

TI TREE — Wednesday 12 April 1989

PUBLIC MEETING

PRESENT: -

Committee:

Mr S. Hatton (Chairman)

Mr B. Ede (Deputy Chairman)

Mr C. Firmin

Mr W. Lanhupuy

Mr D. Leo

Mr R. Setter

Officers assisting the committee:

Mr R. Gray (Executive Officer)

Mr G. Nicholson (Legal Adviser)

Appearing before the committee:

Mr Eric PANANKA

Mr Johnny JUNGARAI

Ms Alice GOREY

Mr Jack COOK

Ms Peggy NANGALA

Mr Mick ARUNDEL

NOTE: This is a verbatim transcript that has been tape-checked. However, due to poor recording or many people speaking at the same time, some of the recordings were inaudible and unable to be transcribed.

Mr HATTON: Thank you for having us here to talk to you. We want to talk today about a job that we are doing in the Northern Territory parliament. You have politicians and ministers coming down at different times. Often politicians are fighting about this and that. Sometimes there are jobs that we do which we are not fighting about. This is one of them. If you look in the back of the book that we gave you, you will see pictures of the people who comprise this committee. I am the chairman of the committee and Brian Ede is the deputy chairman. There are 6 people on the committee, 3 from the CLP, the government side, and 3 from the ALP, the opposition side. Thus, there are equal numbers and we are working together on this one. We are not arguing about it. We are trying to do this job for everybody in the Northern Territory.

Our committee's job is to work with the people and to help the people to write a very important law. As Brian says, Aboriginal people sometimes get confused with the white man's law because it keeps changing all the time. The Aboriginal law is always the same and it keeps going forever. People cannot understand why the white man's law keeps changing backwards and forwards all the time. Sometimes, in the white man's law, there is one law that does not change. This is a law from the people, not from the government. This law is the boss over the government and that is the sort of law we are going to start writing for the Northern Territory. Everywhere else in Australia - Queensland, New South Wales, Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and the federal government - has a constitution. The Northern

Territory does not have one yet. We do not have a law from the people that tells the government what it can do it and what it cannot do. This is a special, strong law that the government cannot muck around with. This is a law that only the people can change. We must have this law to build for the future. It doesn't change and you build up from that. You protect your rights in that law so that no one can muck around with your rights. Maybe you put in that law things about sacred sites or about Aboriginal law, about your language, culture, land and other things. You could put in your right to vote for the government, your right to elect Brian Ede into the government and make him come and talk to you and, if he doesn't do a good job, your right to get rid of him and put someone else in there. How are you feeling?

Mr EDE: No problems.

Mr HATTON: That is a really strong, important law. You put those things into what we call a constitution. Because this law is going to last for a long long time, everybody in the Northern Territory - Aboriginal, white man, Asian - has to talk together and make this a good law, something that we can all say: 'That's good. That's where we all want to see this Northern Territory going in the future'. This law will give us the way to go.

We come to you today to say that we want you to sit down and start thinking about this and about the sort of things you want to put in there. I do not want you to tell me today. It's too big. You need time to think about it and talk about it. Maybe you want some more information about something. You can tell us to come back and explain things to you after you have thought it through. You can then tell us what you think should go into this constitution. We are visiting communities all over the Territory. We have been to Kintore, Docker, Finke and we are going to Arnhem Land and the VRD. We are going to Darwin, Alice Springs, Tennant and all over. We are talking to all of the people.

We are saying the same thing to all the people: 'Start thinking about this law. We must start talking together about this and make a good law and make the Northern Territory a good place for our children and our grandchildren'. If we make a strong law, we will grow together in a place that we can be proud of. We put in this law the things that are important to us and that we do not want the government to be able to muck about with. We are starting this job now. I am not asking you whether you think that the Northern Territory should be a state. Some people think that is a good idea and some people think that it is a bad idea now. I am not asking you that question.

What sort of state you want? You haven't got this law; you don't know what you want. You have got to have this constitution law first, then you worry about whether you want to become a state. This is the first thing that we have to do and it is going to take a long time, isn't it? We have to talk and talk to all sorts of different people, get all sorts of different ideas and bring them together bit by bit. The way that we are going to do that is that Brian Ede and myself and the other members of this committee are going to put down on paper what we think the people are telling us. Maybe next year, after people have had a chance to think about it and tell us what they are thinking, we will put down what we believe the people are saying. We then want other people to look at it to make sure that we have got it right. We will get a big committee of people from all over the Territory - the station people, the miners, people from the towns, people from the cities, women, men - who will sit down and look at this. They might say: 'Yes, that's good. Change this. Fix that up'. When they have done that and think they have got it right, the law will be put to the people to vote yes or no. If you think that it is a good law, you say yes. If the people think its a bad law or not right yet, they say no and we go back and start again. We keep working until we get a law that the people of the Northern Territory want. That becomes the people's law, not the government's law. Only the people can change that, not the government. It is the boss over the government.

