

- **TO: SENATE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS REFERENCE COMMITTEE**
- **ON THE SUBJECT OF:**
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- **INQUIRY INTO CHILDREN IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE &  
OTHER FORMS OF CARE**
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- July 31, 2003

- Submission by: Bernard Francis Patrick Brady.....a Commonwealth ward

- **Opening Statement**

I would like to make the following points with regards the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry specifically with regard to Commonwealth responsibilities for war orphans in institutional care:

- My sister and I were Commonwealth wards under the *Repatriation Act 1920* and cared for under *Repatriation Regulations 1920*. We were classified as 'double-orphans' and referred to as **Repatriation wards**.
- I am Bernard Francis Patrick Brady and was born on 2nd February 1944 and I
- On the death of our father, we became entitled to war orphan pensions and free medical/health care until we reached the age of 16 years. Trustees were appointed under the *Repatriation Regulations 1920, Section 9*, to provide care.
- Between the ages of 3 to 13 years (1 to 11 years for ) I was to experience the appointment and replacement of six sets of trustees, be detained

behind the walls of seven institutions, live temporarily in eight 'foster homes', was enrolled and attended eleven schools (taking into account that I didn't start my schooling until I was seven years old). On the way through I watched two appointed trustees fight over and steal our inheritance left to us by our father and our mother's savings. In effect a war orphan could leave the Federal/Legacy ward system poorer than when they went in.

- The Federal Government did not have a welfare supervisory support service in place for war orphans, to ensure that proper care was being provided by the appointed trustees. Although the Soldiers' Children Education Board of the Repatriation attempted to partially fill the vacuum.
- The welfare supervisory and support service for the Repatriation Department, with regards Repatriation children, was undertaken by Legacy, a volunteer society made up of ex-service personnel. This supervisory and support service possibly gave great service where the surviving parent provided an ongoing family structure. However, in my experience, Legacy lacked the professional welfare resources to deal with 'problem children' and most if not all double-orphans, by their very situation, are going to be problem children, at least at some stage of their development. In my experience, failure to provide this professional counseling/support in early child development can leave a lifetime of emotional scars, a permanent state of depression self-hate and anti-community behaviour, to an extent that one is crippled from reaching one's productive potential. as a within the community.
- State Welfare Departments did not recognize, or provide a service or maintain records for declared war orphans; war orphans were regarded as the sole responsibility of the Federal Government. Although it did appear that the States were left with the responsibility of the undeclared illegitimate war orphans.
- The Federal Government did not have a Repatriation legal service in place to protect the property and inheritance rights of Repatriation orphans and ensure that the legal will of deceased Service personnel were carried out. Failure to provide

such a service, left it wide open for unscrupulous trustees to take advantage, and in our case that is what occurred.

- **WAR ORPHANS HOMES.** I accept the historical fact that my sister and I failed the selection criteria for entry into the War Orphans Homes and which provided the best quality of care available to Repatriation wards in the post-WW2 years.
- War Orphans Homes had been established in all States under the auspices of the Commonwealth Government and directly managed by Legacy. The homes were set up in former army barracks in 1946 and were closed down in 1967.
- The State governments had no responsibility for these Homes and children in these homes have not been recorded in the records of the relevant State Welfare Departments and thus have never been subjected to the various State Commissions of Inquiry on the relevant subject of Children in Institutions. Queensland had **Legacy's War Orphans Home – Moorlands House.**
- The Legacy Manual on entry criteria states: "*Sub-normal children should not be admitted under any circumstances, and 'problem' children or dull children should be admitted only after competent psychiatric, or medical advice had been obtained. If recommended by that advice, they may be admitted for a trial period of up to three months, and if they fail to adjust themselves within that period, arrangements should be made for them elsewhere.*" (Legacy Secretary's Procedural Manual).
- The Repatriation wards, like my sister and I, who failed the selection criteria were placed amongst the general orphanage and/or foster home population. It is common knowledge that these places were poorly resourced and its inmates having to bear the shame and indignity of being treated as a lower social caste by the general community. It must have been a boon for the general orphanages to receive Repatriation wards with their war orphans pensions to supplement the general orphanage funding pool. Further to this, general

orphanages within the applicable State were not obliged to report the residence of Repatriation orphans to the State Welfare authorities but to the Repatriation department.

