Mildura.

LARRY WALSH: Mildura.

25 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Moe, Morwell

LARRY WALSH: Moe, Morwell - let's not go into all the suburbs.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: We're all across the state.

30 LARRY WALSH: Because mum was one of 13.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, our women are - we have good hips. Let's put it that way.

35 LARRY WALSH: Anyway, where was I? Yes. So we started talking and, unfortunately, because of the situation with the organisations at the time - I don't know how to do it without not getting polite. There were three factions. And because of it, when you tried to get  
40 coordination on what was going on with Stolen Gens, it was hard because they weren't communicating with each other, let alone with me, let alone having community meetings to talk to the Stolen Gens to try and get us all together so that we could work on the same page.

45 MS FITZGERALD: And, Uncle, when you say "us", from your witness statement it becomes clear that, in fact, that whole time you were supporting other people to give their evidence to that process but, in fact, you haven't shared your own story for your own sake until now.

LARRY WALSH: Well, this, is one of the mistakes we made, was that because of the lack of coordination between each other - and I mean between the Stolen Gens and the three major Aboriginal organisations - we had no clue what their plans were and they had no clue what our plans were. It even goes down to the submissions the organisations put in. I don't know  
50 what they wrote in any of them.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Look, dad, paraphrase - - -

LARRY WALSH: Bels, please, I'm trying to do it my way.

5

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, but this is your words.

LARRY WALSH: I know, but let's do it my way first.

10

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Okay, you're the boss.

LARRY WALSH: But what happened is, we - and I'm glad now it happens. It was one of those mistakes we made at the time. We didn't have counsellors for people who were going to go before things to bare their pain to the Commissioners. The Commissioners had

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counsellors. We didn't. There was never any discussion with us to see if this is what we might need or things that we could wish for. Because the organisations were having more meetings with the bloody Royal Commission than we were, and so there was a disconnect with what we wanted answers for and what we wanted to achieve and what the organisations wanted to achieve.

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MS FITZGERALD: But, Uncle, you also indicated that that meant that you were all having to provide trauma support for each other.

LARRY WALSH: For each other.

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MS FITZGERALD: When you each really needed it for yourselves.

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, well.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Can I read out your own words?

LARRY WALSH: Okay, go. Yeah.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: 64:

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*"Again, acknowledging that understanding is changed about trauma and trauma informed practices and responses, I still have to acknowledge that it wasn't like that then."*

This is my father's words at 64:

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*"People needed support to go in and tell their stories, practical support, emotional and mental health support. This wasn't available so our community made do, as we usually do, with each other. This meant that members of our community, mostly black, but also including some wonderful allies, were the ones swooping in to provide support, holding someone's hand while they cried, bearing witness to the depths of someone else you knew and often loved trauma, all whilst reliving your own trauma which relates to the testimony of other Stolen Generation survivors. It affected me. It still does to this day."*

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LARRY WALSH: I - when I got to the Royal Commission, when it was my turn to tell my story, I did not, because during the struggle to get it up, I lost friends. Some even before it started. Some were involved in the Deaths in Custody, friends and family.

5 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He means that his friends passed.

LARRY WALSH: And they had no one to speak for them. So I did. It hurt like hell. Because no one else was going to talk for them. They were my mates. They were brothers. They were sisters. They didn't make it. Someone had to talk for them. So I chose to forgo talking about  
10 myself because they were, they helped, they backed, they, at the risk of raising their own pain, supported. They - as I say, some just didn't survive their own nightmares.

But they were bloody great mates and great brothers and sisters, because we had been  
15 through the same things. We understood it. It's like we - and everyone in the organisations were saying to me, "How in the hell did you get them to do it?" The parkies and I had a discussion about the younger ones that were living on the streets, so we started putting a - what do you call those things, a - we demand things.

MS FITZGERALD: Petition.

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LARRY WALSH: Petition to ask for the Housing Board to change its housing policy to include young people housing. Because they didn't have that at the time. So we got that done and why did we do it? Because we didn't want those kids ending up like us. We fought. Not  
25 for us, for them. So they didn't end up like us. So there's a chance they could get housing, there's a chance someone could be there to help them get used to budgeting and things like that - which, by the way, we did. I got two houses from - I went to Youth Affairs which was the Victorian Government Youth Advisory Board and they had - it's funny, but non-Aboriginal had youth housing, non-Aboriginal had old people's housing, non-Aboriginal had  
30 thing - we only had family housing.

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So we had to change the Constitution, got the two houses. I then declared them sovereign because we refused to pay rent while I was in charge of them for three years, because we went, no, these are the houses they owe us. They all learnt to be good budgeters, and every  
35 one them, those kids - apart from one or two who, obviously - you know, if you've got a few, there is always going to be one or two that fall to the way side, as in go back to whatever bad habits - but the majority became very good citizens of the Aboriginal community. All they needed was a break. We, the parkies, gave them the break. We fought for it for them. And that was the same with this Royal Commission.

40 MS FITZGERALD: Uncle - - -

LARRY WALSH: We were together. We were able to work some strategies together, but when it come to the organisations they didn't want to deal with us because we were the alkies, the junkies, the trouble makers. I am saying "we" because I was viewed the same way  
45 because I was - and you know, I had organisations coming up to me going, "I don't know how you got them to do that." I didn't. We were just in the park yarning and they said, "See those kids over there? Yeah. They got nowhere to live. We got to do something about that. They could end up like us." That's the same with Stolen Gens. We went through this shit. We want something done. And we're willing to back you.

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It got so bad I heard at least eight other stories apart from my own. I could not go home until my children were asleep in bed. I would leave before my children were awake. I had to contain my own emotional anger, not from my own story, but from other stories that gave them the courage to speak. And I had to stay the rock. The solid unmovable one and then go,  
 5 "Hey, quick, you, that one. Grab him quickly. Can't you see they are about to break down?"

And that happened for the whole four or five days. And at the end - at the end, after it was over, two brothers - I will say one of the brothers was held more professional boxing titles than any other. He didn't make world champion, but he had Commonwealth champion,  
 10 Pacific champion, Asia-Pacific champion, and his brother, they seen me. They seen the distress I was in. I couldn't take it home. Those boys grabbed me, the parkies. We went into a bunch of flats. We stayed. We partied hard. Yeah, I may have used a few illegal substances.

But after the fourth day I've gone, "Yeah, I'm okay now." And one of them looked at me and he said, "You sure, Bruz?" I says "Bruz, they haven't beat me fucking yet and they're not gonna now." And then we had a hug because they knew I was all right. So that's what I mean about the loyalty between us and why we fought together. Not out of me being the leader but out of what happened to us. We didn't want it to keep going. We did not want another generation going through what we went through, you know.  
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20 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: The greatest sadness is it's still going on.

LARRY WALSH: That's the worst part of it, for everything that we fought, even despite ATSIcs submissions, the organisation's submissions - which I never got to read, which I really feel that was their - if we worked together instead of having three or four different bloody demands, it may have worked better. If the Legal Service is demanding this and that happen, Health Service is demanding this and that happens, ACCA is demanding this or that happen, VAIA, as in Victorian Aboriginal Community Services thing, VACSI all had their own submissions, and I'm not even sure half of them matched each other. That was about  
 25 their own power struggles and interfering in community's business.  
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And I mean that seriously. Interfering in community's business by claiming they're the community. And it still continues to this day instead of people, like when I was young, would go in and demand meetings with ministers and get them. We had these people speaking on  
 35 our behalf with their submissions, which half the time was more about, "Five me more money and we will handle this problem", which is bullshit. It was about sitting with us, working out what we felt were the major needs.

Sitting with us so we could appoint our own committee to represent us. It's like - the latest example was I joined, thanks to the Aboriginal Legal Service, the inquiry last year that the State Government on Aboriginal Compensation and all of that. And what I found was that I was dealing with bureaucrats that do not make decisions. So every time you go, "Okay, this is what we want", they go - they would go, "Oh, well we would have to take it upstairs."  
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And then they get back to you, "Oh, they said no." You can't be angry at the little bloody shits they sent to you, the public servants ones they sent, because they were not the decision makers. They were the screen so that you couldn't blame or know who was behind the decisions. When I was young and we had a committee that wanted to meet with the government, we met with the government. We didn't have bloody bureaucrats interfering. We  
 45 didn't have people who can't make decisions interfering.  
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Where that broke down also is that Aboriginal organisations joined political parties. Because they thought that would give them more influence and more voice. They actually have been defeating the system that worked for the previous 30 years where, as independent people,  
 5 independent decision-making by our community was what was raised by our people to the heads of government. That no longer happens. We have too many gatekeepers now, and the Aboriginal organisations are part of the gatekeeping problem.

