



**THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FORMER CHILD MIGRANTS
AND THEIR FAMILIES**

COMMITTEE

President:	Norman Johnston
Vice-President:	Donald Coleshill
Secretary:	Harold Haig
Treasurer:	Robert Tremlett

Committee Members:	Desmond McDaid
	Carmel Montgomery
	Alan Osborne



Constitution

DEFINITION OF A FORMER CHILD MIGRANT:

Former Child Migrants are persons who were removed from their country of birth when below school leaving age and taken to a Commonwealth country on a permanent basis, unaccompanied by parents or relatives, under the U.K. & Commonwealth Child Migration Schemes.

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.1. To express and promote the common interests of former Child Migrants world-wide by virtue of their removal from their country of birth.
- 1.2. To educate and raise issues relating to the needs of former Child Migrants and their families with Governments, state agencies and non-governmental agencies.
- 1.3. To raise funds:
 - 1.3.1. To assist former Child Migrants in necessitous circumstances and who satisfy criteria established by the Child Migrants Trust to be reunited with their families.
 - 1.3.2. To finance issues of importance for former Child Migrants and their families.
 - 1.3.3. To make donations to the Child Migrants Trust.
- 1.4. To convene International Conferences in conjunction with the Child Migrants Trust, and to arrange and provide for or join in arranging and providing for the holding of exhibitions, congresses, meetings, lectures and seminars.
- 1.5. To establish and distribute twice yearly (when circumstances permit) "*International Focus*", which will keep members informed on developments and issues pertaining to former Child Migrants and their families world wide. It will also invite people with a specific interest in child migration issues to contribute articles, and also give former Child Migrants and family members the opportunity to contribute.
- 1.6. To accept gifts and borrow or raise money for the purposes of the Association on such terms or such security as shall be thought fit, and to procure contributions to the Association by personal or written appeals, public meetings or otherwise. To undertake fundraising activities and seek appropriate grants.



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- 1.7. To employ such staff on such terms and conditions as the Association thinks fit in consultation with the Child Migrants Trust Committee Members.
- 1.8. To procure to be written, printed, published, issued and circulated gratuitously or otherwise such papers, books, periodicals, pamphlets or other documents or films as shall further the aims and objectives.
- 1.9. To promote, carry out or assist in carrying out research, surveys and investigations and publish the results thereof.
- 1.10. To do or arrange to be done any lawful matters necessary, incidental to or in order to promote or assist the promotion of the aims and objectives.

2. MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1. Subject to clause 2.3, Former Child Migrants and their families and partners in the U.K. or country of residence, and former Child Migrants' children, grandchildren and partners, may apply for full membership of the Association and shall be admitted by the Committee on payment of the subscription.
- 2.2. Subject to clause 2.3, any persons who support the aims and objectives of the Association may apply for Associate Membership of the Association.
- 2.3. The Committee may refuse to admit into membership of the Association or may restrict the rights of membership of any persons who do not satisfy the Committee that they are likely to promote the aims and objectives of the Association, or act in the interests of the Association and its members.
- 2.4. In line with clause 2.3 the Association policy is: former Child Migrants and family members who have worked for any of the agencies involved in the Child Migration Schemes, or have been involved with an organisation which has received funding from any of those agencies, may be Full Members of the Association, but may not stand for election to the Committee or sit on any Sub-Committee.
 - 2.4.1. No other persons or organisations associated with or in the employ of any agency formerly involved in child migration are eligible to be members of the Association in any form, save ordinary members of church congregations.



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Australia

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- 2.5. The Associations policy on representation of the Association is: That only people appointed by the Committee can speak publicly or write articles on behalf of the Association.
- 2.6. The Committee may expel or suspend at its discretion Full members and Associate members for conduct likely to bring the Association into disrepute, for conduct inconsistent with the aims and objectives of the Association, for non-payment of the subscription, or for any reason which in the opinion of the Committee is sufficient cause.
 - 2.6.1. Any member in respect of whom expulsion or suspension is to be considered shall be informed of the allegation or reason for proposed expulsion or suspension, and invited to present a verbal or written explanation to the Committee Meeting at which the matter is to be considered.
 - 2.6.2. The Committee shall establish a procedure of appeal by which expelled or suspended members may appeal against their expulsion or suspension to members of the Committee not involved in the initial decision.
 - 2.6.3. Members may resign from the Association by written or verbal notice to the Secretary, or by non-payment of membership fees within two months of a notice that such fees are overdue.
- 2.7. The Committee shall determine from time to time the rate of subscription payable by Full/Associate Members of the Association. The Committee may establish a policy on membership subscription that allows it to waiver or adjust subscriptions for any Full Member who is in necessitous circumstances.
 - 2.7.1. Annual subscriptions shall be set and made payable on the first day of July in each year. Proportional subscriptions for members joining during current (subscription) year will be half yearly, and rounded to the nearest dollar or pound, i.e. full year \$25, half year \$13.