That is the way we are going to go about doing this and it will take a long time. It must be done properly because this is the way we will provide for our future, our children's future and their children's future and make it a good one. It is a job that we must do. If we don't do this job, if we say that it is too hard and walk away from it, then our children are not going to thank us. They will say that we did not do what we should have done for them. If we do this job properly, our grandchildren will look to us and say that we made a good place for them and that we were good people. If we do not do it, they will say that we failed them. We must work for our children and our grandchildren and build that future by building this strong constitution law together.

I don't want to talk too much more. There are many things to think about. Eric, do you want to talk to the people about some of what I have said? Or Brian, do you want to go first? If you have any questions about what we are saying, please ask.

Mr EDE: Everybody knows that most of the time when I come around talking, it is about water or housing or about whether your schools are all right or whether your clinic is all right. Those are the sort of things that most of the time the

politicians are working on, trying to find out what the people want, what they need, trying to see if we can write letters, see if we can get the government to give a bit of money or fix it up a bit. Today, we are not talking about that.

People bring up all the time this problem of whitefellow law. They say: 'Our Aboriginal law going straight way all the way, never change, everything thousands of years, but we keep hearing about this white law going to change this way and they are going to change them that way. People get frightened and worry about how they are going to be, what is going to happen. What are they going to do? Are they going to change the law about our sacred sites and are we going to end up having a fight again, are we going to have to go back down to Canberra and have another argument back there or are we going to go to Darwin and try and make argument about that to try to fix it up? People don't want to have argument. They don't want to have fight. They want to be able to sit down good in their own country, look after sacred site, look after the law'.

To do that, we have got to have some of that whitefellow law which brings in some of that Aboriginal law, a law that doesn't change. It has to be something that is strong and will be there forever and ever. Other laws might be about having a driver's licence or about how fast you can go on the road or something like that. Okay, those ones might be changing all the time. But, there are some really important laws that should not be changing all the time. You have got a law to look after sacred sites from Aboriginal side. We need to have whitefellow law that goes along side it like that. If they go 2 together like that, that means the Northern Territory can go good because both sides are looking after the land, looking after the people. That is what we are trying to do in this constitution.

150 years ago, when Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and everywhere else were building up their constitutions, they just had mob of lawyers, clever fellows, sitting in that main city up in their offices. They wrote down the constitution. They didn't go out and talk to Aboriginal people and say: 'How are going to look after your country? How is everybody going to work together on this one?' Here in the Northern Territory we want to do it a different way. We want to do it the proper way and start from the people first. That is why I am out here on this one. That is why he is out here too instead of being back in his place up in Darwin. We want to talk to all the people in the Northern Territory so that we can find a way that we can all come together.

For too many years, we have had this thing where your law is going strong one way and another one coming up bump him and people fighting and arguing. We have got to grow up. We are not like a mob of little kids anymore down in the school yard, running around pulling hair, pushing each other, carrying on like that. We have got to be men and women, strong and grown up. That means we have got to have Aboriginal people, non-Aboriginal people, Chinese people or whatever, all together - one Territory, one people, working together. To do that, we have got to have an agreed law that we are not going to change all the time - things that we agree about how land rights and people's land cannot be taken away, how sacred sites have got to be looked after, things about how culture, language and people's rights cannot be taken away from them and things about how they give power within that new place the Northern Territory that we are going give to our children, our grandchildren and our great grandchildren so that they can all work together and everybody is in there strong together.

That is what we are out here for. I am not going to come here and say that you have got to have this, this and this in that constitution because I am just one person. All you people have got to decide this one. You have to say: 'Well, we think that these are the important things. These are the really important things about law or whatever that have got to be inside that constitution'. We are just starting now. We are just opening up this idea. We have been looking at what is happening elsewhere around the rest of Australia and overseas, looking at the way they did it. We decided that this is the best way to open this up: to come out and talk to people. When we go back, we will travel all around Northern Territory. We will be sending out tapes in language so that people can hear more ideas and keep talking about it. Then, we might have a first try at putting it all together. We might find that everybody says that it is not right or half the people say that it all right and half the people say no. Okay, we start again. This might take us 5 years or 10 years. It does not matter because we want to get it right. We want to get something on which everybody can agree.

The main thing about this one today is to remind people that, when these things come, they should look at it as something important. If you don't like it, say you don't like it when it comes up. Don't think: 'Oh well, that part is all right, but I don't like this part. But, it's nearly all right. That person said that I should say it is all right so I'll say it is all right'. Look at it, work it out for yourself and, if you don't like it, say no. Like that time last year when the referendum came up - yes, yes, yes or no, no, no. If you are not sure or you don't like it, say no. But, be part of working for it. Don't say that it is something for that Kardiya mob to look after or that it is something for that clever mob in Darwin to look after. That is not right. It is something for every person in the Northern Territory to work through. Be part of it, talk about it. Everybody discuss it and put ideas forward.