They're talking with the ones that are making decisions, and they're just going, "You know, Bruz, we're on your side. You're on our side because you are part of our party now and we  
 10 can only give you X amount." Bullshit. If you fought them from the beginning, you would have got a lot more. Instead, you got conservative, you forgot why you were there, you forgot how many people fought before you to get you there, and you forgot it's not about your organisation, it's about us, our communities.

15 And this is where you let down Stolen Gens. Now, we also let each other down. I am not going to say that it's all their fault. We, because of our individual pains, could not see that we needed to join together - well, I would say the parkies understood it, because we'd all been there, and we'd all knew each other from them places. So we understood each other. But a lot  
 20 of people's individual pain - my pain is different from your pain. Your pain is different from their pain. Your pain is different from her pain. Your pain is different from his pain. It's because of the circumstances of your life that the pain is different.

And it's what stopped us from getting together. We've got to learn - and I'm sick and tired of  
 25 saying, "Are you learning yet?" Until you unite you have always going to lose. Until you - Stolen Gens unite, form a team, that you think could handle your issues and your concerns, we are always going to the organisations who only see it from their perspective. Most of the people in the organisations were raised in happy families.

30 You know, one of the reasons I am critical of some of the organisations is they don't allow people like me in. I mean, they allow me in because I've been around too long and I'm too stubborn to back off. But it's a lot of us that they don't allow in because we aren't their idea of respectability. I am betting that if I ever get in that Premier's list it will be somewhere after I'm dead in another 30 or 40 years. Because the people running it are looking at respectability  
 35 people. It's like NAIDOC awards.

I've seen it been given to public servants. You know what the NAIDOC award was about? The people that volunteered. The people that tirelessly worked in our communities to assist our communities. It wasn't about a reward for someone that worked in an organisation. It  
 40 wasn't about a reward for someone that worked in the government. It was about a community member contributing to our community, to help strengthen our community. Not the crap it is.

I was asked if I wanted one and I refused. I was asked if I wanted to be on the Premier's thing, and I refused. Why? Because I know if I'm put up now as I am, I will be knocked back.  
 45 I know it will be after I'm dead where someone will go, "Oh, actually, when you look back at what he did he wasn't a bad bloke." That will be the only way I will get in that bloody thing while the current people are after respectable people.

Everybody knocks the people I'm associated with. I'm not saying they're all good. I'm not  
 50 saying that they haven't got problems. I'm not going to lie about them. But they also know I

will tell the truth about them, that they did stand behind me 100 per cent. Yes, there was dissent, like anything. Yes, we allowed for other people to have their own opinions because it wasn't a dictatorship, or it wasn't that thing that a lot of organisations do. "Yeah, I know we're against it, but we need all of youse to say yes. So let's raise our hand --"

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: They need the mic for the live stream, dad. It's for the - - -

10 LARRY WALSH: Sorry. "So let's raise our hand and vote on this. No, you've got to vote yes too, you know. We've got to make this look like the board's all together at one." That was started in 1982, and I'm not going to name the two organisations.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: And it happened to me two years ago.

15 LARRY WALSH: But I'm in the - I'm in one of their old houses is one of them. It's happened too many times. This is the problem. I'm sick of it. And I'm sick and tired of people telling them rumours and lies to stop them from uniting. You know, when I was on this committee, someone, who I won't go into, was telling other people Stolen Generations, I was earning lots of money from these meetings. This was to decide the package. Bloody hell, for over 12  
20 months, all I earned was about \$400.

25 But someone tried telling them I was earning a lot more than that and said, "Look, just because he's been doing this and that in the Stolen Generations, he's getting lots of money." There are too many people telling you people lies. There are too many people that need youse to be divided. It's about time you got off your bloody mooms and realised you are being used so that nothing changes. And that is not on me, that's on all of us, because youse are so caught in your own pain - just like I am - just like I go through it every day for 20 years - and not just the Stolen Gens. I'm talking about all my physical pains. I still believe we can win.

30 I still believe if you mob stop bitching at each other, we can win. You need to find a way to work together. You need a way to support the current team that I'm not rejoining because I am not dealing with all them bureaucrats. I never did when I was young, I never did in my middle age, and why the hell should I in my 60s have to deal with bureaucrats who can't make decisions when I used to deal with you who made decisions.

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MS FITZGERALD: Uncle?

LARRY WALSH: Yes.

40 MS FITZGERALD: I want to move from one really very important and difficult subject to another very important and difficult subject. Because we haven't yet spoken about deaths in custody. And you had some really - well, very personal experiences with that process, but also, as with everything else that's happened to you in your life, you used that very personal - those very personal losses to then spur you on to make changes and to organise  
45 your community. And I wondered if you would speak a bit about that.

50 LARRY WALSH: Well, you see, I say in the story that I was at home working, because I had a family to support, when - I call them brother cousins because we called each other brothers cousins for stuff we were doing together. Now, my two cousins were well-known political activists in the political activist world. Same last name as me. I got a phone call from one of

them, and he said, "Uncle" - you know, as I say, I don't like that, but I will use the family names. "Uncle Moffatt died." Yeah. Okay.

5 "Cousin, me brother will pick you up in half an hour. We will wait for you to get here." So we got there. The Walsh family were there and the Moffatt family were there waiting for us. When we got there we put down the questions we wanted to know: What was he picked up for? Why was he picked up? Why didn't anyone check that he had a heart condition? Why was there no checking of him in the police cells. Why - we asked all these questions. We got what answers we could, and we then called a community meeting. And I mean every one of the Gunai/Kurnai in that area and even all the way down to Tyers turned up to the meeting of the families.

15 They all came and they asked us what we found out. And they said, "What's the next step?" So we formed a committee to look at all the issues and how we could make it a headline. So we organised a demo where we got the courts and the police station handing out pamphlets. And it forced the courts and the inspector or whatever he was of police to agree to have a community meeting. At that community meeting, before we had it, we all sat down to make sure everyone was comfortable with the idea and who wanted to speak and have a say so that we could organise it to how we go through, whether the police or the courts.

20 There was this old guy - God bless him, he must have been bloody 70 or 80 back then, you know. He's gone, "Nephew, I want to get up and say something." "No worries, Uncle." He's always been a really soft talker, this man. He's passed away so -- but he was also one of the people that were teaching the Gunai/Kunai their craft and art patterns. He was older than the other -- so we got it. We went and did start to try to create police liaison, court liaison so that some of the arrest rates could be stopped and some of the deaths may be preventable.

25 So my cousins were starting to look at because, as I said, my cousins were pretty well-known in their day. I mean, one's nickname was Have Demo, Will Travel. No, that was our nickname for him. He was - you name the Demo on which date - - -

30 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: --

35 LARRY WALSH: No, he never a Black Panther, although he associated with a few of them. You name the demo, he was there. So they started having a look while I went back to work because I had a family to raise. Then whilst I was working, a cousin of mine came in and she looked upset. And before she got near me, she burst into tears. And she said, "I'm sorry, your brother was found dead last night in a police cell." I was working at the Koorie Heritage Trust at the time.

40 I just turned around to Jim and he said, "Yeah, I heard Larry. Take as long as you like." So we went up there. Now, as I say, my cousin with the nickname Have Demo, Will Travel and I went up. So we heard the story. So we went to the police station - not the police station, the pub where they arrested him. And we stayed there after closing because, for the first time in a long time, I let my anger out. And my cousin didn't mind the fighting either. And when the police came to try and throw us out, I just told them - come forward and try and arrest me.

45 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He was picking a fight.



LARRY WALSH: And my eyes went red. And so they retreat and had to go get my recently widowed sister-in-law to try to get us to calm down. I mean, she's just found out her bloody husband - is grieving, she's grieving because she's just lost her husband and the father of her children.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Which one was a baby at the time.

LARRY WALSH: Which one was a baby at the time, and instead of just go away, or whatever, or just come take us on, they went running to get a person grieving to stop us.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It may have worked, but dad did not approve of it.