3. VOTING

- 3.1. Former Child Migrants have full voting rights.
- 3.2. Families of former Child Migrants can vote on all matters except changes to the Constitution, which can only be changed by a two thirds majority of former Child Migrants who attend (or vote mail or fax) at a



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- 3.3. Bi-Annual General Meeting or meeting called specifically for this purpose.
- 3.4. Associate members, or any persons on or co-opted to the Committee in an advisory capacity, have no voting rights.
- 3.5. Matters raised at Committee Meetings, General Meetings, or a Bi-Annual General Meeting where a vote is required will be decided by a majority vote.
- 3.6. Any members unable to attend a meeting may appoint one other member as their proxy (an appropriate form can be obtained from the Secretary) or, in the case of Committee Meetings, may also register their vote by telephone or fax.
 - 3.6.1. Full Members living outside of Australia can register their vote with the Secretary by proxy, telephone or fax.

4. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

- 4.1. The Committee shall be responsible for the management of the business of the Association. The Committee is authorised to determine the manner of any meetings of the Association.
- 4.2. Only persons holding Full Membership can be members of the Committee. Family member representation on the Committee must not exceed 25%.
- 4.3. The Committee number will be up to 8. The Office Bearers shall be appointed by the Committee. The Office Bearers will be: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer. Two senior members of the Child Migrants Trust will be on the Committee in an advisory capacity.
- 4.4. The main Association Committee is based in Australia. Branches of the Association may be formed in each of the countries that former Child Migrants were removed to. They may establish their own Committees to manage local business and have representation of 2 per country on the main Association Committee. Constitutions for Branches must be approved by the Committee.
- 4.5. The Committee will have the power to co-opt additional members to the Committee, or form sub-committees and delegate powers as required.
- 4.6. The Committee has the power to establish the terms and conditions of the employment of any staff.



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- 4.6.1. The Committee will seek the professional assistance of the Child Migrants Trust to ensure that any staff who are appointed by the Association will have the necessary skills and qualities required to meet the diverse needs of the Association Membership.
- 4.6.2. Any persons employed by the Committee will be paid their professional rate, or their award rate, and be covered by Work Care Insurance where necessary.
- 4.7. Elections for 50% of positions on the Committee will be held at each Bi-Annual General Meeting (BGM). Ballot forms for elections (which will be sent to every financial member) must be completed and returned to the Secretary not later than 14 days before the BGM.
- 4.8. The quorum for Committee Meetings will be four (4). Meetings of the Committee may, at the discretion of the President, be held by way of telephone conferences.
- 4.9. The quorum for General Meetings and BGM will be twenty (20) members of the Association.
- 4.10. If a quorum is not met at the BGM where new Committee members are to be elected the existing Committee and Officers will continue in their positions until the next quorate BGM
- 4.11. The Committee has the power to call an extra-ordinary General Meeting. Two weeks notice will be given to all members.
- 4.12. Members will be notified about the date of AGM's two months in advance. Only Full Members can place motions on the agenda at AGM's. These must be received by the Secretary no later than fourteen days before the meeting.
- 4.13. An advisory panel will be established by the Committee. This panel would investigate and answer any criticism or complaint relating to the Association.
- 4.14. The Secretary will be responsible for:
- 4.14.1. Keeping the minutes of all meetings.
- 4.14.2. Keeping and maintaining a register of all members and associate members in which shall be entered their full name and membership position (full member or associate member), address and date of entry as a member.



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- 4.14.3. Making an entry in the register of members when a member resigns, recording the date on which the member ceased to be a member.
- 4.15. The Treasurer will be responsible for:
- 4.15.1. Paying and keeping a record of all accounts.
- 4.15.2. Accounts will be audited annually by an independent auditor.
- 4.16. Expenses incurred by Committee Members on business relating to the Association will be paid for by the Association in accordance with a policy established by the Committee on the presentation of receipts. Expenses exceeding \$25 must be authorised and paid directly by an Association cheque.
- 4.17. The Committee will take out Public Liability Insurance and arrange such other necessary insurances.
- 4.18. The Association will be an independent body, but will work alongside the Child Migrants Trust. While the Association is independent of the Child Migrants Trust it works in close partnership. The Association recognises and acknowledges the Child Migrants Trust as the only international, independent and neutral body providing all former Child Migrants and their families with a complete professional reunification and counselling service.

5. DISSOLUTION

- 5.1. The Association will not invite or accept funding from any of the voluntary agencies involved in operating the Child Migration Schemes. In the event of any proposal to accept such funding being accepted by the Association, the Association shall be dissolved.
- 5.2. Subject to clause 5.1, the Association may be dissolved by a resolution proposing dissolution being accepted by a majority of those present and voting at a General Meeting of the Association called for this purpose.
- 5.3. If the Association is dissolved for the reasons given in clause 5.1, or because of a lack of membership, or for any other reason; all funds held at that time (after all expenses had been met) would be transferred to the Child Migrants Trust.

*“THOSE WHO CANNOT REMEMBER THE PAST
ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT”*

George Santayana

INTRODUCTION

This submission, on behalf of our members and all child migrants, concentrates on the painful legacy of the barbaric child migration schemes. It is a legacy of pain and sadness which will remain with those who have suffered greatly by this misguided policy which removed children, sometimes as young as four years of age, from their parents, family, communities and their country.