That is all I got to say for now. There might be some people who have some questions or something that they want to talk about.

Mr PANANKA: Can I say, I just want to ask. Older people, if somebody was thinking, worrying what he can pass on his worry, can they ask them in language?

Mr HATTON: Yes, please.

Mr PANANKA: Alakenhew; tryerdrty law anantherr nyentel kwet anem. Arrwekel no law change-errek. Tyenh law kwenh one place anerlanem. Anyent akwet tyerrty rrpwerlekenhew. Kel atywelkerekenh law arrpenh anem Change-elerlapem, keep her going, from start. Kenh Aboriginal law not been change, till today.

It's like this. We've got one law all the time. It wasn't changed before. My law is still in one place. Always one belonging to black people. Well the white people's law is different. Changing all the way along, keep her going, from the start. Aboriginal law hasn't been changed, right up to today.

Tywelkerel kwel change-elerlapem ngwenh yanh (inaudible) nthakenh anem angetyemer law apel government law that one. They changemelerl law. Kenh anyentelheletyek twekerleletyekew.

The white people always change the law. How are they going to bring the government law to us(?). They change the law. We've got to join them together and make them one.

ANOTHER SPEAKER: Arrwengkelth apel antem kelantem enter.(?)

The law is men's business.(?)

Mr PANANKA: Yes. Cause the law anem tyeperrel anem. Law anem tyeperr empern. If law kweny anantherr apanterrem, yanheng trouble-errem. Kenh law akenh anem rrengkerr anterrkwemarl. And everybody law-eleng eteth.

Yes. Because the law is important. The law is the most important thing of all. If there is no law we are lost, and we get into trouble. You've got to hold on to the law. And everybody is alive with the law.

Them nheng tywelker law-art alhek, sometime atywelker law anem, argument atwerrenty angerr something. Atwerrenty apek start-emelemel. Kenh anwekantherr nhenh, nhenheng some time atwerrem. Law anwekantherrenh akwel mwerrelkwer anem atywelkerengentyel.

Going by the white man's law, sometimes with white man's law we have arguments and big fights. It might start a fight. This way we have fights. Our law is better than the white man's.

Kenh atywelkerekenh anem - salp an salp lyet. Kenh war arrayelemel angkerrem law nhenh anwekantherrenh artek. Anyent apek enetyek. Nthakenh anem government law nhenh tywelkerekenh law tyerty rrpwerlekenh law enetyenh. Lakenh kwenh.

Well white people's law is separate now. We can discuss straightening their law and making it like ours. Might get one law. How are they going to put the government law - the white men's law - and black people's law together? That's how it is.

Mr JUNGARAI: Speaking in an Aboriginal language.

Mr PANANKA: It is same problem I think as with the language. Like we got 2 law, one your law, one our law. Our law not going to change in many, many years. Nothing change that is why they talk language. Government law changing all the time. Government changing, law changing and our laws say which laws right like Aboriginal law and government law. Our law sometimes work this way, but the government laws is not right. Our law saying this way. If your law changing might be (indecipherable) changing. (Indecipherable) that law is wrong, should be right. We live in the Territory and here we should have good law, black and white in the one land and one government. That is our law saying and we don't have the government or any one parliament or something. We only can live together, black and white we live in Australia and in the Territory. We should come with one government. That is our law saying and our law working. If government put another law, we look our law not right. There comes trouble that way. We do not like the government changing law all the

time. Maybe even come another government put government out and bad government maybe trying to start some big argument, maybe war, and we don't like that one. We like to come together with one government.

Mr EDE: The big thing about this constitution is that it is on top of the government. It is boss of the government. Other laws, like laws about drinking or laws about driving or land rights, all those ones that they put on before, those laws the government can change any time they like. They might have a fight about them if they try and change them. People might argue, but if they push really hard, the government can change them. But what about the constitution? The government can't change it. They have got to go back to ask the people and the people have got to say whether it is all right to change it or not. That is why we are trying to put this one up. The constitution is like having a dog on a chain. That dog can move inside the length of that chain, but he can't go outside. It is the same as putting a chain on the government. You say: 'You can do these things in there that we say are all right, but you can't go outside there'. The constitution is like that chain and the government can't go past it.

Mr PANANKA: Anyone apek backants-arl skujen apekew? Just ask for somebody the way(?) - tellem with the language. Jack-ey? Arrangkerr arthey?

Anyone want to ask any questions about this? Just asking for somebody to tell them in language. Jack? How about you lot?