LARRY WALSH: I almost still kept going, but Cousin Desi was watching my sister-in-law's reaction. No, come on, calm down. Calm down. Let's leave.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: As me father puts it here:

*"She didn't need anything more of anything that evening. So we agreed and went home."*

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LARRY WALSH: I got re-back involved. And I - thanks to my cousins, because of their political activities, they started asking around the state and interstate how many of this was happening. So my cousins and I went up to Queensland to see what the deaths in custody there, on the way back, New South Wales, to see what was happening there, and then to try and create in our States the movement to call for a Royal Commission.

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Most people don't remember me, and I'm okay with that because I'm not a public figure. I'm a great planner, and a great networker, but I'm not a public figure. Because I've seen too many public figures who are asked to make comments on things they know nothing about and they make these comments because, "Oh, I'm in the papers again." I'm not that type of person. It's why I prefer storytelling, because it means you can pass through things without anyone noticing you or seeing you as a person involved in something political or something - social justice type things.

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Story telling is one of the best disguises I ever found. Because people talk to you about stories. And sometimes they talk to you about their lives, and you sometimes start to get a picture of what's going on and what needs to change. Story telling is not the art of telling a story; it's the art of listening. See, I used to say to people when I used to do radio, I know you're hearing what I'm saying but are you really listening to what I'm saying? Because they are - see, everyone thinks hearing is the art. It's not.

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The art of hearing is listening. To hear where there's a pause, to hear where there's change in tone, to see the way they hold their body tells you what they're really saying. The art of listening is one of the most forgotten arts in the world. Because too many people are trying to talk over each other rather than use the art of listening. And I say - not an actor. An actor is not bad at watching someone and then developing a character that they have to use for a play.

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I'm saying a storyteller actually has a sense of listening that most people don't even notice. I mean, that's why I've been able to get away with a lot of things because everyone either dismisses me as a street lout or, yeah, he's a storyteller. In the old days, the storyteller was the

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oral historian. Every story I tell, I could name where that bloody story happened. That's the art of storytelling in the traditional sense. Not just saying here is the story of the old days, but to be able to go, "This is where that happened. This is how it happened." And sometimes when whether you realise it or not, I'm talking about earthquakes, I know what I'm talking about earthquakes but nobody else does. I know I'm talking about volcanic eruptions but nobody else does.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Volcanic eruptions. Flood and famine.

10 LARRY WALSH: Because they are thinking it's a story. It's not a story. It's actually history. And it is is all put into stories, so they are remembered from generation to generation. I am a storyteller, and I want the generations of the future to know what we achieved so they can take it the next step.

15 MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, before you, Grannie Annie has been doing the same thing. She's been telling stories.

LARRY WALSH: Well, Grannie Annie was recorded as helping a lot of the Aboriginal women on Coranderrk write their submissions, those that couldn't write, and Grannie Annie also testified at the Coranderrk inquiry.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I was going to say she very famously - and it feels very famous because it's in my family, but I'm like, maybe it's just famous to us. I don't know. But she testified. She was really brave, actually. She testified not just about herself but -- about our Great Uncle David who - she was - he was sick and she didn't have enough food rations and she was requesting extra blankets because David was sick, and David died as a result of them refusing to give her blankets and more food rations. And so Grannie Annie was moved to be one of the only women that was actually included in the Coranderrk inquiry. The other thing I will say about - - -

30 LARRY WALSH: Plus she wrote on behalf of five or six of the women who couldn't write properly.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Indeed.

35 LARRY WALSH: Their testimony.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: She also wrote down language words for not just her own language but other language groups around her, and the other thing that's really special about Grannie Annie that I relate to particularly, but I think that Dad is trying to walk in her footsteps as well, or in a different regard - well, so Grannie Annie was given a unique position in that she could move inside more circles than the average man.

45 She was able to move inside men's and women's circles, and that's because my great-great-great-grandfather, her husband, he had been in an axe fight when he was young. His name was Talgium Hamilton. And Talgium means speaker. So he was - - -

LARRY WALSH: After that -- job, he couldn't speak.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He was a designated speaker, though, in our family and a designated role as speaker. However, Annie could understand him perfectly. So he would just talk - so Annie was able to participate in men's ceremonial business, not because she was participating as herself but because she was - - -

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LARRY WALSH: Translating for her husband.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Her husband translator. So I suppose dad and I have talked about this as us trying to follow her footsteps in the sense of us both also standing up against racism and harsh treatment and inequality, but more than that, the same way she - in just her very - like, in the very places she was put in, she expanded sort of circles and knowledge and discussion. You know, that's what we're attempting to do with our testimony.

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15 Every part of our testimony, we've been very deliberate with and dad - I've been very proud of him. He made it really clear to me that he didn't want this document to have any wallowing in it. That it wasn't about telling the sad things that had happened to him for no point or purpose. That every story we were going to tell was going to have a purpose and a point to show how systemic discrimination had occurred across our lives.

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MS FITZGERALD: In terms of those systems - - -

LARRY WALSH: Can I also say about Grannie Annie, Grannie Annie and her two brothers, Grannie Annie was one of the only registered midwives in both New South Wales and Victoria.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He's story telling. That's just Grannie Annie's brother - - - -

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LARRY WALSH: Her brother was a storyteller, but - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He was other things too.

LARRY WALSH: But they were also the healers. And it's a thing that I believe in that - not this bullshit position here myself, but I believe that we have, all of us, the last eight generations, has suffered some form of mental or emotional, whether it be inherited by the parents being the first generation being locked up, because we were used to being free, to the way people were moved around from mission to mission to reserve, to break down families, there is a lot of - we need to - yeah, while we need to fix the Stolen Gens and the deaths in custody, we need to take a longer, harder long-term look at the effects of colonisation much better than we do.

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For instance, can you imagine living free, roaming your land, then being put in chains and moved to somewhere else's country that you didn't belong to? So you had no right of say, no right of doing something without the consent of the local people who were also being forced in the same position as you. And over time, luckily, those mobs got along. But some of the areas where we used to meet to settle differences, well, let me see, in one place it became a church. But it was where Aboriginal people went to settle their differences. The white fellas turned it into a church or a town hall. Wherever Aboriginal meeting for ceremony, the white fellas built a church or a bloody town hall --

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It hasn't stopped there, and that's what your testimony shows, is that the process - colonisation is a dirty fucking beast that does not end. It is an active process. It didn't end in 1883. It is going on now. And dad's testimony, attests to  
 5 how he has - the effect of colonisation is borne out on his body and my attempts to address that in support of dad's.

LARRY WALSH: If you look very carefully at the Coranderrk records and almost every mission reserve record, you will find people were removed just like the Stolen Gens. You  
 10 will find that people were forced to live elsewhere that had nothing to do with the - their country, their knowledge of their country. Forced to move away. In some cases I sometimes have a yarn with Djirri Djirri dancers and Mandy Nicholson and that, because our - Mandy and I have discussed this idea that the whole thing is - and this is why I am a little bit anti-lobbying and a little bit anti different things - - -

15 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Only a little bit, hey.

LARRY WALSH: I will say a little bit for the moment. Because that's where our inheritance comes from. That's where our whole - you know how they talk about Aboriginal sites and we  
 20 will protect this Aboriginal heritage, that's a lie. The sites means nothing without what was in the area around it. I mean, if you're going to a ceremony for a few days where in the hell is all your food coming from? Where is all your tools for the ceremony coming from? Where is all the ochre for the ceremony coming from?

25 It's not just stopping the dance, but it's also not recognising the interrelationship between whatever the ceremony was and why you were there. For instance, I know Sue here shares a story with me because of the creation of fire, that shares between Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung.

30 CHAIR: --

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, but I'm saying there are instances of that. But you know what, I'm not allowed to go into Sue's area to start that story, and she's not allowed to come into mine and finish that story. Why? I'm sorry, someone has got to own it, you can't share it. Even if  
 35 the story is your shared story. No, one of youse has got to own it. It's everything to break our cultural links, our kinship links, and even today, you know the biggest trick they've got?

Oh, yeah, here's your *Cultural Heritage Act*. Oh, oh, we have got a *Forestry Act*. Separate when they are part of the one. They are playing games with us and forcing us to play the  
 40 same game. My culture and heritage and my inheritance is the whole damn Taungurung bush. The whole of those river systems. And if you took out the lands, these - all these buildings, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung claim the same. My area is all this area where there used to be forests, where there used to be ceremony. Where we had plenty of waterways. It's the same story throughout Victoria.