Fifty years and more after we were forcibly removed to Australia, thousands of former Child Migrants yearn for justice, for recognition, and for the chance to be with our mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters.

This shameful episode in British/Australian Commonwealth history is a chapter of sordid vested interests. Children being used for political and religious objectives. There are many lessons to be learnt from our collective experiences of abuse and exploitation. This national inquiry in Australia has been needed for decades. The Association strongly believes the complex issues involved deserve and require a full Judicial Inquiry. Whenever abuse of children is exposed, particularly on this scale, involving at least two countries and other powerful institutions and organisations, there is a need and an expectation that a formal investigation should be forthcoming. Any decent society would expect no less. Unless we learn from the past we destroy the possibility for change in the future.

Child migration to Australia remains a poorly understood chapter in Australia's Commonwealth history. Myths, misunderstandings and deliberate deceptions are deeply woven into this sorry saga. Human rights abuses on an unprecedented scale, in our view, are denied by the federal and state governments. Present day government responsibilities are shrugged off. The charities and churches who played a major role in the abuse and deception still deny their culpability, and speak of 'good intentions'.

Without the investigative and pioneering professional work of the Child Migrants Trust we would all probably still be crying in the wilderness. They alone have given us hope, understanding, and most importantly have provided the child migrant community with a professional service which has helped literally thousands of former Child Migrants to meet with their mothers and fathers before it is too late for all of us. The Trust has, for over a decade, worked tirelessly in Australia with very limited resources to ensure we were all given that priceless opportunity to understand more about ourselves, enabling us to piece together our fragmented childhoods before time runs out, both for us and our families.

Our deportation to Australia was cold and heartless. We were literally dumped in institutions across the country. We were isolated, vulnerable, distressed children. Most of us believed we were the only ones. The churches and charities charged with responsibility to care for vulnerable young children exercised total control over us, generally without any accountability. Some of those institutions, even today are reluctant to relinquish that control, and have held onto personal documents and denied us vital information to prevent us from discovering our identities and our families. As young children, boys and girls, we were humiliated, flogged, bashed, and raped by our so-called 'caregivers'. Many of us received grossly inadequate education and were treated as slaves.

The individual personal submissions presented to this Inquiry will, we are sure, provide the Committee with the evidence to support our views and assessment of the situation. It is very difficult for us to talk openly about our brutalised childhoods. The pain and the stigma of our early existence in Australia remain with us. We all carry the scars, in one way or another. Many of us are no longer here to bear witness to our ordeals. Those people took their lives years ago, or are to be found now in medical institutions for those who just could not find the strength to survive. Their testimonies go unheard, but they will never be forgotten by this Association.

Our Association, of which we are very proud, was formally established in 1994 to provide a collective voice for child migrants, and our families who are often the silent victims of these schemes. The Association has worldwide membership. Our objectives and goals are laid out clearly in our Constitution. Our intention from the outset was to provide an opportunity to seek justice and recognition for our members. Today the International Association enjoys a large thriving membership from all over the globe, but predominantly in Australia, which received the greatest number of post-war child migrants. We also have many members who were deported before the war.

The Association is self-funding and is completely independent from Government, Church or those charities involved with the discredited child migration schemes.

The International Association is the only organisation which represents all former Child Migrants and their families. Perhaps it is important to state emphatically that we are not in any way an old boys and girls club, many of which were formed years ago as much to promote the agencies as to provide a social contact network for those who have been in their care. We are not a social club, but a campaigning organisation. There exists, particularly in Western Australia, a number of small localised groups purporting to represent child migrants. Scratch the surface of these organisations and you will find the Christian Brothers, the Church, and others who have things to hide. These organisations need to be looked into closely. They are often divisive and prevent the healthy growth and development so desperately needed for those of us who have been scarred for life.

The Committee meets regularly with our members in Australia. We listen carefully to their views, opinions and aspirations. The Secretary works from Melbourne and is available most days to deal with enquiries. The Association's President is based in Perth, Western Australia, and enjoys regular contact with child migrants across the world. The Vice-President, based in New South Wales, meets regularly with members in Queensland and Sydney.

The Association produces an International Journal which we take great pride in. It serves many purposes, but is intended to ensure our members are kept up to date with developments. Our intention is always to produce a journal which is uplifting and positive. We tend to concentrate on family reunions and the search for identity, as this provides so much hope for those of us who still wait. It is always of great joy to our members to learn of others who are meeting their families and beginning to move into a more positive period in their lives. International Focus is sent to Senior Government Ministers, both in Australia and the United Kingdom, members of the U.K. Foreign Office based in Australia, the Prime Ministers, John Howard and Tony Blair.