Angkety apek kel angketyek anyway apwerapwer kweny nhewarn apetyalp nhang nhenh mpwelhepelhem. Kel apetyalpay! Nhang nhenh arem rrangkerr? Angketyeh kel apetyalpay angkety apek kel angketyek law-ek apek lakenh, ntwā apek country law anwernekantherrenh(?) awway law (inaudible) mpwelhepelherleng. Merel aperlengkwekenh angkemalhem an menhengkwekenh, Law kwer apek (inaudible).

Don't be ashamed to come back here and talk in language; this thing (tape recorder?) is waiting for you. Well, come back! Can you mob see this thing? Come back and talk in language about the law of your country and tell them about our law(?). Talk about the law for your grandfathers and grandmothers country.

(A lot of confused and indecipherable talk).

Way! Tyerrty nhartek nhenhel arrenhantherr, tyerrty arrengekerr and angkem akngeyekenh law-ek angkepangkemel erlpangkem. Arrengekenhek and aperlekenhek, menhekenhekarl. Law kwenh angkerretyek nhenh thayt eletyek.

Hey! These people came to talk to you about your law and your fathers' law. Your grandfathers' and grandmothers's law. You've got to talk about the law and tell these people.

Arraty kwenh anwern law lakenhek wantemel alakenh angketyek engkerrek. Look! Kwey? Anakerr anaken anem anantherr ant anpernetyakenhem ay! Kwerakert anem ay! Kwey? Anentyek arrangkerr. Anpernenty akenh.

That's right, we've got to talk about our law, everybody, like that. Look! We're all related to one another according to the law. We don't mix with the wrong skins.

Anmatyerr apek angkem Alice-l kel antem English elewem. Someone-l English apek elerl Anmatyerrel angkemarl.

You can talk Anmatyerr and Alice can tell them in English. Someone can speak English while you mob are talking Anmatyerr. (Stretch of inaudible talk).

Well artwang mapelertew angketyek (inaudible) law-akert again antem. Akwerarlk lyertelyem law-elarleng. Kwey? Engkerrek angketyek our law nthenh anemel anyenetyenh law alakenh wantemel. Hey? Law mwerr anetyek. Atywelkerek rrpwerlek.

All the men have to talk about the law for men's business(?). Everybody's got to keep our law strong(?). The law's got to be good for whites and blacks.

Mr HATTON: This constitution can be the white man's way to make Aboriginal law stronger. We can write in our constitution that we must protect the Aboriginal law. Thus, in the white man's way, you can strengthen Aboriginal law. When you have got that, you say that is the way you want this Northern Territory to be. You write it into those laws and

then you start asking whether you want to become a state. You have to do this job first.

Ms GOREY: Finish it off by talking to the people.

Mr HATTON: Yeah, that is right.

Mr PANANKA: Ngkernemel kwel law kwek arratyeletyek. (inaudible) anem law, well he (inaudible). That's when the law mpwarem antem, you know. Governemnt and law, tyerrtyel apek law mpwarem, and we'd be right then. Then everything mixemup? and we not right; we just still law (inaudible). Lakenh.

They are setting up something to improve the law. government and law, Aborigines might make the law, and we'd be right then.Like that.

Mr HATTON: That is why we have to get it right. It means we have to sit down, think about it and talk about it. We have got other stuff here and, as Brian said, we will send some stuff out on tapes in language for people to listen to and get ideas to talk about. When you work out what you want to say and what you want, we will come back and you can tell us. Maybe that will be some time late this year or next year when people have had a good chance to have a think about it. Then, they will hear what other people are saying, apart from us. You are saying this and maybe that mob up in Groote Eylandt are saying something different. You listen to what they are saying and they listen to what you saying. You talk together and maybe work out something that will work for both and think it through. The people from Darwin, Alice Springs, Pitjantjatjara people and people from all over will have their ideas.

Mr PANANKA: Make that one to put in your law. I think this (Indecipherable).

Mr EDE: Yes, they did not have any problems.

Mr PANANKA: Yes, that is why we (Indecipherable).

Mr EDE: That one, that is the federal government and a lot of people are saying the same thing. They are not happy with that boundary. It is one of those boundary things. If they put that one in, if it goes ahead, we have got to talk about those boundaries - whether you have one for Amattjura, one for Walpiri, one for Alyawarra ...

Mr PANANKA: (Indecipherable). That is their country. We don't worry. (Indecipherable).

Mr EDE: That one that we have got to work out outside, not inside this constitution. We have got to work that outside because, at the moment, it is all that town mob who decide where that money is going to go for bush mob.

Mr PANANKA: This one we were talking the other one. I think this is the law why people are saying that. Why we are talking now.

Mr EDE: This is that ATSIC one?