- I am also aware that through anecdotal evidence that many of the inmates in the general orphanages were illegitimate children of military service personnel with possible undeclared rights to war orphan pensions and free medical care. The movement of Service personnel through local military camps and the social effects thereof have never been researched, but one could guess that this may be a reason for the high orphan population that peaked in the post WW2 years.
- The failure to be provided with explanations, the secrecy and remoteness of government decision-making, in our case the Repatriation Department, the role model that this establishes and the failure of closure can dog you for the rest of your life and effect your own decision-making in personal, employment and business relationships in later life. In contrast the children of the family culture have an ongoing face-to-face process of explanation, role-modeling and emotional closure with the decision-makers, that is their parents.
- One of the major impediments for understanding the decisions made with regard your child welfare and thus bring closure to the past, is the difficulty of retrieving files from a bureaucracy that puts self-preservation before providing a service for those it was set up to help. I refer specifically to the Veteran Affairs Dept., Legacy and the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau. Since I begun this 'learning about our past' process in 1998, I have received grudging and minimal assistance and in some cases rejections from these three institutions. At this stage I have formally received no files from these primary sources and have had to rely on sections of files from secondary sources.
- In year 2000, the undersigned was advised by the Soldier Career Management Agency that the father's war medals were available to be collected. One

wonders how many other war orphans (especially those who were streamed off into the general orphanage population) would be aware that they are entitled to receive their parents' war medal and experience some pride from them – if only they were informed of their entitlements.

- **RECOMMENDATION.** That this Inquiry recommend that the Federal Government establish a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the past practices of the Veteran Affairs Department in dealing with war orphans of Australian Service personnel. To receive submissions from members of the public and interested bodies, and make recommendations that the 'worlds best practices' are implemented for the care of future war orphans. To hear and deal with individual complaints that may arise with regards failure of duty of care or failure to undertake due diligence on the appointment of trustees under the *Repatriation Act 1920* and *Repatriation Regulations 1920*. That the guiding principle for the Commission of Inquiry be the Constitutional responsibility that lies with the Commonwealth Government, as spelt out in the Australian Constitution, Section 51 in its preamble and in particular in its subsection (xxiii).

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- **A SUMMARY of SUPPORTING DETAILS**

- Our father was Francis Anthony Brady ("Frank"), who was born on the 28th June 1913 at North Melbourne and served 5½ years in the Army during the period June 1940 to November 1945, mainly in the 2/23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry battalion, in which he saw action both in North Africa/Middle East and New Guinea. Frank contracted malaria whilst in New Guinea and saw out the last part of his service in the Army Ordnance Corps. (service numbers were V6469, VX32007 and VX61325).
- Our mother, Patricia Joan Britton ("Pat") was born on the 13th August 1924 at Latrobe Tasmania, worked for a part of WW2 at ADI Ammunitions and then

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served in the WAAAF's, firstly as a drill instructor until she was involved in a fall from the gymnasium roof during a rope-climbing exercise, and then as a cook. Pat was still employed on military duties (outside the WAAAF) up and to the end of the war and as and when not impeded by her first pregnancy status. (WAAAF service number was 104464).

- On Frank's return from the Middle East in February 1943 and prior to his re-assignment to New Guinea in June 1943, Frank and Pat were married at St. Patrick's Church, Lilydale Victoria.
- Following Frank's discharge from the Army on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1945, he had difficulty holding down a job due to a pre-war spinal injury caused in a truck accident in 1937 and aggravated by service in the infantry. His health was further adversely affected by contracting malaria whilst in service in New Guinea. In civilian life Frank was to suffer increasing bouts of malarial fever that left him physically weak and he had difficulty holding down laboring jobs.
- Pat's health also began to deteriorate after the birth of Rosemary in February 1946. She became prone to Epileptic fits and blackouts and was being regularly admitted to either Prince Henry's or St. Vincent's Hospitals.
- During periods when they were both ill, the children were placed in temporary institutional care.
- Frank was twice rejected for a military pension and eventually he was obliged to take employment as a mortuary attendant at Royal Park Mental Hospital
- Frank died on 25th August 1947 from pneumonia and malaria complications, at the age of 34 years whilst employed as a mortuary attendant at the Royal Park Mental Hospital.
- In April 1948, Pat was admitted to the Repatriation Hospital Heidelberg following a blackout that occurred in my company whilst alighting from a train at Flinders Street Railway Station. Pat claimed and was to repeat her claim, until her death in 1952, that her illness was due to a head injury suffered in her fall as a drill instructor whilst in the WAAAF's.