45 I'm not say I'm trying to tell the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung story. I'm just using the example because I'm here. It's the whole system is set up to find ways of forcing us to behave their way rather than ours. I should not have to argue that my inheritance, the whole Nirai Bulluk area, the whole of the creation of the Goulburn River, the whole of the creation of the King  
 50 River and a couple of other rivers is part of my culture and my heritage, but, more important,

it's one word the white fellas won't use with us - my inheritance. Passed down from my ancestors all the way through to me and to my children. And that every Aboriginal has that.

5 It's just that we are not using the right word because they are training us to go "heritage" instead of "inheritance." Inheritance has a different legal meaning to heritage. And I'm sick and tired of us being fooled by scaly-backed devil dodgers. If you want a translation of that one?

10 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: No, I reckon let them sit with it and work it out on their own, hey. Dad so very eloquently put this thought. He's been thinking about this thought a lot of, right, so I've heard with it a bit because I live with him. So, you know, he hears my thoughts too, so lucky him. But this is one of the most eloquent ways I've heard him say it, so I want to read it:

15 *"If we lose our unique landscapes, animals, waterways and plants, that is a loss both to me culturally and to my heritage, but also the culture and heritage to everyone who calls my country home. If I lose my heritage, you lose yours. If the bush goes, so too does the romanticism and mysticism that non-Aboriginal Australia viewpoint that - if the bush -"*

20 Sorry, it's me, not dad. He's eloquent here. I'm not:

25 *"If the bush goes, so too does the romanticism and mysticism within the non-Aboriginal Australian view of the Australian bush. There simply won't be another Banjo Paterson if our land is not protected and its beauty cannot be wandered and pondered by an artist. There are many, many more losses that I could list from the degradation to our environment and heritage that will occur if nothing is done."*

That sort of has a --

30 LARRY WALSH: The examples I use now and then is the Heide School of Art. No more bush, no more Heide School of Art. May Gibbs of gumnut doll fame and 'Advance Australia Fair' there will be no future May Gibbs. CJ Dennis, there will be no future CJ Dennis.

35 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: See, this is what I love about my father.

LARRY WALSH: The Man from Snowy River.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I love that example.

40 LARRY WALSH: You know, no more things like that.

45 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: This is what I love about my father. He has come up - well, he's trying to fit language so that, you know, this - at this particular viewpoint obviously is actually for non-Aboriginal people. He's trying to educate through that viewpoint, and I love him for attempting to do that. I love him for attempting to put his own framework and give it over to someone so they can see value in it when they might not have before.

50 MS FITZGERALD: Isobel, I think I might ask - - -

COMMISSIONER BELL: Can I just say - - -

LARRY WALSH: Can I make one more comment on that one?

5 COMMISSIONER BELL: Can I just say as a non-Aboriginal person - - -

LARRY WALSH: You see, the thing is what I have been talking to people about is - they say to me, "How do you want me involved?" I go, well, all I want you to do is talk about your country, your heritage, and your inheritance. Because if every Aboriginal started doing that,  
10 we would change the debate on Aboriginal heritage and environment. And what's more, for any of you non-Aboriginal out there, I also am being generous as an Aboriginal to say that is also a part of my heritage. It may only have existed for 150 years.

15 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: But you - but we can share.

LARRY WALSH: But we are all people who at one stage or another of watched on TV, heard the song or heard the poem, 'The Man from Snowy River'. We have all heard of gumnut dolls. We have all heard of - well, actually more New South Wales, but we have Mulga scrub here.

20 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: You --

LARRY WALSH: No, but Mulga Mick of the - of Henry Lawson and them because we have Mulga scrub.

25 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Oh, Lawson as well. Yeah.

LARRY WALSH: So you see what I'm getting at, is that we have been fighting these wars alone when we - I'm saying to people, it's quite simple. I as an Aboriginal and the ones that  
30 have joined me on this, we're not about to shoot your heritage down. We will acknowledge that part of your heritage is also part of ours. So we need to combine the Heritage Acts and the Environment Acts to make Australia's heritage permanent. And that's where I - I tell you, sometimes people say, "He's mad, he's got this crazy idea" but they all have greater truth and they are easy to do. It's just that we are so busy holding on so tightly to whatever we have  
35 been told is at risk rather than looking about how do we expand it so it's not at risk.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Before we - - -

LARRY WALSH: We have got to defeat the government by using the non-Aboriginal arts to  
40 defeat government. To get what I want, I don't want to make deals with the devil. I am saying if I am Australian and you are Australian, then that is your heritage, and it is also part of mine. I have a longer heritage and a longer history.

45 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: But if mine dies, yours certainly will.

LARRY WALSH: But if mine die, yours dies. Full stop.

MS FITZGERALD: Commissioner Bell, did you want to - - -

50 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, I was going to say.

COMMISSIONER BELL: As a non-Aboriginal person, I just wanted to thank you for the beautiful words that you spoke, for reaching out to people like me, for emphasising how important it is not just for you but for us that you protect country and speak for country. For  
 5 inviting me to think about country in a new way. For inviting me to understand that we need to join up your inheritance with heritage and protection of country. And I just wanted to say to you that these ideas are very powerful in my mind, and I will remember the words that you've spoken and the concepts and the ideas that you're sharing with us today.

10 LARRY WALSH: As I say, I just want - and we're getting around slowly to Aboriginal people talking to them about the idea. Because if I come out and become the spokesman, there will always be people criticising me. I'm trying to turn it into a team not into a - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: It's better in a team, dad, anyway.

15 LARRY WALSH: Not a one-man band.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: We are more likely to get it done.

20 LARRY WALSH: But, unfortunately, someone has to raise it in the way that becomes a team. I have some good people willing to call and one person in particular I have discussed the idea with for a couple of years until I confirm it in my mind. Remember, I say I don't write anything down until I have got it exactly where I want it. I'm at that point where I think after  
 25 NAIDOC - and, by the way, I am trying to challenge the environment and heritage laws. It's funny but I'm trying to get Environmental Defender's Office to learn Aboriginal heritage laws because I think I could combine a court case to prove the point.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Don't give too much away. We're in public testimony.

30 LARRY WALSH: I don't care who knows, because - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: You can all know it's coming. But I don't want the government to know too much - - -

35 LARRY WALSH: No, I always warn people when I'm after something. I warn government, I warn organisations. Even when they say "Oh, you can't do that." I said, "Well, I just told you I'm going to do it."

40 MS FITZGERALD: Chair - - -

LARRY WALSH: And one example I will give of that.

MS FITZGERALD: Sorry, Uncle.

45 LARRY WALSH: One day, there was supposed to be this big community meeting of an issue I had raised, and the people thought they won the issue. I went to where they were drinking that night and I drank and partied. And they've come over and gone, "What are you partying for?" I said, "I've won tomorrow's fight. I've got the numbers." And they got real upset with

me. So I went to the meeting the next day, I said one or two things quite innocently, got attacked. At the end of the vote, I won by 10 votes.

5 And I told them that, because I knew if I angered those two they would lose 20 votes. So I deliberately went to the pub that night to anger them. All I'm saying, I warned - I warned every organisation before I do anything. I have always warned government. You know why? Because I dare you to stop me. I dare you. I don't care what your numbers are. I will dare you to stop me by warning you in advance. I usually find, by the way, then they think I'm up to something real sneaky and dirty. So it's easy to --

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MS FITZGERALD: With that warning, Chair, to the government, if it's an appropriate time, I did just want to leave on this note, Uncle, given that, after the break I was going to ask Isobel some more questions.

15 LARRY WALSH: Well, I want to leave on the mistakes we made.

MS FITZGERALD: I wanted to leave on this note, which was the very sage words of your chief parole officer, at the bottom, who has noted that - what was that - yes, sorry, it is page 87 of Annexure A. And down the very bottom, he notes your current employment, notes you would also like to work in the Aboriginal Affairs League "to promote the interests of his race.(He's a very, very articulate Aboriginal.)"

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LARRY WALSH: Well, actually, that bit about wanting to join Aboriginal Affairs are crap. No, because I think I was - there is a lot of stuff they wrote about me but nobody ever asked me. They just wrote it about me. I was already way in front of most people on anthropology and archaeology. But I never mentioned it. So they're making this assumption because I'm always questioning where is my Aboriginality. Where is my identity? Where is my family?