Mr PANANKA: No, this one we are talking.

Mr EDE: This one, the constitution. The constitution will be the strongest law for the Northern Territory.

Mr JUNGARAI: That is the one we thinking and talking on now.

Mr EDE: If you to propose ideas about councils and things like that inside this constitution, you can talk about them inside that constitution. If you think that what should be in there is a tribal council covering every part of Northern Territory, they will talk about that and, if we get everybody agreeing to that, that is the way we could put that one in. All those things could be done in there, but we want to see which ones you think are really the most important things that have to go into this one.

Mr HATTON: You can write just about any laws. The only thing you cannot do is go against the federal constitution. But, apart from that, we write our own laws as a people about all those things. Anything. It is important. If it is really important and you want it to be there forever, then you put it in your constitution. You say that the government can't touch that.

Mr PANANKA: And people somehow, all these people they can, once we talk, talk own language. You say one thing that

law.

Mr EDE: They are the things that we have got to talk about as we go along. Now we are just starting. We will keep on talking about it and put ideas around. It might take us years, but that is all right.

Mr HATTON: But, you have got to do it properly. This is not one that you can muck around with and, if you get it wrong, you go back tomorrow and fix it up. You cannot do it with this one. When you do it, it is there.

Mr PANANKA: Hey! Alakenh apek angkerreperrem, eveyr tyerryt yenh nheng mpwarem strong angketyek arrernem akwetant. Not a government-el. Not a government-ek wait-erreyek, government law mparetyek. Tyerryt amerarteyel law mpwaray, ntwā amer akwet anyenetyek akewel. Government no ra akangkwerrem. Alakenhem nheng angkerreperrem. Kwey?

Hey! If all the Aboriginal people talk about this they can have a part in setting up strong laws for good. Not the government to do it. Not to wait for the government, government to make the laws. The Aboriginal owners of the country, you've got to manage the country always. The government doesn't listen. That's how we're talking. OK?

Not akwer akwek artek atnam atywelkerel leademelerl apetyert. Kel law ntwekenh ngkwengenh anyenterremel angketyek nerlanerleng. (another person: they got to arrantherr listen, (remainder inaudible))

You don't want to let the white people lead you like little kids. You've got to come together and talk about your law. (They've got to listen to us...)

They dont's listen tyerryt rrpwerlek kangkwerr. Not apalekalekerlanetyek, and law-ekartey anwern nhakelem artwant. You got amer ngkwengenh angkernerl, law ngkwengenh....(part inaudible due to someone saying 'they waiting for get answer from Aboriginal people.') Don't atywelkerel ngenh akemelheletyek nhenh anem, nthakenhelemel nhenh mapel elem. Angkerr... (obscured) -Someone sle says 'You mob got to self wake up-errrlent-. She start talking with the language, them laws,...

They don't listen to Aboriginal people. They don't listen, and we men are the owners of the law. Your've got to organise your country, ...(They waiting to get answer from Aboriginal people.) We don't want the white people getting us up. That's what you've got to tell them. (You mob have got to wak yourselves up).

Ms GOREY: They are waiting to get an answer from Aboriginal people.

Mr PANANKA: She start to talk in the language but same law tell him. We are not little boy. We are not little girl. We got law. We got our country. (Indecipherable). You got own law. (Indecipherable) and let everybody know. (Indecipherable).

(Various women; first part mostly inaudible) ...they canpt changemelerl. Yanheperl arrernelherl holdem-elem.

They can't change our laws.(?)

Nhenhartek nhenh apetyek ngkert nheng angkety apwerel ...(Obscured by others).

(seems to be along the lines of 'The whitefellows came to talk to us, to tell us.)

Mr PANANKA: Law atywelker ernakerlanetyek atywelkerel can't nhenh awerl; you got to law tyerryt rrpwerl ngkwengenh angkerrrl idea ngkwengenhel, merekartwey ngkwengenh country antwerrkweperrkwen, way anpernetyakeny, different different (inaudible) anpernetyakenh, skin-akert, skin name-akert. And country law you gotta, you gotta think about and talk about.

White people can't understand you law. You Aboriginal people have got to talk about your ideas about your law. The traditional owners are still looking after your country. The white people don't have the sorts of relationships we have, with our different system of relationships; we've got skins; we've got skin names. You've got to think about and talk about your law for your country.

WOMAN: Alakenh anetyenh.

That's the way it's going to be.

Think about it and talk about it. I am telling it in language this way. You have got skin name, you got father's country, think about it and talk.

Mr EDE: Talk about it, get ideas. Maybe we go this way. Maybe we go that way. Everybody talk about it. Listen when those tapes come up. Hear what different people have got to say. Listen to what that Top End mob have got to say. Listen to what the town mob have got to say. Everybody got to listen to what you got to say and everybody got to listen to everybody else. Then, we find a way to come closer and closer together until we find one way that we go in that constitution.