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- At Heidelberg Pat was diagnosed as an “hysteric”. The doctors came to the conclusion that her illness was not caused by her war service, but due to congenital problems that were exacerbated by a personal crisis as the result of poor relationships with her parents especially her mother. They further concluded that she showed signs of being mentally retarded. Pat was sectioned and transferred to Royal Park Mental Hospital on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1948.
- As one reads their report, one wonders how did Pat pass the military enlistment criteria and be employed as a drill instructor and cook in the WAAAFs and be able to take on other military duties, such as live-in housekeeper for the Military Services Club, up and to the end of the war.
- Whilst in hospital Pat met Jeffrey Alan Moon (“**Moon**”), who was then employed as a casual hospital ward attendant ‘*in between radio and concert singing engagements*’. Pat married Moon on 23rd June 1948. The marriage removed the authority of her father over her and allowed her to be released from Royal Park Mental Hospital into the care of Moon, on a probationary arrangement. In retrospect, it was jumping out of the frying-pan and into the fire for Pat.
- Moon was appointed co-Trustee of Bernard and Rosemary under *Repatriation Regulations 1920, section 9*.
- Pat was to return to the care of Royal Park Mental Hospital on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1948, after she received a beating from Moon who was in a drunken rage. The cause of which was Moon’s insistence that he have control over the inheritance from our deceased father and not Nana Britton. This beating took place in my presence, when I was 4 years old, and in the presence of Mrs. Moon, the mother of Alan Moon.
- When I came into possession of the Royal Park Mental Hospital files in 2001, I was able to see for the first time, where Pat had been forced by Moon to sign a will leaving 50% of her estate to Alan Moon, upon her death.
- Unfortunately for Pat, she appeared to have lost all credibility among medical staff, at both the Repatriation and Royal Park Mental Hospitals and did not

believe she had been beaten. At no time was I interviewed about this incident, which had also left me in a state of shock, as I had never seen our Mother being hit before and when I attempted to intervene, Moon forced our mother to tell me to get back in my cot or he would hurt her more. the medical report reads "*She is almost certainly a pathological liar*" and with regards Moon "*He is a decent enough man*" In my opinion, Moon was a charming and manipulative man when sober- stagecraft was his profession. This incident began the end of my childhood.

- Following reconciliation with Moon, Pat was released again on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1948, so that she could be with her children and Moon needed a breadwinner in the house. Pat had not only inherited the large physical build of her father but also his love of hardwork and the ability to save and squirrel away money into various bank accounts. Through the assistance of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau and the Mother-Prioress of the Carmelite Convent at Kew, Pat went to work as cook-housekeeper for the Jesuits at Burke Hall and Kostka Hall Preparatory Schools (the feeder schools for Xavier College).
- Full time work suited Pat and her Epilepsy problems practically disappeared until late February 1952. The cooking and housekeeping were live-in positions, which meant that us children were left in the care of Moon during the week. Moon was incapable of holding down a fulltime job, whether it was singing or laboring work, due to his heavy drinking habits.
- Our half-brother Thomas Alan Moon ("**Tommy**") was born in 1949 (Up and to February 1952 he lived with Pat, at her live-in job). Pat always had difficulty with childbirth and her afterbirth period required her to stay in hospital for an extended period. Moon was drinking heavily during this period and he would force me to sleep with him when he came home drunk, until one night when I had Scarlet fever and his touching me caused me to bleed profusely that he panicked when he could not stop the bleeding and an ambulance was called to take me to hospital. I believe that was the last time he touched me, and thereafter he turned

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his attentions onto my sister. During this period there was no food in the house and Rosemary was crying with hunger and so I mixed up a packet of whitewash with water and we ate it as if it was porridge..