Our membership represents most of the major receiving institutions in Australia and other Commonwealth countries. Our members spent their childhoods in some of the following institutions:

BARNARDOS, NSW

BURNSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHILDREN'S HOME, NSW

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS INSTITUTIONS: CLONTARF, CASTLEDARE, TARDUN
AND BINDOON IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

CLARENDON CHILDREN'S HOME, TASMANIA

DALMAR CHILDREN'S HOME, NSW

DHURRINGHILE PRESBYTERIAN FARM SCHOOL, VICTORIA

FAIRBRIDGE FARM SCHOOLS, MOLONG IN NSW, PINJARRA IN WESTERN
AUSTRALIA & TRESKA IN TASMANIA

METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOMES, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA &
MURRAY DWYER CATHOLIC ORPHANAGE, NSW
NAZARETH HOUSE ORPHANAGES, WESTERN AUSTRALIA & VICTORIA
NORTHCOTE FARM SCHOOL, VICTORIA
SALESIAN BROTHERS BOYS TOWN, TASMANIA
SISTERS OF MERCY ORPHANAGES AT GOODWOOD, SOUTH AUSTRALIA;
NEERKOL, QUEENSLAND; LANE COVE, NSW
ST JOHN'S BOYS HOME, (ANGLICAN), VICTORIA
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.
UNITED PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION, NSW
SWAN HOMES, (ANGLICAN), WESTERN AUSTRALIA

As you would anticipate, our membership consists of those former Child Migrants who are Australian veterans, both men and women; farmers; professionals; domestic and factory workers; those who are unemployed; retired and pensioners. We have all been Australian taxpayers.

The Association has strong links to the Child Migrants Trust. Our Association grew out of our role some years ago when we were asked to provide an advisory service to the Child Migrants Trust in Australia. The Trust is a professional organisation and as such, rightly in our view, sought the opinions of the consumers of its service. Let's face it, without the Child Migrants Trust we most certainly would not have met our families and would probably still be living a complete lie about our status. The Trust's position has always been to focus on the positive aspects of what could be done now to help us face the future in a more constructive and meaningful way. After fourteen years of dedicated service, which has changed the lives of thousands for the better, it seems highly appropriate that as an Association we would strive to work closely with the Trust.

Our work with the media has been, in our view, a strength to our cause. We have helped to achieve well-balanced documentary programmes. Our recent work with CBS in America, which was transmitted in over 50 countries, won a prestigious Emmy Award in New York last year. We have been involved in several documentaries, and the print media have followed the development of this Association with great interest.

SECTION 1 - CHILD MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA

Unaccompanied children have been imported into Australia as a cheap, **useful commodity** since the nineteenth century. Convict children, famine victims from Ireland, and later children from impoverished backgrounds were rounded up at intervals throughout the nineteenth century and dispatched to labour starved Australia. This was the precedent for the twentieth century Commonwealth Child Migration Schemes.

Twentieth century child migration was marketed as strengthening the Empire, a cheap way of building the population in Australia, replacing war dead from the Great War. This transformed into racist hysteria with the rhetoric of Arthur Caldwell and others, anxious to protect Australia from the 'Yellow Peril'. 'Populate or Perish' was the catch cry of Australian politicians in the post war era, and under that banner child migration was strongly pursued by successive Australian Governments from 1912 to 1970.

Child migration to Canada was stopped in the 1920s following an outcry about the lack of safeguards for children and the likelihood of abuse and exploitation. Sadly, the lessons from Canada were ignored by the Australian Government.

Churches and charities competed with one another to receive the largest number of children into Australia for religious reasons. Child Migrants were pawns in religious struggles for supremacy, particularly between the Catholic and Protestant churches. The Australian Government exploited these dubious motives towards the goal of increasing Australia's population as quickly and cheaply as possible.

ONLY WHITE CHILDREN WERE SELECTED

There were many black children living in the United Kingdom during those years who were in similar situations to ourselves. These black children may have welcomed the opportunity to live in this 'wonderful' place called Australia. They were denied this 'opportunity' because of the colour of their skin. This must be one of the few times when it was advantageous to be black, thereby saving them from a lifetime of loss and pain.

His Grace the Archbishop of Perth, showed he clearly understood and supported the racially based 'White Australia Policy' when he welcomed British boys arriving in Australia in August 1938 with the following speech:

'At a time when empty cradles are contributing woefully to our empty spaces, it is necessary to look for external sources of supply. And if we do not supply them from our own stock we are leaving ourselves all the more exposed to the menace of the teeming millions of our neighbouring Asiatic races...'

Some of our members have made the point that, as there has been no Asian invasion, former Child Migrants have fulfilled the obligations that were placed on them when they were deported to Australia.

At the same time that Australia was importing White British Children, it was forcibly removing Aboriginal children [who had white fathers] from their Aboriginal mothers. The 'WHITE AUSTRALIA POLICY' was firmly in place. No black or coloured people were allowed to emigrate or even enter Australia under the Immigration Act.

There have been many myths perpetuated by the deporting agencies and the governments involved in these devious Schemes. These myths have been used by governments to justify their Child Migration Policies - and by the deporting agencies to prevent child migrants from tracing their families, to gain public sympathy and good will, and to exploit the public purse.