Mr PANANKA: Sometime tyerrty angkem arrangkerr - I talk with the language - sometime tyerrty angkem - you got your land, angkety angkem whole lot fo tyengenh amer atyengenh erntang atyenenh ap nhenh. You got amer ngkwengenh arratyel law ngkwekgenh strong-el anyenetyek amer atyengenh angerr anyenetyek. lakenh someone-l dragem-elepeletyenh akwer akwekart. Alakenhelepelem awetyek nhenhepenhem apetyek angkerretyek. Mer kwenh, arrwekel kwenh tyerrtyekenh law-el anemel everything arnang arretyakenh kwaty apek soakage angernetyakenh aweth angerr, apwerel anetyamel anakngerr arrenrterrem. kel lyet akenh anybody ken war alherl across, artak arrernemel, mer angerrety artem. Anwenh atywenp atyerreperrem. Kwey? Rwang arrtyelepelem.

Sometimes Aborigines talk - I'm talking language -sometimes Aborigines talk - you've got your land, talking language, all my country, all my hills. You've got to keep the law strong for your country, keep it strong for my country. Otherwise people will push you around like little kids. If you do that people will listen to you when they come to talk. Before with the Aboriginal law anybody couldn't just come and chop down the trees and dig soadages,(can't understand next part). But nowadays anybody can go across the land, and put up a windbreak or make a big camp. Shooting prenties. Eh? Making fires.

Lakenhem law ngkweng tyerrtyekenh antem. You can - elerl(?) tyerrty artwang angkerrerrleng mer law-ekartey anpernetyenh law - anyenem law anpernentyakert skin-akertel akenh engkerrek, merek enetyek. Or lakenh alakenh anwern wantemerrem.

That's the way your Aboriginal law is. You can tell the men who are talking about the country, the owners of the law, who are in the right relationships, to make the law for the country.(?) That's the way we want it.

Someone-l angern akwer akwekart kwel push-emeletyek engkernewern push-emeletyang kel anem, country ngkwengenh again alkwertart elemel alkwempel lyewearn alhem; clear-emelelhetyart. Atalkwarlek anenty ewarlekart. Kwey? That's all right? And you got angkerl strong, government-el awetyeh, government-el aretyeh.

You're not like kids, waiting for someone to tell you what to do; you've got to look after your own country, like when you go to the shade to make a shield; do it properly.(?) (Can't translate next bit.) Eh? Is that right? You've got to talk strong and the government will hear you and take notice of you.

Jack COOK: Yes, angkerretyeh. Lakenh akwetam apek rrwemerrwemel angketyek. Right arrpenhanthem angkemetyenheng, lakenh, Pwerenheng? (Another: Arraty kwenh.)

Yes, we've got to talk together. If some are too shy to talk for themselves, other people can talk for them. (That's right.)

Mr PANANKA: People have got law and they got their ceremonies, their country's laws. He knows his law and he knows his boundaries out past his country's corner. People know already and government cannot see such one. Government think that all Aboriginal people have got one law. All got different laws, separate ones, like all blackfellows in the Northern Territory. And all the different tribes have language. We are not one; we are separate. All different tribes. Does not matter if one island, one land. Alyawarre, Warumungu, Warlpiri side, Pintupi side, Luritja side, Pitjantjatjarra, Arrernte, Eastern Arrernte, Northern Arrernte like we. And all got different country. And all got own country each, not one. Not like Canberra and whitefellow law, got all the area. Same with Queensland, Western Australia or Northern Territory, NSW, Canberra. That is one in 4 and then 1, 2, 3, 4 (Indecipherable) might be another couple. Aboriginal got none like that one.

Aboriginal got all separate ones. By his own law (Indecipherable). Even put that way it will be enough trouble.

Jack COOK: Nhenhewel nhanhay, warlpel angkerrepperrem arrwekel. Like, nheng arner - tnetbert apetyalhepelhem second mob angkerretyenheng. Lakenh alpem angkety nhenhantem alpemel alpemel elem.

This lot are talking for all the white people first. They are going to come back and visit us again to talk some more. They want to keep on helping.

Mr PANAKA: Still again angkenhengkenh (inaudible).

They are still going to talk.(?)

ANOTHER PERSON: ...kel alpemel tyerrty pel elepelerl, ...(another) Yanhem angkem awerrarr.

...Listen to him, he's talking.

Mr COOK: A few words. I come from Mt Allan. I just come here for this meeting. Our laws go for many years, never change. It is still standing up today but the government they changing every year. They changing for another government come in, a new government. And he take it on and change it for another law, newer laws. Don't know what can happen. Don't know what can happen under new government that get in. That is why we all ought to think about it. Might be something happening. He might bring in the trouble, something like that.