- When Pat came home from hospital and I informed her of these incidents, she made the decision to run away and she sought the help of Miss Clausen of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau to find a secret location for us all, away from Moon. We moved to a new commission house which I believe was in Glenroy where we lived for a few months until I attempted to enroll at the local school under an assumed name, however, I gave the game away under questioning and told my real name. State Welfare Dept. officers arrived and asked me to lead them back to the house where we were living, as there was a complaint out from Moon, with regards Pat being still on probation from Royal Park Mental Hospital and that Tommy was a State responsibility.
- The result was that Pat and Moon became reconciled, Moon said he was 'a changed man' and 'would give up the drink'. We children were sent to Nana Britton for a period and when Pat returned to her position with the Jesuits she made the decision to board us at the orphanages rather than leave us in the care of Moon during the week.
- As of 1951 we boarded at St. Josephs and St. Vincent's Orphanages respectively.
- In late 1951 to early February 1952, we went to stay with Pat at Kostka Hall Brighton and Moon was employed as a gardener. This was the last time we were to live with our mother. The events that occurred at Kostka Hall after our return to the orphanages for the new school year, was to have fatal consequences.
- In late February 1952, an incident occurred at the Jesuit Preparatory School involving sexual interference of a boy by Moon. This led to the instant dismissal of both Moon and Pat. This information was given to me by Nana Britton and Maud Young. It has since been confirmed by the Royal Park Mental Home files that record a shocking incident had taken place involving Moon.
- Pat with the assistance of Miss Clausen of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau

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had Tommy placed in an institution where he could not be found by Moon.

- Pat's epileptic attacks started to return and I believe she blamed herself for convincing Fathers McNerny and Brady to employ Moon at the Preparatory school, as a gardener. Pat was to spend the last few months of her life in St Vincents and Queen Victoria hospitals and convalescent homes and finally in May 1952, she was to return to Royal Park Mental Hospital for the last time.
- The Australian Red Cross assisted Pat with a second application for a Service pension in her own right. The Repatriation rejection crossed over with the notice of Pat's death.
- Pat died on 13th June 1952 at the age of 27 years at Royal Park Mental Hospital. Cause of death was diagnosed as Epilepsy. See post-mortem and Coroner's Inquest report. At this point in time Bernard was 8 years old, Rosemary was 6 years and Tommy was 3 years.
- The details, cause and location of our mother's death were kept secret from us at the time, although the way adults were talking over the top of me, as if I wasn't in the room led me to believe that our mother and us children were a part of something shameful. For many years afterwards Rosemary and I had doubts that our mother was really dead, but was imprisoned in some institution.
- We were not taken to the funeral and more agonizing for us children was that we (the three children) were not permitted to meet as a family, to share our grief and console each other. We were never to see or be informed about the disposal of her clothing or personal belongings. We were kept separate and learnt how to turn our grief inwards. This separation decision was to destroy us as a family unit.
- At no time during the events of our childhood were we provided with specialized counseling by either the Repatriation Department or the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau, nor were we provided with the reasons for the bureaucratic decisions that affected our childhood development. There has never been any closure, not even today. It appears to me that when we reached adulthood they just opened the

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cage-door and let us fly away like swallows.