25

They're assuming - mate, if I went through the report and underlined bits and pieces that I would say are factual lies - because when you read all the reports where it says, you know, social worker interviewing me, it says a lot of times that I was stand-offish or reluctant to talk, and I was only in the room for a minute or two. So most of the conversations don't involve - they are about me, but nobody is asking me. And I don't get it. Everyone, whether it be school reports, whether it be welfare reports, all say I'm intelligent.

30

Well, then why in the hell didn't they ask me what I wanted or why I wanted to? Who knows. Maybe I put that food right next to his plug in the plonk so he would get the message, not me. Maybe it was time he left. Nobody ever asked me.

40 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: So if this is - this is where dad's going to - - -

LARRY WALSH: I'm know I'm going to stop at that.

45 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: - - - end today, I do want - - -

LARRY WALSH: But I will say - I will say - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Can I say something and you can finish?

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LARRY WALSH: Yeah, but wait. I will say, we got a few things wrong over the time and a lot of it was to do with lack of coordination. A lot of it to do with lack of respect by the organisations to the people they're supposed to be representing, because if you put me on a task force to deal with government about some needs, I expect to be talking to someone that

5 is in decision. Instead, the organisations have already had that conversation about someone in decision-making, and they're not saying what we want. They are saying what their funding needs are. Not my needs. Not all my brothers' and sisters' needs, not all my friends and their children's needs. No. The organisations' needs.

10 And that is why some organisations don't like me, because I will tell the truth. I'm not the most honest man in the world, but I have nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to hide and I don't care if people say, "Did you try to murder people?" Yes. I don't care if people say, "Is it true that you used to get searched for weapons?" Yes. "Is it true that you used to -" yes. I do not deny anything I've ever done. I do not offer explanations for why I did them or how I did

15 them. I just lived a period where that was the only way.

I changed. I learnt to control my temper without the help of government - although it was their responsibility. And I learnt to be able to get things done in the organisations, despite the fact that they don't like street people in them. The one they hire usually is one of their family

20 who is going to report to them and try to persuade you to think what the organisations think. I would use other words, but I won't.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Can I just really quickly do this and then I will let you be the last word.

25 LARRY WALSH: No, I've got no more.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I want to say if this is where dad is ending his oral testimony today, that there are a few things in this document that I just wanted to call

30 attention to for your later reading. Number 1, dad also does talk about deaths in custody. He was involved in the actual commissions of Deaths in Custody. And the lack of counselling, trauma-informed support for everyone involved is something that he talks about and something that he really wanted to bring up today. It's just to lowkey be, like, hey, has it been thought of here too, because we don't want to repeat the same mistakes that have occurred

35 again.

Also, he talks in - from section 80 onwards about his experiences within the health - within the hospitals, GPs, and police. In 83, he talks about the fact he's still - most recently it was just before the pandemic, because he hasn't really used public transport since the pandemic,

40 but just before the pandemic, dad was pulled over. So the ongoing harassment by police is still happening for dad today. And that's in here.

Another thing I really wanted to quickly draw attention to is the fact that my father's foster parents refused - there was a deliberate decision not to leave him money because - and it's in

45 here and Ms Noakes talks about it. She didn't believe Aboriginal people could manage money. But there's also a piece of land that dad was promised which is actually - turns out it was our clan lands. It was in Wandong and Mr Noakes made no will.

LARRY WALSH: Because there was no will.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He made no will and at the time - and he told this to dad but he'd also told it to Melva, to dad's mum and at the time - - -

LARRY WALSH: He also told it to some of his family.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He also told it to family, and, at the time, the family said, no, that's not true. That - after he died, the family said, no, that's not true and then dad and Melva

10 (Audio dropped)

LARRY WALSH: Why, because I do not see an issue as just an Aboriginal issue. I see every effect that happens to Aboriginals - we are the testing ground because when they did Work for the Dole, they tested it on us for five years before they introduced it to the whitefellas.

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MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, apparently we're not recording and I will - - -

LARRY WALSH: Okay. I'm out of it.

20 MS FITZGERALD: So - it has been a technical issue. Obviously, the equipment has - you back on great. Thank you.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I really want my last statement for dad, in support of dad, is actually his words. And I'm just going to quote my father because this is really where I think we should end:

25

*"This is not the sum of my story of who I am. There have things about my family, culture and community that make me unbelievably proud. I'm take after my great-grandma, Grannie Annie, and I'm choosing to speak out about injustice, racism and harsh treatment. What she testifies in the Coranderrk Inquiry was not the sum of her and my Uncle David's story. She was so more than the words captured in a process created about a culture that was not her own, as too am I. Larry Walsh."*

30

MS FITZGERALD: I should say, in the same way that during your father's evidence today you have been able to add things, I would hope that Uncle Larry, you also feel free to add some - any additional testimony this afternoon after the break.

35

LARRY WALSH: I feel that I would rather my daughter talk, because one of the problems over deaths in custody and stolen kids I kept raising but nobody took notice, was how many of our children, whether it be deaths in custody children, whether it be Stolen Gen's children, are suffering and no one is doing anything about it and the government is trying to deny it because we raised it at that advisory, and it was one of the first things the government knocked back.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Sarala, dad and I have a pretty good relationship, so if he thinks I'm saying something that's wrong he will let us know, won't you.

45

LARRY WALSH: All I'm saying is that, from my perspective, the young haven't had a chance to have a say on what they need so that we can break this cycle. And I am going back to fight things my way because I've tried the establishment way. It fails because they write

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the rules. And I am better at breaking rules. So I want to go back to that because it's the only way I am - I see that we can force the government to do what's needed. By the way, any politicians listening, I know the five factional heads, Labor.

5 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I don't.

LARRY WALSH: So I know which officers, Labor, I will be targeting.

MS FITZGERALD: Is that a good time, Chair?

10

CHAIR: Yes, thank you.

**<ADJOURNED 3:23 PM**

15 **<RESUMED 3:33 PM**

MS FITZGERALD: You have already taken the oath and you have already provided some evidence, including you have provided a witness statement, a Balert Keetyarra, and I would like to confirm that the contents of that, are correct, are truthful.

20

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yes, all accurate and truthful.

MS FITZGERALD: And at the end, I will tender that along with your father's witness statement, so all of that will go in as evidence.

25

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yes.

MS FITZGERALD: One of the things I wanted to pick up on in that, is you were very respectful of the process and the fact that, at the moment, we are in the process of gathering evidence from Elders, and at paragraph 30, you have noted that you have more to say - your testimony in that statement is support for your father's experience because you're conscious that you are sitting inside the Elders part of this process. But we are very interested to know about those intergenerational impacts, and so I would be really pleased if you would discuss - you've talked about your sister, your community, your family and you all fighting a lot of the same battles as each other because of your father's disenfranchisement, and if there was anything else you wanted to say on that issue.

30

35

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yes, so before I begin, I would like to acknowledge how privileged I am to speak here today. You know, I'm on the beautiful Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung country, which has always sent me safe, and I'm grateful to the country spirits, the Traditional Owners who look after this country spirits, because I have always been safe on this land in - globally. And my father asked me to join him through this process.

40

45 It's been going on for us for a couple of weeks, months, really, and he was feeling more and more disenfranchised, but also he felt like it wasn't really him. So there was that, but then also the other thing is my father - and the reason I feel I have to acknowledge him before I sort of get into it, is a lot of my testimony and a lot of what this talks about is really intensely personal. We're talking about trauma that was handed to me by someone I love, like, despite him not wanting to, not knowing how not to.

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Yoorrook Justice Commission

You know, we're talking about a man who has knowingly handed trauma to me and not known how to not. And, you know, there would have been a time period so 10 years ago, when my father couldn't - you know, I would have to wait until he passed and I know there are many in my generation that are actually in that position, that they have to wait for their loved ones to pass in order to talk about these uncomfortable things. But you know, my father gave me this, asked me to do this, because, you know, a lot of what's been happening with my life and health journey, you know, and mental health journey, dad and I got the most recent diagnoses of complex post-traumatic stress disorder, and - - -

LARRY WALSH: No, I'm syndrome.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Sorry, I have complex post-traumatic stress disorder. My father has post-traumatic stress syndrome. I believe they are the same thing, but we have two different psychs, so whatever.

LARRY WALSH: No, it's simple. I'm going through - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: You're not on the mic.