Our laws. The government long time ago peoples, as Alice Spring get bigger, they was pretty honest men. They never bring in the trouble, but they was all right. Never been changed. What I remember about the older governments in Alice Springs was there. We remember and what has been coming good all along, never been changed until all the men they work on the cattle stations, elders and all that. They never changed. They were all there. You just going on the same law but they change all right. Other person come, work for a little while or might be another boss get in. Ours never change. That is all our law and him still standing today, never been changed. But, we do not want to be changed. We know ourselves from our fathers and grandfathers never been changed. We still on the track today. He is standing up today. Never finished off.

So we like to become together, decide together and we like to bring this constitution what you people calling it, we like to bring him in together. We want to be a one lot. We do not try to push white people but we want to come together and work together, really big important way. Not some time got to be changed, rubbishing all our people. No. That no good. What are you going to do with it that way?. What are you going to bring him in that way for? You might bring in bad (Indecipherable) or something. We like to come together. We belong under one Australia. We like to grow up all the children to come together and we all pass away and that will be good. Some of these fellers in the school they might read about them people. They been making good world, leaving something good for others to pass on. They might be smart people from doing that way, but we like to know all that sort of thing bit by bit. We do not want to miss things. What can happen behind all these young people when they grow up? They might be bringing in some trouble, but we like to believe everything good. That is all.

Mr EDE: I think what we just heard is very good. That is what we are talking about. I think everybody agrees with that and that is what we want to do through this constitution thing. We do not try to rush it. We go easy, slowly talking about things and working out how we can do that. But, we have got to start. It is no good if somebody says: 'It is a long way to walk out to Woolla Downs so we are not going to start'. You have to start going. That is what we are doing now; we are starting this one off to see if we can come together. We are travelling around this first time. Then, we will be going, talking, everybody setting things out, ideas going around, everybody talking to each other to see if we can get them right. Has anybody else got anything they want to say or should we say that that is it for now?

Mr PANANKA: Arrantherr angketyerl ay. Angkerl mwerr awemaw, angketyem arrangkerr aw. (partly audible comments or questions from a couple of women.) Angkety apek angkerr Alice-l yanhekenh eletyenh Angkelethelekenh?

You lot talk and we'll understand you all right. You talk in language and Alice will tell it in English.

Ms NANGALA: Ngkerreh akwenh mwerr anetyek, rlwehenh angkem. Ya. Warn kwenh anetyeh, warn. Warn anetyeh. Warn. Nyentey akwetekeh anetyeh, mereh. Mereh. Warn alhernter yenh awerlek angkerr anetyeh land relhekenh(?). Mer anganek our little one. That's right? That's right me talking?

Everybody's got to talk good, talk about it. Yes. You've got to sit down without grog. Sit down without grog. No grog. Stay together, for our country. For the country. Without grog the white people will listen to what you say about the land. Our little ones belong to this place. Is that right? Is that right what I'm saying?

Mr PANANKA: Yew yew. Alhernter renh angketyeh thamperr eley. Kenh someone-k amperr ngkweng angkety eletyeh. Angkety nhenhel apel eley. (Inaudible) ...entepentem. (Some inaudible comments at times from women.)

Yes. Somebody's got to tell the white people. But somebody has to tell you first in language. You can tell it in language.

Mr HATTON: I think perhaps we have talked enough for today.

Mr PANANKA: Yeah.

Mr HATTON: Does anybody want to talk any further now?

Mr HATTON: Talk privately?

Ms GOREY: Speaking in Aboriginal language.

Mr PANANKA: We can talk privately and come back later.

Mr EDE: We come back another time.

Mr HATTON: Yes, we will come back again and again to talk. We have all got to think about this one.

Mr PANANKA: I just been thinking. How many laws has the government got?

Mr HATTON: Oh, lots of them.

Mr PANANKA: (Indecipherable). Like I can tell my wife. My law got 2 laws - one good law and one bad law and we do not carry the bad law. It was thrown out. We are trying to keep a good law.

Mr HATTON: Right.

Mr PANANKA: That same as the government got. 2 laws.

Mr HATTON: Yeah.

Mr PANANKA: My people (names some names) lock them up. Bad laws. Our law is good law. We don't keep bad laws. We throw them out so that we can keep good law.

Mr HATTON: That's right. And that is the way that we have to work. A man said something to me before which was a good description. He said that we look at ourselves and we have got the bones and the skeleton in there, the ribs and the arms and the legs. The bones give us our shape and make us stand up. Our arms work because of the bones in there. That is like that constitution. Then, the other laws are like the flesh and the skin on the outside. You might get fat, you might get skinny, you might be strong, you might be weak, you might be black or you might be white. It doesn't matter; you still have the same bones, the same skeleton and shape. That is like the constitution inside. It makes it strong. Do you want a constitution that looks like a kangaroo or one that looks like a rat?. You think about it.