- What I did and still do find rather extraordinary, is the amount of counseling and support that was provided by Catholic institutions to our mother, from the age of 14 years and up and to her death at 27 years. A part of the reason was discovered in the files of the Royal Park Mental Hospital and which were provided to me in 2001.
- The files show that Pat had on a number of occasions in her childhood had been taken into care due to family neglect, that she had eagerly sought Catholic institutional care as a haven from her parents, that at one stage she had entered the Carmelite Convent at Kew as a novice nun and that on another occasion on being returned to her family had been raped and after her hospitalization had been taken back into care. At this point of time, I do not know if a child was born as a result of this event. There are two statements on file, one made, under dispensation, by the Mother Prioress of the Carmelite Convent and a second statement made by Miss Clausen of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau. Both people remained in constant contact with Pat throughout her short life. I now believe the full story is in Pat's case study and I am led to believe this is still in the possession of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau.
- Soon after the death of our mother, I was visited at St. Joseph Orphanage Surrey Hills by Mr. Rankin of the Repatriation Department, Mgr. Perkins and Miss Clausen of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau. They advised me that Moon had been removed as the trustee for Rosemary and myself, and that our half-brother Tommy to be made a ward of the State and was to be placed in the care of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau pending adoption. I was asked to which relative would I like to go to and I confirmed that I wished to go to Mary and Veronica Brady. No decision was made at this juncture.
- I was to learn later on from the Brady aunts that Moon had written to them shortly after the funeral of our mother, offering to sell Bernard to them for 200 pounds (copy of letter is now in my possession). They had reported this to the

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Repatriation and Mgr. Perkins and they believed this was the reason for the removal of Moon as trustee.

- I also believe that both the Repatriation Department and Mgr. Perkins regarded the Brady aunts as interfering nuisances, as they would continually hound the Rankin and Perkins with complaints of our mistreatment. It appears to me that it was a classic case of 'shoot the messenger'.
- Mgr. Perkins of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau was appointed trustee under the *Repatriation Act and Regulations 1920, Section 9* for Bernard and Rosemary, whilst Tommy was made a ward of the State also under the care of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau. This was in June 1952.
- Tommy was not a Repatriation ward and was treated in separation from the two of us. His welfare was the responsibility of Catholic Family Welfare Bureau in Victoria and its director Monsignor Perkins. We have no knowledge of his whereabouts or current situation.
- We were to remain in our separate orphanages for another 18 months. During this time I learnt how to get over the loss of our mother and the separation from my sister. I was able to do this in the mutual healing process of the orphan peer group. I was in the company of fellow travelers through life; we all had experienced losses of our parents, either through death or abandonment. We understood each other. Despite the restrictions imposed by the physical containment of the orphanage environment, I entered into and enjoyed the vibrant orphanage sub-culture. It was a haven from our stepfather. However, I did miss the company of my sister.
- A final joint decision (or what was believed to be a final decision at that time) was made by the Repatriation Department and the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau concerning the welfare of all us children was made in December 1953 and some 1½ years after the death of our mother. At this point in time Bernard was nearly 10 years of age, Rosemary was nearly 8 years and Tommy was nearly 5 years. We had each spent approximately four years in separate catholic orphanages.

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- By now I had settled in to orphanage life, was doing well academically and had a good gang of friends, was reasonably fed and received good care from the Josephite nuns and later the Christian brothers at St. Vincent de Pauls. In many respects we were left to our own devices and the rule of the peer group. The only shame and humiliation of being an orphan was the reaction of people and other children in the 'outside world' when they saw us doing our Sunday walk around the neighborhood streets in our baggy khaki clothes (ex-army surplus) with our escorting nun accepting donations from passersby and us boys hoping that instead of giving the nun the money, that they would buy us all a penny icecream instead. The reaction of relatives made you aware of the shame and guilt of being in an orphanage. In retrospect, the Repatriation Department should have left me to complete my childhood in the orphanage, for at least there I could have a childhood and not turn into an adult before my time.
- In 1954, and at 10 and 8 years of age respectively Rosemary and I were sent against our wishes to live with our maternal grandparents at Tumut NSW. Whilst Tommy was adopted by his married widow aunt and sister of Moon, namely Maud Young. The decisions were never made in joint consultation with us children. I had made it quite clear that we wished to go to our father's elder sisters namely Mary and Veronica Brady but this was denied.
- Our grandparents replaced Mgr. Perkins as trustee who, with the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau, had no further involvement with us for the next three years
- Legacy was now to provide the welfare support and act as agent for the Repatriation Department.
- It was assumed that our maternal grandparents would provide the normal family homelife for us children. However, it is now obvious that the Repatriation Department had not undertaken a due diligence check on the current circumstances of the grandparents. Their own records would have apprised them of the fact that the maternal grandparents were incapable of providing a normal and loving home environment, due to a combination of sickness, manic

depression and disinterest in children, especially girls. The grand parents lived separate lives in separate residences. Nana Britton had a housemaid to care for her. The arrival of Rosemary into the household meant that the housemaid could be dismissed. In effect the Repatriation Department was providing Nana Britton with a maid on 24 hour call and paid for by the government, this suited our grandfather.