MYTH NUMBER 1 - THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT PASSIVELY ACCEPTED CHILDREN SENT FROM BRITAIN BECAUSE OF THEIR SUBSERVIENT ROLE IN THE EMPIRE. BRITAIN WAS RESPONSIBLE

Far from being passive recipients of British children, the Australian Government actively sought 'Good White Stock' to protect Australia by building the population as quickly and cheaply as possible, and sent delegates to Britain to promote and expedite this trade in children. The Australian Government set a target of **50,000** child migrants in the first three post war years.

In January 1945, the Prime Minister called a conference of State Premiers in Canberra to discuss child migration. The briefing paper, not more than six pages, outlined the problem. Australia had seven million people – a population that increased naturally by only 55,000 to 56,000 a year. To achieve a population of ten million within twenty years, it was necessary to bring in up to 70,000 immigrants a year. In this paper it stated:

'The present proposal, approved in principle by the Commonwealth Government and now put forward to State Governments on whose full co-operation its success depends, is for an official child migration scheme.It is proposed that the Commonwealth Government seek out in Britain and Europe, in each of the first three post-war years, at least 17,000 children a year [i.e. About 50,000 in three years] suitable for migration to Australia....'

The Australian Government encouraged child migration by providing funds for building works to accommodate newly arrived children, and paid two thirds of the subsidies to support children imported, up to the age of 15 years. **This was an Australian initiative.**

MYTH NUMBER 2 - THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT REMAINED RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILD MIGRANTS. AUSTRALIA GAVE CHILDREN OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDED THEM WITH A FUTURE

Children deported to Australia under the Child Migration Schemes became the legal wards of the Commonwealth Government from the moment they arrived in Australia. The Commonwealth Government, under the Immigration [Guardianship of Children] Act 1946 [Commonwealth] was legally responsible for the welfare and guardianship of all child migrants under the age of 21 years who were not in the care of a parent or relative. While the Immigration Minister delegated this responsibility to the appropriate Minister in each State, this did not alleviate the Commonwealth Government's legal responsibility for the welfare of Child Migrants.

The Commonwealth and State Governments failed to put in place legislation to regulate the activities of the agencies who controlled the institutions. In reality, this failure meant there was no supervision or active involvement to protect us, and horrendous crimes were committed against large numbers of vulnerable children in institutions across Australia. As Child Migrants we were subjected to the control of State Children's Welfare Departments until we were 21 years old. This enforced control meant that we needed the consent of the 'Welfare' to move from abusive and exploited positions as farm or laundry workers, but had to satisfy the State Government welfare officer who generally took the word of our abuser and ignored our plea for assistance. There was no protection for 16-year-old girls raped by their 'employers'. No protection for child migrants who worked in slave labour conditions, often without pay, their wages offset against 'board and lodgings'. The lodgings were often tin sheds with no running water or toilet facilities. Our food was often left outside the back door while the family ate at the table.

Many child migrants simply ran away and hid until they thought they had turned 21. We had no birth certificates, no proof of identity, and no proof of how we arrived in Australia.

The same Children's Welfare Departments who controlled our lives, often went on to destroy our files and personal papers, and to deny our existence. The Department of Human Services in Victoria lost all child migrant files until some were finally 'found in a basement' in 1997.

SECTION 2 - CHILD MIGRANTS - WHO ARE WE?

MYTH NUMBER 3 - CHILDREN DEPORTED TO AUSTRALIA WERE WAR ORPHANS AND UNWANTED STREET URCHINS.

While there may have been a few orphans, the overwhelming majority of children had mothers, fathers, and extended families in the United Kingdom when they were deported. This cruel lie stopped the majority from ever searching for their parents and families; or asking for records. Why would you search for your parents when you have been told they are dead?

To label us unwanted street urchins was despicable and untrue. It stigmatized former Child Migrants and our families. It is also highly disrespectful to our mothers and fathers, many of whom came to claim us but were similarly deceived by Churches and charities who lied that we had been adopted in England - or often in America.

The term 'ORPHAN' is highly emotive. It was used in the propaganda of the governments and the deporting agencies to exploit public sympathy and the public purse, and to promote them as 'SAVIOURS' of vulnerable 'unwanted', 'orphan' children. It is now widely acknowledged that the overwhelming majority of former Child Migrants were not orphans. The Child Migrants Trust verifies this fact. However, some people continue to use this highly emotive term to describe former Child Migrants. They do this for their own purposes, and to satisfy their own needs.

A book about child migration written by journalist Alan Gill was published in 1997. The title of this book is: Orphans Of The Empire: The Shocking Story Of Child Migration To Australia.

Alan Gill's research into Child Migration must have been quite flawed, in our view, given the title of his publication. His research would surely have shown that the overwhelming majority of former Child Migrants were not orphans when they were deported. Yet he uses this emotive term in the title of his book, thereby perpetuating the mythology. We consider this is gross insensitivity and does nothing whatsoever to further our cause or provide the clarity which is so desperately needed on these issues. If Alan Gill is so concerned about the plight of child migrants, a donation from his royalties would not have gone amiss. We could contrast this, of course, with the author of "Empty Cradles", whose royalties have ensured that the Child Migrants Trust was able to continue its work when those responsible failed to put their hands in their pockets. We did discuss this matter with Mr Gill some time ago.