Thank you very much for coming in and listening to us and talking to us. If you need any further information, please ring us up or write to us and we will get it for you. It is really important that we must start thinking about this one.

Mr PANANKA: (Indecipherable). Like whitefellow laws. One law is the top one, one law is the bottom one. Is government one. The Northern Territory government is in bottom. Sometimes we are worrying which government we can see if anything happen like this because we live in the Territory. We are not living in the southern states, Canberra, big city. We living are in the Northern Territory. We grow up in the Territory and something happen with the Northern Territory government. Like you, you have short memory. We should talk to you probably.

Mr EDE: As you say, the federal government is on top here and Territory government comes underneath. Now they give the Territory government some things that it can do and it tries to do those for the people.

Mr PANANKA: We see top government, little government and all little governments coming from it, like a big tree that has got little branches coming out.

Mr EDE: Yeah, sometimes that is hard.

Mr PANANKA: Sometime we be that way, too many little government. This man is on top, Prime Minister, and that minister on top of you. I don't like him anyway. He is on top of you and more little government comes out. Big tree got lot of seeds, plough come in. After that, it won't get seed and plant seed falling off. After rain, that little young tree grow. We make our law grow up like this - going one way all the time. (Indecipherable). Like African people, we got lot of problemS. That is all we can say.

Mr EDE: Yes, it is a bit mixed up sometimes. We have the federal government in Canberra looking after all of Australia. He comes down really close to people for things like cheques, federal government money coming.

Mr PANANKA: The federal government is Bob Hawke in Canberra. Land rights law ... Western Australia, Queensland. The Territory should have own law, I think.

Mr EDE: Yeah, land rights, like you said, that one only covers Northern Territory because this is a territory. It doesn't go into the other states. Some places do their own and some do nothing.

Mr PANANKA: The Northern Territory ... Western Australia. They got government there. Same in Queensland. Nobody can go to Queensland and make this law there because they got government in Queensland.

Mr EDE: That is right. But, we are more under, if you like, the federal government than Queensland because it is a state and we are a territory.

Mr PANANKA: Just like here. This mob here has 3 to 6. Sometimes people argue. Like with people on the Country Party side some argument. Sometimes people start argument and there is argument in court. Aboriginal people start argument, you on this side and I am on this side. (Indecipherable). Sometimes people not on Territory government side; they are on federal government side, the top government. Sometimes we tell them that they not living in the south in the same way we are living in the Territory. Start a big argument sometimes. We should have government, one government, that is all. Like we call one government like Territory government and Bob Hawke is in Canberra only. That is the land rightS. The Territory government should have self-government, the same as in Western Australia and Queensland.

Mr EDE: What I am saying is that we can't have that statehood. That comes after self-government, like Queensland and those mob. We have got to have constitution first.

Mr PANANKA: Oh yeah, that is what we are talking about here.

Mr EDE: Then we can talk about that other one. That government is a pretty powerful thing if it has not got any rules around it. It is like a young horse growing up. You have got to break him in, put a rope around him and get him nice and quiet before it can go properly. That is what it is like with this constitution. It is like saying: 'These are the rules you have got to work under to break them in so that, when we get going, we get going properly'.

Mr PANANKA: What about our laws, Aboriginal laws? Whitefellow laws here (Indecipherable).

Mr EDE: Well, that is what we have to talk about inside the constitution. What ones from that are we are going to put inside that constitution so that they are level?

Mr PANANKA: Some rubbish you won't like from our side, you throW them out. We can only put good law in government side. Government throw its bad law out too. Bring good laws in.

Mr HATTON: Just bring the good ones in.

Mr PANANKA: Maybe you got ... (Indecipherable). You throw them out. You don't want to keep that one.

Mr ARUNDEL: Some laws are only for Aboriginal people. You just keep them for yourself. Some laws are only for white people and we just keep them for ourselves. Some laws are the same for both. We put them together and make the one law for all.

Mr HATTON: You put in the constitution that we cannot take away the laws that are only for Aboriginal people.

Mr ARUNDEL: That is what the bones are. You keep the bones, the strong ones.

Mr PANANKA: Like we can't take your law. The government cannot come and take my laws for his way.

Mr HATTON: You can make sure they can't change that by putting it in a constitution. That stops them from that.

Mr ARUNDEL: After that, the government has got to obey our law which says that, if it makes a law and it is not right by the constitution, it is no good and we throw it out.

Mr HATTON: Or it doesn't work.

Mr ARUNDEL: Can't work.

Mr PANANKA: Oh yes.

Mr HATTON: Thank you everybody.