- History was repeating itself, the records held by both the Repatriation Department and the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau clearly cited the mistreatment of our mother in a similar fashion some 20 years before.
- The Repatriation Department had used the account of this ill treatment and neglect as an argument to refuse a Service pension to Pat, on the grounds that her illness was due partly to her family nurture environment and congenital conditions, and not to any head injury incurred whilst serving in the WAAAFs.
- In some ways I was more fortunate than my sister, in that I was becoming crippled in the ankles due to the after-effects of polio. This was noticed by the local legacy guardian attached to our case, namely Mr. Cameron, who requested that the Repatriation Department take the necessary urgent action to deal with the problem. Thus for some 14 months I was an inmate at the Repatriation Hospital at Concord Sydney, where I underwent a series of operations to correct the problem. Mr Johnson, who was Secretary of the Soldiers' Children Education Board saw to my needs in Sydney and I stayed at his residence on occasions.
- This was a very happy period for me where I was well treated and spoilt by the soldiers and their families. In December 1954 and two days before my first operation I was asked to feature on Sydney radio in an interview at my bedside and sing a song, as a promotion to show how soldiers' children were cared for.
- During this time of my happiness, I had forgotten about the plight of my sister and when I returned home I saw how unhappy and miserable her life had become. Our legatee guardian, Mr. Cameron, had been quick to pick up a physical problem regarding myself, but in my opinion did not know how to handle the abuse and

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neglect that Rosemary was suffering and which left her in a continual state of depression and inadequacy.

- Rosemary did all the housework, was dressed in Nana Britton's cast-off clothes and was verbally abused on a constant basis for being '*slo-micky and lazy*' with her work. When visitors came she was not allowed to greet them but had to sit under the house, 'her cubbyhole' until they were gone. Rosemary was continually being accused of 'ogling' the passing boys through the fence holes or 'brazenly looking into men's faces'. Rosemary was not to bring school friends or go to friends homes, and Nana Britton would threaten that if she did not come straight home from school she would fetch the police. In my next letters I reported the situation to Mary and Veronica Brady and to Stella Bayley (Pat's youngest sister and daughter of Nana Britton). They decided to inform the Repatriation (Mr. Rankin) and Mgr. Perkins.
- In 1957, Bernard and Rosemary were removed from the care of their grandparents, by the Repatriation Dept, following claims of neglect,.
- These claims were similar to the claims of neglect that led to the placement of our mother in various convent institutions, through the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau, some 20 years earlier. This information was known to both the Repatriation Department and the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau and was discovered in both sets of files in 2001.
- In June 1957, we were interviewed by Mr. Rankin at Repatriation House in Melbourne and then sent to live with Maud Young and our brother Tommy and thus for some 6 months we three children were together as a family. Maud Young was now appointed trustee under the *Repatriation Regulations 1920*, Section 9.
- In August 1957, Moon who we had not seen since 1952, turned up and demanded his right to live with 'his' children, 'as a family' as he was now 'a changed man'.
- This crisis for both us children and Maud Young was brought to an end in late August 1957 with the murder of Moon whose body was found on a vacant allotment a couple of miles away from our residence.