Children were sought for deportation directly from children's homes in Britain, and from their own families **by stealth**. The Australian and British Governments worked in partnership with Churches and charities to round up children in a planned and organised strategy.

Prior to the Welfare State in Britain, many children were placed in care by single mothers, often coerced by the clergy to place their babies for adoption for religious reasons - to 'protect our faith'. Many of us are children of marriages that broke down during the war years. Because there was very limited support for single parents in those days and for families who were experiencing difficult times, mothers were often forced to place their children in the care of church and charitable 'caring agencies' or government agencies, until they were in a better position to care for their children themselves.

DECEIT AND DECEPTION

There are many examples of mothers being deceived by the church and charitable agencies who judged them to be 'unsuitable' parents. When some mothers returned to the agencies to take their children home, they were told lies - that their child had been adopted by a 'good family' in the UK or, in some cases, the most despicable lie of all - that their child had died.

This deliberate deception was then compounded by deporting us to the other side of the world. Little wonder the charities and churches covered their tracks and denied us information about our family backgrounds - we had been deported by stealth and deception. Sometimes our mothers never gave up looking for us, but the majority believed the lies told by persons in authority. Like us, they lived in pain and torment for the rest of their lives.

INFORMED CONSENT

Some children were deported with the consent of their parents. But what were they actually promised? Parents who were consulted were often, like us, told fanciful tales of wonderful opportunities abroad. Told there were families waiting for their children to bestow all the bounties of post war Australia. Nothing was said about harsh institutions, slave labour, desperate hunger, educational deprivation, rampant paedophilia. Sometimes parents were told their children had been sent to Canada, when in fact they had been deported to Australia.

In some situations, parents were tricked into consent by a promise that they could follow their children to Australia, or that their children could return if they were unhappy. These matters are difficult to evidence after so many years, but one of our members has her mother's desperate letters demonstrating the deception of this very situation. By the time her mother finally paid her own way to Australia the children were wards of the State and home release to her was refused. **Was this informed consent?**

Letters and gifts sent to children were rarely passed on. Those children who knew they had families were usually told they were unwanted; that their parents had abandoned them. They have lived with this cruel deception for decades. We find the evidence on our files, long held back from us.

SECTION 3 - UNDERSTANDING OUR OWN HISTORY

The Child Migration Schemes were the result of a deliberate policy of socio-political engineering by the British and Australian Governments.

Unlike other immigrants, former Child Migrants did not emigrate to Australia of their own free will. The Association uses the word deported because this best describes the way in which we experienced our arrival. Our members are becoming increasingly frustrated by the sanitised use of language employed by those who wish to minimise and normalise our ordeal. Those involved in these past practices continually re-frame their involvement to suit the particular context of the day.

An overwhelming majority of former Child Migrants experienced high levels of confusion and alienation as a result of their removal. There was very limited understanding of the schemes or the numbers in Australia suffering as a result of their experiences and isolation. It was only when the Child Migrants Trust came along and exposed our desperate situation in the late 1980s that we started, individually at first, to have some reality based information. We had no idea that Australia was involved in wholesale trade in children. We remember shiploads full of kids but our parties were kept apart. No adult seemed to ever explain anything to us.

Many of us believed we must have been *'really bad children'* to be sent so far away from our country of birth, from home. This belief has stayed with us all our adult lives and has been a source of shame and confusion. The majority believed that the small or large group they had arrived with were the only ones, for example, a child migrant deported to Neerkol in 1951 may have believed that there were only 48 children sent to the country.

Even today, nobody in the Australian or British Governments can give an accurate number of how many children arrived in Australia. The figure of 10 thousand post war children was suggested in the early 1990s. This has been a subject of considerable discussion. Perhaps the figure is closer to 6 thousand. We do not know. This is not a piece of ancient history – it happened in the 20th Century. That there is no clarity of this important issue is a good example of the lack of attention to detail that illustrates the Government's administration of the Schemes.

The Child Migrants Trust is able to demonstrate clearly the lengths they have gone to, to educate Governments and policy-makers about the long-term damage of the Child Migration Schemes. We had no words to describe ourselves. The terms *'orphans'* and *'war orphans'* were part of the emotive propaganda used by governments, churches and charitable agencies when we

arrived. It was never correct. Children were brought to Australia *before* the war. This propaganda was used to exploit public sympathy. It made the governments and the agencies who were involved in our deportation look as if they were carrying out charitable, humane work. It also assisted the deporting agencies to make money out of us; to seek and receive donations from local communities, and receive awards for their good works in helping the unfortunate 'war orphans' from bleak post war Britain. It was an effective strategy. It stopped the Australian people asking any difficult questions, and it prevented many of us from searching for our families when we were younger.

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

There could be many hundreds, possibly thousands, of former Child Migrants in Australia today who still believe they are 'orphans' and have no family, or that they were deported to Australia because they were unwanted. Or worse, because they are guilty of some childhood crime. They could be living in isolation, in caravans, in a small country town, or in the outback, still without a birth certificate, proof of identity, or proof of how they arrived in Australia.