LARRY WALSH: I'm going through the army one.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yes, my father - look, they consider us - they handle us differently because I'm in a - they handle our treatment differently because I'm in a sexually violent trauma healing program and my father is - currently there's no sort of equivalent for Stolen Generations so they're putting him in with the army vets and treating them him the way they would an army vet. Anyway, through that process - and this is super deeply uncomfortable for me to talk about publicly. It's not something I ever have really talked about publicly.

You know, but through that process and through my family begins to understand my panic attacks and - you know, I mean, if you Google complex post-traumatic stress disorder, you will basically get what's going on behind closed doors that you don't see. And my father - there was a great level of humility, actually, in him. It didn't come from me, I didn't say, "You did this to me. You mum, anyone." He said, "I am seeing in you things that I feel and felt. And it means that it is continuing and continuing on in the generations."

So he wanted to provide this platform to attempt to stop this intergenerational path - trauma handing on happening. And the easiest way I can sort of describe it - because I worked for a long time in Museums Victoria, so I'm very intimately familiar with their Victorian collection and particularly the photographs. And I know that Museums Victoria, a state institution, has a photograph every generation from my apical ancestors down to me. Every single one of us is photographed down my line in that museum institution.

You know, the information that's been gathered on us by the State - and actually the documentation - and I worked at that institution on projects on massacres on all sorts of different things, so I was able to document six generations of discrimination to be passed down through the generations that - and, ultimately, the end result is that nothing is changing. We're still facing the same battles. And so I just wanted to acknowledge Dad because he's had to humble himself to allow me to give this testimony at all.

And I also wanted to acknowledge my mother, for she - she too has to - and she too - even though she's not Indigenous, has to humble herself to hear this testimony. You know, I suppose, for me, the effects of growing up as a child of a stolen man, there are many. But I do  
 5 know and I can see that many of my fears which people see as irrational, such as hospitals and doctors, which have prevented me from getting healthcare, you know, my father's fear of hospitals which has been reinforced time and time again by racialised treatment inside them has then come to me and then I've had racialised treatment inside them.

10 And then it's gotten to the point where now because I am so traumatised by that experience, I don't want to present unless it's too late. I nearly had a miscarriage that was - well, I did have a miscarriage that was nearly too late because I was so reluctant to present.

MS FITZGERALD: Isobel, when you talk about racialised treatment, there is a really  
 15 particular example you have spoken to me about in the past about your father presenting with quite significant symptoms. Can you just talk about - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: So recently - so in the last - actually, we  
 20 are currently going through a complaints system with Bendigo Health at the moment. The complaint has been ongoing for seven months and we are still waiting for feedback on them. But about seven months ago my father - longer actually, because the complaint would have come after the incident, dad and I - I had moved up to Bendigo, and dad was living on his own.

25 And he called me up one day and he was like, "Bella, I think I need to come and stay with you for a bit." You know, it had been - like, it was a year and a half into the pandemic at this stage, so he had been alone for a year, so I was like, yeah, okay. Then he got up to my house and really quickly it became really clear that he was sick. And within two weeks, you know,  
 30 we had been back in touch with - we share a GP - or we did - and we've been - that's because - the reason is because we don't trust doctors, and we found a GP that we trust with our life. And we follow her everywhere she goes.

And so we went - because we're frightened to present to hospitals. And we knew my father was sick. We thought we will go to our GP first. And she did all the appropriate kind of  
 35 testing and actually found out, like, through - because you can tell through bloods if someone has pancreatitis, which is an inflammation of the pancreas, and you can tell - or there's indicative features through blood work that can be done for gall stones. And she basically found out, our GP, that did had gall stones and it was likely to be leading to a pancreatitis  
 40 attack.

So she advised us, as soon as she had an attack, to present to the emergency and she forwarded ahead the file to Bendigo Health Hospital Emergency so they knew what was going on. When we got there, three days later, when dad did have an immediate pancreatitis  
 45 attack, we were asked 15 times in emergency, my father and I, if he was an alcoholic. I replied and he - well, first off, I let my father reply because I don't speak for him other than when I need to advocate for him because things are outrageous.

And he said "No, I haven't had a drink since the grand final. And I had two drinks at the grand final." And I know this to be true because he was with me. Like, he had been in my  
 50 house in the pandemic between then and then. You know. So I knew because I was the one

who drank the actual four that made up the six-pack. So, like, I know he drank two. And so dad said "No, no, no, I haven't had a drink for months." And then they came to me.

5 Then they waited until dad sort of wasn't engaged and they were like, you know, is your father an alcoholic, what's going - is he here looking for, you know, drugs of some kind. I was like, "No, no, no, he's not. We are pretty sure he has gall stones that are causing his pancreatitis like the doctor said. He hasn't had a drink for three or four months." Then they called my sister up. Because she was listed - I am listed as his next of kin and like - because I live with him and so to make immediate decisions if necessary.

10 But we always list my sister is like a back-up emergency contact and like a - you know, she needs to be informed because yeah. You know. We are equals. We are equals. And they called my sister up, who was with my mum at the time, and they asked her, "Is Larry an alcoholic? Is he drinking alcohol?" You know, the assumption - then the bloods came back and, yeah, he was having a huge pancreatitis attack. His pancreas was inflamed. His liver was inflamed and had he gall stones, and two most common causes of liver and pancreas inflammation are gall stones or alcohol. So despite the fact that he clearly had the gall stones, they didn't want - you know, whatever.

20 Then - so we knew dad needed his gall bladder out. They moved him into fast-track for surgery. At that point, they kicked me out of the hospital because I was no longer - we were no longer in emergency care. And you're not allowed - in the pandemic, you weren't allowed people in the wards with you. At this point somehow, the hospital lost my dad's filing system twice and left him there in a room for four days with no food, no water, waiting for  
25 emergency surgery.

MS FITZGERALD: Isobel, what was the reason he was not getting any food or water?

30 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: They say because they lost his files.

MS FITZGERALD: But he - - -

35 LARRY WALSH: The real reason was they were supposed to operate every day so I wasn't allowed to eat.

40 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: So he was nil by mouth because he was awaiting operation, but somehow - somehow surgical didn't talk to emergency didn't talk to ward staff so it wasn't booked and no one followed this up despite the fact that I was calling, and every time we called, they would just fob us off and ask again about alcohol. So there were some pretty clear assumptions about what's going on there - and the fact that they haven't replied to us in our complaint - through their formalised complaint system. But this stuff happens repeatedly. You know, my father - yeah. He looks a little homeless sometimes, and I don't mean that negatively. Like, he likes to dress a bit street.

45 LARRY WALSH: That's the way I am.

50 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He likes to dress a bit urban. And, you know, people - and then he gets into a health position where they make immediate suggestions about the drugs he must be on and what he wants. And then the standard of care we get is less. And I have to push - I have to - you - I now have to attend - the reason I am my

father's carer and attend to his doctors' appointments is because a doctor does not take my father seriously.

5 And it makes me so angry because why does sitting next - why does a light-skinned - why is it a 30-year-old light-skinned woman is more - is worth listening to more about someone else's body than the human themselves? You know? But that's why I go with dad. Because, quite often, dad will be trying to say something, and people will just ignore him and talk to me about his healthcare. It blows my mind.

10 MS FITZGERALD: Isobel, there is one other thing that I do want to address before the Chair needs to leave. And that's a relatively similar incident with the police where yet again - -

15 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, I did want to talk about this incident actually. Because the reason I wanted to talk about this incident is because I wanted to show that - I mean (a) we know people are still dying in custody. We are currently going through Aunty Veronica Nelson's inquiry. And I didn't know her - great respect to that family. We have certainly been thinking about you all as this process has been taking place. But I actually did want to tell a story which is a sensitive story, in our family. But - one day my sister was arrested, and she was arrested for drunk and disorderly, as they love to arrest  
20 Aboriginal women for, and they picked her up at about - at Moonee Ponds and - -

LARRY WALSH: No, they picked her up at Broadmeadows and took her to Moonee Ponds.

25 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Oh, took her to Moonee Ponds. Anyway, I was working. I was at the museum. I was doing a tour actually so I had no phone with me, nothing. And so I will tell you from my perspective, and then I will sort of - so I finished working. I had been working for about three hours. I got to my phone. There were 17 missed calls on my phone. And they had all come from mum and dad. Mum was currently in regional Victoria.