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- The sensation and news media hype surrounding the murder was distressful for all concerned. Moon was well-known on the radio and concert circuit as the “Singing Tommy”, his youngest half-brother, who sang under a stage name is famous as one of Australia’s early rock ‘n roll stars.
- The knowledge that Moon had been in recent contact with us caused the Repatriation Dept. to make alternative arrangements.
- Legacy now started to play a more assertive role with regards our wellbeing.
- In September 1957, we were taken into Repatriation House in Melbourne by 2 Legacy staff and interviewed for the second time by Mr. Rankin, the Secretary of the Soldiers Children Education Board, also present was our newly appointed Legatee Guardian, namely Mr. Jim Reid. Maud Young was not invited to attend this meeting.
- Rankin asked us children to whom we wished to live with and we stated that we wanted to go to Mary and Veronica Brady. Rankin asked for a second option, as he believed that the children required a normal family home environment with a father role model for Bernard, and I requested that the second option be Stella Bayley, our mother’s youngest sister.
- In October 1953, Maud Young received the Repatriation Dept. decision that she was to be replaced as trustee, however the children were to stay in her care until the end of the school year so as not to disrupt their schooling.
- Melbourne Legacy was to be appointed trustee until the children became of age and Mr. Reid was to be the legatee guardian with direct responsibility, the children were to be sent to boarding college at the expense of the Repatriation Dept. and that they were to stay for their school holidays at the home of Stella and Lennie Bayley.
- Rosemary and I have not seen or heard from Tommy since this date. His fate and whereabouts are unknown to us.
- In February 1958 Bernard entered Assumption College Kilmore ran by the Marist Brothers and Rosemary was sent to the Sisters of Mercy convent school, also at

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Kilmore.

- For Bernard these were the unhappiest years of his school life, whilst paradoxically for Rosemary these were the happiest, where she did well both academically, socially and at sport.
- During the first term at school, our legacy guardian informed us that the arrangements with Stella and Lennie Bayleys had broken down and that alternative arrangements would need to be made for our stay during the school holidays. It appeared that the Bayleys objected to the cancellation of war pension payments during term holidays by the Repatriation Dept. Both Rosemary and I took this apparent rejection very hard, and the wounds that it left have never been healed.
- It was arranged that Bernard was to stay with his aunts Mary and Veronica Brady (note that the Repatriation had dropped the need for Bernard to reside with a male adult role model due to budget restrictions), whilst Rosemary was to go to Ted and Thelma Brady. Ted was a brother of our father. This decision would put a further strain on our brother-sister relationship, as Mary and her sister-in-law, Thelma, were both strong-minded women with a mutual dislike for each other. Us children would be used as psychological weapons in their ongoing trench warfare.
- I found the environment for war orphans at Assumption College to be barely tolerable. The Repatriation in their haste to get me '*out of sight out of mind*', failed to undertake a due diligence investigation on the suitability of Assumption College as a boarding school for war orphans.
- Assumption College did not have a war service culture. It basically catered for the sons of catholic pastoralists/primary producers where the majority of their fathers were exempt from military service during the war years.
- The Marist Brothers had no experience, nor were they trained or prepared for dealing with such novel arrivals. Their reaction was to 'whip them into shape', so they spoke, smelt, dressed and behaved like the boys from the family culture.

Over the next six years, I received more thrashings than I have ever received in my whole life. Nothing like this had ever happened at the orphanage. I believed that they were determined to break my spirit, and as an orphan I had no father to complain to. The catchcry from the Principal to us orphans was 'be grateful for the opportunities that have been granted to you'.

- I never told my aunts, as they were so proud of me being at a catholic college and I repressed my misery as I did not want to let them down, as they had been so supportive in our early childhood.
- To the best of my recollection five war orphan boys were sent to ACK to complete their secondary schooling through the Soldiers Children Education Scheme. Three of them ran away in the first couple of months due to bullying from the boys and the brothers, and never returned. The remaining two of us (the other shall be called D. as I don't have his permission to use his name) became friends and supported each other.
- The College produced top footballers and mediocre scholars. In my first 2 years, I was not physically capable of keeping up with my peers as I was still recovering from my ankle operations and stood out from the other boys with my surgical boots that I was obliged to wear until I was 16 years. In fact the attempt to achieve in sport after I turned 16 years led to the collapse of my right ankle and I was obliged to undergo another operation at St. Vincent's Hospital Melbourne.
- Prior to being detained at Assumption College, I had always excelled scholastically (my school reports testify to that), in spite of my troubled childhood, study and excelling at school was an escape for me from the poor and unloving home environment provided by the various trustees appointed over me. Unfortunately whilst at Assumption College, I declined academically and struggled along the bottom of the class for the next six years. I was obliged to repeat a year. There was never any review by Legacy, the Repatriation or the College with regards the reasons for my academic decline
- On occasions both D. and I became targets for the sexual aggression of two of the