RELIEF – ANGER - DISTRESS

When former Child Migrants first learn about the politics of child migration, our initial response is often relief that we were not the only ones. This is followed by anger and distress when we learn that so many of us were lied to and deceived by the agencies and the governments involved in our deportation. *Imagine learning after a lifetime alone that you were not an orphan, 'war' or otherwise, when you were deported.*

This anger and distress is compounded when we learn that our parents; our mothers in particular, were also lied to and deceived, even more so for those former Child Migrants whose parents are found too late. We feel the responsibility of justice and healing for our mothers and fathers, and an urgent need to put things right.

For the first time in our sorry history we have an agency with highly developed skills and expertise in this area. The Child Migrants Trust are world experts on the subject of child migration and the complex task of reuniting us with our families under these terrible circumstances. We are indeed fortunate that the Trust decided many years ago to use their scarce resources here in Australia where there was so much hope for us.

DENIAL OF OUR HISTORY

During an interview in the Emmy award winning 1999 CBS '60 Minutes II – The Lost Children' documentary about Child Migration, Philip Ruddock MP, Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, was asked why Australia had not apologised to former Child Migrants.

The Minister answered: *'I am not sure what we would be apologising for. What we sought to do in Australia was to provide an environment in which young people who were brought here, and chosen by a Government abroad, were given the opportunity for a new life, and many have had that opportunity.'*

[Interviewer]: *'What to apologise for? Children were brutalized.'*
'I'm not sure that that's the outcome. There were a number of people who were brutalized according to the allegations that they are making.'

[Interviewer]: *'You don't doubt these allegations do you?'*
'I don't know. I am a lawyer and my training is to require proof and corroboration when these allegations are made.'

Former Child Migrants have been angered by the Minister's comments, particularly those who were physically and sexually abused. Many instances of abuse are now a matter of public record. The Minister's comments have the potential to diminish former Child Migrants' evidence, question their integrity and heighten their pain. They ignore the fact of public acknowledgements by some organisations for abuse perpetrated against former Child Migrants. The Minister also minimises our experience and our loss by continually emphasising that many former Child Migrants have **done well**. Mr Ruddock's comments typify the response by the Australian Government to child migrants desperate pleas for help.

If the Minister doubts the allegations of horrendous human rights abuses made by large numbers of former Child Migrants and requires proof and corroboration, the Australian Government should hold a full Judicial Inquiry into the Child Migration Schemes. This Inquiry would have the power and the expertise to investigate the allegations, and to bring the people who were directly, or indirectly, responsible for these horrendous crimes against young vulnerable children to account.

In plain terms, the International Association wishes to make it clear that this is not a submission on behalf of a bunch WHINGING POMS. It is a genuine call for help from a group of people who have lost so much that the rest of our society take for granted. It is a call for justice.

THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL BETRAYAL

Former Child Migrants were stripped of everything when we were deported to Australia under the Child Migration Schemes. It was a dehumanising process designed to cut us off from our past, our loved ones, our identities, our country and our friends.

Many of us have gained the respect of our communities through our positive and varied contributions to the welfare of our communities. As you would expect, we serve our communities in both public and private forums. We defended Australia in times of war and many of our members served distinguished terms of employment in the military, and fought for Australia in the Korean and Vietnam wars; even though [unbeknown to us] we had not been granted the status of Australian Citizenship when we arrived. The overwhelming majority of former Child Migrants continue to live in Australia now because we want to. We see ourselves as 'Aussies' – not 'Pommies'. We enjoy the Australian way of life, the Australian culture, and respect the Australian philosophy of a 'Fair Go'. But, like most individuals and groups in society we will no longer tolerate being discriminated against.

AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP – PROOF OF IDENTITY

For decades, we believed that when we arrived in Australia we automatically became Australian citizens. This was not the case, as many of us found out when we needed social security benefits, and had to provide proof of identity, and proof of how we had arrived in Australia.

We may have served in the Australian military and fought for Australia in Korea or Vietnam, or both; but when we wanted to claim social security benefits, **we were told we were aliens**, and if we couldn't prove how we arrived in Australia we would be deported! The Association has a member who was deported to Australia as a young child. **He served in the Australian military, married and had a family.** At a point later in his life he moved for a while to New Zealand. When he tried to re-enter Australia, he was told that he was not an Australian Citizen, and as he had no visa he could not enter Australia.

He has a son, 3 daughters and 15 grandchildren living in Australia. He wrote to the Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock regarding his Australian Citizenship. The response he received was that if his children sponsored him for citizenship, he could stay in Australia for two years, and the Australian Government would then consider him for citizenship.

Until 1995 former Child Migrants had to pay for the privilege of Citizenship! Only the intervention of the Child Migrants Trust removed that obstacle for us.

SECTION 4 - HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN AUSTRALIA

The 1998 House of Commons Health Select Committee Inquiry into the Welfare of former Child Migrants was overwhelmed with written and oral evidence from former Child Migrants who had experienced degrees of physical, sexual and psychological abuse throughout Australia in our receiving institutions. All these institutions were run by the so-called “good and great” in our society.