30 So I just - I knew something was wrong, and I finally got through to dad, and dad was like, "You need to come down to the Moonee Ponds police station. I am here." And all I could hear on the phone was this wailing and screaming in the background. And I could tell my father was frightened as well. So I immediately left the tour group I was with and I was  
35 actually with a group of my - in a kind of family. I left them immediately, and I went down to Moonee Ponds police station.

40 And it just so happened to be at the time I was not only studying law, I was also working for the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service as a client services officer. So I was one of the people who was frontline for when an Aboriginal person was arrested. So I was able to pretty quickly determine that things were not going as they should have gone, when I arrived.

45 It turns out that my father had been sitting - so it turns out - then I arrived and I got told by the police officers - while I could hear my sister hysterically screaming from the back of the lock-up, I was told by the police officers, "Your sister has cut herself, we have strip searched her but there was a - there was a weapon and she's managed to cut herself and there is blood over the cells." That is all I was told. And then I said, "Why haven't you - like, what has she been charged on?"

And they said, "Nothing. She's being held for drunk and disorderly." And I said, "Where is the D20?" Which is the - initial contacting form that police officer has to fill out when they arrest an Aboriginal person to contact VALS. And they could not produce a D20 because no one - none had been produced. And then they were like, "Why are you asking about the D20?" And I was like, "Because I work for the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service." "Oh, hi, are you Phil from - are you Phil from the cells?" "I'm Isobel from VALS."

And by that stage, my father had been sitting there and when I walked in, I will never forget - I will never forget this and it's something, actually, my dad writes in here, he writes in here that the police tried to criminalise, humiliate and beat him, and they were only successful at two of those, criminalising and beating him. They never humiliated him, but this day was the closest I think I've ever seen my father to being humiliated by the police.

He was sitting like such a good little boy, like - sorry - this is going to make me cry - that 8-year-old little boy, that you saw is who I saw sitting in that police station. And he had been sitting there for three hours while the police refused - and he was my sister's next of kin at the time and lived with her. I didn't live with her and I was 23. And they refused to give her to him and refused to charge her. So I rock up, and I start getting quite angry and being like, "Where's the D20, where's this, I have called VALS, they're expecting you to call - a representation, you to call."

They decided at some point they would allow me to go and see my sister because she was still screaming. So I walked back to the cells and I suppose many black families will relate to this, I immediately turned to her and went, "Shut the fuck up." She immediately shut the fuck up, which I was very grateful of. And then because I scared them, because I was a staff member at the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, and I worked on the front - on the front service - on the front end of that service, they decided they would release her to me. Not to her next of kin, to a 23-year-old who had no licence, who had no identification on her, just a smart mouth and light skin.

The reason I bring this story up - and this is, like - you know, I had to ask Hannah's permission because, like, shame job, right? Like, not - I don't actually think it's a shame job. I don't actually think it's a shame job because what happened to her is she got arrested - in her perspective, she was drunk. They strip searched her. She got distressed. She began to get distressed and hit out things and then hurt himself, and then - the reason I bring this up is because the same deaths in custody issue that dad faced with his brother actually dying in custody, here, 30 years later, he was listening to what he thought was his daughter dying in custody.

She was, same as the two aunts whose inquests are just happening now, Hannah was openly told by the police, to her family that she had open wounds on her body and had harmed herself in there and yet no medical evaluation had taken place of her, nor did it take place of her. They just released her into my custody and were like, "Go." Once I'd been like, "Where is the fucking - where is the ME? Where's the report telling, like, where she cut herself? Why is there blood on the cell walls?"

I still do this day do not have answers about that, and it also terrifies the shit out of my sister now, if she ever gets arrested, if she ever gets in any trouble with the police, they are going to strip search her, because she's been - because she's cut herself before in there.



MS FITZGERALD: Isobel, that's because she now has a weapons flag against her name.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, and it's all because we don't come from a culture that actually believes in imprisoning people. If you actually look traditionally at Taungurung traditional lore, you would die before you would be imprisoned. And I understand this is a very different cultural notion, and I'm not trying to say, our cultural notice should, you know, revert back 100 per cent, but I am trying to say locking someone up has a different effect on a culture that has a different relationship with freedom and freedom of movement.

Freedom of movement, is - is a major thing, and when Hannah lost her freedom of movement, even if it was justifiable for a small moment - which I don't think drunkenness ever is, but whatever - even if it was justifiable for a small moment, if it then gets to the point that that person's escalating, screaming, cutting themselves, trying to harm themselves against police cell walls, doing nothing is not an option. And I'm sorry, we are talking about four to five years ago.

We're not talking about historic old events that make us all feel nice. You know, in terms of dad being picked on by police, I still - like, this is my privilege. My privilege is that I'm light skinned and I don't get picked up by police unless I'm with my cousins or my family. And I have - I watched PSOs recently. We were at a train station in North Melbourne, and these PSOs stopped and they didn't see - I was down away from my dad. I was getting us a Coke from the vending machine. So they thought he was alone. And - - -

LARRY WALSH: I was catching a train up the bush.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: And they thought he was alone and so they walked up to him, a PSO, on North Melbourne station, and they said, "Where's your ticket, sir?" And dad was like, what, okay, pulls out his Myki. I walk up and I'm like, "Excuse me, why have you asked him for his ticket?" And they're like, "It's none of your business. We're checking this man's ticket." I'm like, "Where is your ticket checker? Where is your Myki inspector?"

Because I know what - I know what they look like, believe it or not. I have been fined before so I know acutely what they look like. And he was like, "What do you mean? I'm just asking him where -" and they would not let it go and it got to the point where I was having a go at them, being like, "Wre you really harassing this old man?" He then got on - luckily, his V-line came and that's where we were splitting up, was North Melbourne station.

So the PSOs left us alone for a while, but then he got on to the V-line and then the PSOs made a direct beeline down towards me and, luckily, a train pulled in and I was able to get - and I don't - the train wasn't going to where I was going but I just caught it. You know, this stuff happens 0 also after post pandemic, there's - we were moving through the city, and there was - remember that brief moment where there was like the African gang violence?

And I only say "African gang violence" because it's like, why do you need to label it African? The other gang they were fighting was a white gang, but we didn't need to italicise and rationalise them. Just youngsters. Probably dickheads but whatever. You know, they're just youngsters. Anyway, that whole - the gang thing was going on in the city, in the middle - after pandemic and they were doing those random stops at the police station - at the Flinders

Street Station where you - where they can randomly check that you have not got a weapon or whatever.

5 And they were letting hundreds and hundreds of people stream past them and actually it wasn't me with dad at this time, it was Hannah and some of Hannah's colleagues, but they were behind. And they stopped dad, searched dad. You know, this is what I don't understand. Here is a man with a crippling shoulder injury. Look at him. Is this the threat? Is this the threat you are looking for when you are looking for youth gang violence in town? I don't think so.

10 LARRY WALSH: I think I'm a bit too old to be in - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I mean, it got to the point that white - Hannah's - two of Hannah's non-Indigenous colleagues stopped and said, "Why you are doing this to this old man? What threat does he pose?" So this stuff is still occurring today.

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MS FITZGERALD: Commissioners, I wanted to make sure - Uncle - - -

LARRY WALSH: Can I say something. Isobel mentions the police station. They asked me to leave, but, no.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, they did ask him to leave for Hannah.

LARRY WALSH: I refused to because, yes.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: He thought he was listening to his daughter die. Can you imagine that?

LARRY WALSH: They wouldn't let me have her.

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MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, I wanted to make sure the Commissioners get a chance - - -

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, I'm just going from what Isobel said.

35

MS FITZGERALD: Yes.

LARRY WALSH: The - what a lot of people don't understand is that they tried to get me out of the police station. I refused to leave because I'm not going to let my kid die. That was a fear. Isobel hadn't arrived. I may have - I was thinking about taking the law into my own hands.

40

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: But I did, and we got our girl back and she's perfectly fine.

45

MS FITZGERALD: Commissioners, were there any questions that you wanted to ask of either Uncle or Isobel from their evidence today?

COMMISSIONER HUNT: No, I don't have anything other than to say thank you for sharing, and it's been difficult and hard, and particularly you, Uncle Larry, of just coming forward.

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And I don't want to use the word brave. I think the word courageous is more the word, and I

know you are a very private man so I (1) want to thank you on behalf of the Commissioners but also myself personally.

LARRY WALSH: Now, don't forget we've still got to discuss Ned Kelly.