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Marist brothers, who I shall refer to as **Brother. C.** and **Brother. K.** and from a visiting diocesan priest who specialized in the counseling of youth and young men. I believe that they took advantage of the fact that we did not have fathers and we were vulnerable to the need for adult male role models. I will not go into details in this submission, and am prepared to take up this matter with the Archdiocese of Melbourne and the Marist Order at a later date.

- Jim Reid, our legatee guardian, visited us on occasions, however the relationship between guardian and wards was formal and superficial. He did not want to hear any problems nor did he encourage mutual sharing of confidences. He ensured that we were adequately supplied with clothes and school requirements. Although my formal address as far as the College was concerned was his home, we were only invited there twice in six years and I gained the distinct impression that Mrs. Reid did not want us fraternizing with her children.
- During my time at Assumption, there was a lack of encouragement or support from the Repatriation, Legacy or the College. I was never encouraged to feel proud of our father and his military service contribution, and any mention of my mother was treated with embarrassing silence. I always had the strong underlying guilt that I was the cause of our parents' death and I was being punished for it.
- The Repatriation, Legacy or Mgr. Perkins never explained their actions, counseled us or provided formal closure. My period as a ward only enhanced my shame and guilt in being an orphan and growing up as a second-class citizen
- Rosemary left school in 1962 and joined the Navy. I left school in 1963 and joined the National Bank, I had failed my matriculation at Assumption, however, I did home study whilst in the bank and successfully matriculated in 1964.
- CONCLUSION
- The under resourced orphanage was a waste disposal and deterrence system. It was set up on a slim budget to discourage dumping of unwanted offspring on the

state purse. The 'immoral parent' could not be punished so the righteous community punished the child instead. This social attitude can no longer continue, as its reminiscent of our convict heritage.

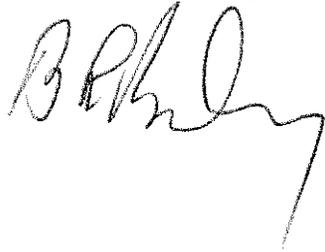
- I believe there is sufficient anecdotal evidence to oblige a government research program into the proportion of adult inmates (who were institutionalized as a child and/or are children of former institutionalized orphans/state wards) in enforced incarceration, be it in prisons, alcohol/drug refuges and mental health institutions, as compared to the social norm.
- Misguided charitable institutions deemed it their duty to excel in managing institutions on low budgets in order to please the community purse.
- In retrospect, if the said charitable institutions had the orphans real interest at heart, they should've taken a political position and lobbied the community for more resources and improved dignity status, so that orphans had the same economic and citizen entry opportunities, as children growing up in the family culture environment.
- For many orphans there is a lifetime of shame and second-class citizenship to look forward to. Many hide their background in order to get a job or enter into a relationship. Most have never been trained to survive and prosper in a family dominated culture that takes so much of its freedoms and privileges for granted. In many cases the attempts to formalize marital and family relationships and responsibilities that they haven't been trained for, can lead to a repetitive cycle with the next generation being taken into care. **A Commonwealth social empowerment program needs to be put into place to raise the status of former members of institutional care, in their own eyes and the eyes of the community.**
- Governments, their service departments, such as Veteran Affairs need to be publicly and individually accountable for their stewardship of charges placed in their care. If the State plays the parent, it must be as accountable as would be expected of a parent to a child in the dominant family culture.

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- Given the right resources and environment, orphans can self-heal through the orphan peer group, and those who have had the experience of being in care should form the core of planning and management for future children in care. .

Signed by Bernard Francis Patrick Brady

On 31<sup>st</sup> July 2003

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B.F.P. Brady', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.