5

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yes, there is one other thing I wanted to add, which is that there was no scope thus far, because I was sitting here to support my father to talk about this, but I also wanted to speak about racialised violence that I've experienced as an Aboriginal woman inside my own community. Because I think this is actually an area that we need to discuss more for Aboriginal women.

10

MS FITZGERALD: Isobel, the Chair is going to leave and -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: That's AOK. I just want to say this. Auntie can leave, but I just need to say there have been instances for me that have actually been documented, and currently an Aboriginal Green Senator totes around this Elder as though they are actually an Elder, but there is an Elder out there who is actually - because I am a Taungurung woman who was involved with my nation group, I have actually had my name and address written on their Facebook telling their young - their young men in their family to come and visit me.

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I have had - because I stand up, often, in the positions that I do stand up with, and I am my father's daughter, I have had many, many instances where people are - put me down or are rude. Thank you, Aunt. But I did - and I am not going to go into it any further, but I really hope that throughout this process there is scope to discuss the violence that is also happening internally within our community because if it doesn't stop and the women - women aren't starting - you know, if you are not going to stand with us women, then why the fuck should us women continue standing with you men?

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LARRY WALSH: First of all, thank you, Auntie Eleanor.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Thank you, Auntie Eleanor. We really appreciate that. And travel safe.

35

CHAIR: My apologies.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: You've got to do what you have got to do.

CHAIR: Thank you.

40

LARRY WALSH: On what Isobel is saying is that there is this one family in particular who were using Facebook to bully people they didn't know or like. When they picked on my children and my tribe, I went for them.

45

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: And the other thing I will say on the record, there is a whole word currently used within the Victorian Aboriginal community for my tribe and it is so disgusting that it is used - Tuna-rong. Tuna-ronga. The idea that I, and other Aboriginal person, would boil me down to one part, one simple fact, which is exactly where my land lies, and then make assumptions about all my politics, whom I am, whether I

deserve to have land claims or not, whether I deserve to have a forum or not, whether Taungurung people are welcome here or not, whether we are greedy or grab-hungry.

5 Whether I'm involved in the corporation or not, it doesn't matter, and we need to get to a point within Aboriginal Australia, again, when we are standing with one another because that is what we are strong. That is when we are strong, and it's currently you will note I think - I can notice right now there has been division within our community and you can see it because our community is standing more alone than they have in a very long time.

10 LARRY WALSH: And an example of that was I Facebooked back the person.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Which is sad, because I used to call them Uncle.

15 LARRY WALSH: -- a failed leader who is bitter because of it and that's the truth, a failed leader who is bitter because of it, abusing people because they didn't agree with his views. So, yeah, I had a go at him and I also told some of his family who are passing on these messages that they were enabling violence, so some of them withdrew from it. And then the rest of them threatened they were going to get me.

20 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I know. But that's the thing that shits me so much, is when I - when people were violent to me as a young woman and a young Aboriginal woman by other Aboriginal people in my 20s and I raised it with my leadership and eldership in community, what happened? But they went after my eldership. Disgusting. Disgusting.

25 MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, I want to give - I know the Commissioners probably have questions.

LARRY WALSH: No, I've got to say - yeah, but wait.

30 COMMISSIONER BELL: Counsel, I'm just conscious that the Chair has left.

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, but I was just going to say this, so - so they changed their attention to me. I just gave them a few stories that they know they heard about me.

35 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Thanks, Daddy.

40 LARRY WALSH: To say don't threaten me or my children ever again. But the fact that as a parent - and here is the joke, none of the other parents stood up for their kids. You know why? They were bloody scared. And I'm sick and tired of - I'm too old to keep standing up against them. I'm sick and tired of people hiding instead of joining forces and say, "Piss off, you failed. Stop picking on everyone." I do not see some of their supporters as a problem. I just see - I just see this really big thing in Aboriginal world.

45 COMMISSIONER BELL: So, Counsel - - -

MS FITZGERALD: Uncle, Uncle - - -

50 LARRY WALSH: Sound tough.

COMMISSIONER BELL: Counsel, I think we need to acknowledge that the Chair has left. That this is not the last occasion that we can speak with this family, and because I haven't had the opportunity to thank you, Isobel, for giving evidence, I want to thank you. You spoke with enormous power.

5

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BELL: And I hope it's not the last time we hear from you. You've got an enormous amount to share with us in addition to what you already have in support of your father.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BELL: And, again, Uncle Larry, thank you. Courageous is the world I would use.

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ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: The last thing we wanted to do was say thank you to everyone who helped us do this. There were so many lawyers, solicitors, who helped us with our words. There was so many people who checked in via text. Sue-Anne, I really appreciated that. I know Brendan did as well. So I really appreciate everyone who was involved in the Commission and the efforts that they put in helping us put this together.

20

It was a really hard process for us and it wouldn't have happened without that support. And, in particular, I suppose, Sarala, for me, you were the face so I really - yeah, it meant a lot to us. Thank you.

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COMMISSIONER BELL: Thank you. I think we need to - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Yeah, let's end there. That's it, Dad.

30

MS FITZGERALD: We can still - I should say, though, Uncle, every single thing that you have said in your witness statement is evidence in this Royal Commission. So you have said it beautifully in your Balert Keetyarra.

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LARRY WALSH: Yeah, well, I just want it recorded - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Excellent work, Dad.

LARRY WALSH: I just want it recorded my mother's nickname was Kate because of that story that goes in my family. Kate - - -

40

COMMISSIONER BELL: Now, you have got some tendering too?

MS FITZGERALD: I do. I need to tender to the Deputy Chair the exhibits. Now, that we mentioned those exhibits, I should tender them so that evidence is in. I would like to tender the Balert Keetyarra of Uncle Larry Walsh, dated 19 May in its redacted form. It will be published as Exhibit 7 and it has with it Exhibit 7.1, which is a very large annexure which we will, Commissioners, with your permission review for Uncle Larry's personal information that might be harmful if it were out. There's a really large amount of information.

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**<EXHIBIT 7 BALERT KEETYARRA OF UNCLE LARRY WALSH, DATED 19 MAY 2022 [REDACTED FORM]**

**<EXHIBIT 7.1 ANNEXURE TO BALERT KEETYARRA OF UNCLE LARRY WALSH**

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: That would be wonderful.

MS FITZGERALD: We will check birthdays, addresses and those things. So that, with your permission.

COMMISSIONER BELL: Counsel, I've had the opportunity to read that body of work, which is quite extensive, over 200 pages. It almost all concerns personal information in relation to Uncle Larry, and I wonder whether it might not be better to mark that confidential at this stage, during the review process?

MS FITZGERALD: If the Commissioners are amenable, I would be indebted at this stage and then we can carefully review.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: I think we would prefer that Dad, yeah?

LARRY WALSH: Yeah, I would prefer when you investigate the Kelly story - - -

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: If anything comes of the Kelly story, Dad wants in. All right, everyone.

LARRY WALSH: No, because is it a myth or is it the truth?

COMMISSIONER HUNTER: Uncle Larry, I can speak to you. Once we finish these proceedings, we can have a quick chat about that and we can - then I can talk to the other Commissioners as well.

LARRY WALSH: Yeah.

MS FITZGERALD: Thank you, Deputy Commissioner. I would also like to tender Exhibits 7.2, 3 and 4, which are each photograph we have shown today. And then, finally, as Exhibit 8 the Balert Keetyarra of Isobel Paipadjerook Morphy-Walsh dated 20 May 2022. This very day. Thank you.

**<EXHIBITS 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 PHOTOGRAPHS SHOWN TODAY**

**<EXHIBIT 8 BALERT KEETYARRA OF ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH, DATED 20 MAY 2022**

COMMISSIONER HUNTER: Thank you. Thank you, Counsel. And thank you again, and those gifts are from the Commission for coming, and also for your support people I have some clap sticks as well for you.

ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: That would be really lovely. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER HUNTER: So thank you very much.

5 LARRY WALSH: Thank you for inviting us, because I feel by allowing myself and my family together to talk, we are hoping that it opens the door for other family groups to talk, because I think the individual thing is good but sometimes we forget the effects that happened to me also happened to my children.

10 ISOBEL PAIPADJEROOK MORPHY-WALSH: Kudos, because he didn't want to get up without it. So thank you.

LARRY WALSH: Thank you very much for that.

**<ADJOURNED 4:10 PM**