Likewise, the 1998 Forde Inquiry into Queensland institutions was also inundated with written and oral evidence on the same issues from former Child Migrants based at Neerkol in Northern Queensland.

The accumulated allegations received by both inquiries led the Health Select Committee to conclude that there had been “*widespread abuse*” within some institutions throughout Australia; and the Forde Inquiry to conclude:

‘Over the years significant numbers of children in the care of the State in government and non-government institutions have been subjected to repeated physical, emotional and sexual abuse.’

It is quite clear from the two inquiries we have referred to that a Judicial Inquiry is essential to ensure the evidence is collected and investigated within a legal framework. Are we ever going to be believed? That, of course, is the fear of all those who have suffered abusive childhoods.

We, and our families, are having to slowly come to terms with a tragedy that has impacted very heavily on all of us. The Australian Government should demonstrate the same level of courage and face up to their responsibilities. The Government’s response in Australia to the Stolen Generation demonstrates a clear defensiveness which saddens our community. We do not enjoy reliving our childhood experiences. There is part of us all that resents the need to expose ourselves in front of others with the pain of our past – the rape, the torture, the imprisonment, the humiliation and the degradation. Revisiting the past is an extremely painful and distressing process.

Many of us have never told our families, or our friends, because of the stigma of child migration. Work colleagues have no idea we are child migrants. The Association is working hard to ensure that former Child Migrants no longer feel ashamed of who they are, but to feel proud because they are survivors.

Remember we were children. While much of our suffering continues as adults, we were children when we were abused in care, and betrayed by the British and Australian Governments. **We ask you to bear in mind that the horrendous atrocities you will read in submissions and hear in oral evidence happened to children, aged 4 to 14 years old.**

MYTH NUMBER 4 - LET'S EXPLODE ANOTHER MYTH - CHILD CARE IN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTIONS WAS IN LINE WITH THE 'STANDARDS OF THE DAY.'

When has extreme brutality and horrendous criminal offences against vulnerable young children ever been acceptable in Australia as the 'standards of the day'? If this Australian Government holds the view that these practices were acceptable, God help this country.

TERROR AND CONFUSION

When children arrived in Australia many were separated on the docks from their brothers and sisters, and from their friends, with no explanation. Many were herded onto the back of trucks and driven off miles into the outback. **Young vulnerable children, most of us between the ages of 6 and 10 years old.**

Some children were fingerprinted when they arrived. Deported from their country of birth – and treated like criminals in their new country. Many were stripped of their clothes in public, and given ill-fitting institutional clothing. No underwear. No shoes. Some children's hair was cropped or shaved. Every link with our home and individual identities was taken from us. Some children were given numbers, no longer called by name. On the first day at their new home, a large cold institution, many witnessed a child being publicly beaten for some unknown crime. They were immediately terrorised. The campaign of fear had started. Many were soon put to work. One woman recalls being beaten at the age of 8 for hiding one of her socks under her mattress - her only link with her past.

Many children were constantly brutalised by exposure to violence. Small children were made to slaughter animals. In front of us, our pets were killed. Many of us dreamt of running away, but saw what happened to those who tried. In Western Australia, under the Christian Brothers, a barbaric practice called 'running the gauntlet' was instituted for children who tried to run away; stripped naked, children would have to run between two lines of older boys armed with sticks. Then they would be beaten until they reached the end, where a Christian Brother would kick them to the ground, leaving them bruised and bleeding. Fairbridge Farm Schools instituted public floggings for children who tried to run away from their military style regime.

HUNGER AND DEPRIVATION

Many Child Migrants knew extreme hunger and deprivation in Australian institutions. Food was used to punish and control. Some children were kept in near starvation conditions and then used as slave labour on outback farm and building projects. Children were fed tasteless slop while those in charge ate decent meals in front of them. This often led to children stealing from rubbish bins, eating animal feed, scavenging for anything they could find – tea leaves from the teapot, anything to quell the constant gnawing pain in their bellies. When children were caught stealing food they were made an example of – by beatings in the yard. Children were made to kneel for hours with their arms outstretched as ‘atonement’.

Some children were forced to sleep on outdoor verandas, through all seasons. This happened in Western Australia, in Victoria, across the country. Little children [sometimes only five or six years old] who wet their beds were beaten and humiliated. Made to walk around with urine soaked sheets on their heads, and then forced to sleep outdoors in the middle of winter as a punishment. This was not limited to one or two institutions - we hear the same accounts over and over from our members. Were these the standards of the day? Did it happen to you in your home as a child?

Not all former Child Migrants will describe themselves as abused. Many are too proud. Many don't want to think about their experiences, they are too painful. Many will tell you they lived in fear and hunger, day in, day out.

Where were the children's legal guardians? Where were the State Welfare officers?

The Australian and State Governments failed in every aspect of their duty of care. They failed to ensure that Child Migrants in many of the institutions had adequate food, clothing, shelter and safety.

SLAVE LABOUR & EDUCATIONAL DEPRIVATION

Most of us were made to work in the mornings before we were fed. Many children [when they could be spared from hard labour in laundries or on the farm] were too exhausted and hungry to learn anything at school.

A few children received favourable attention and were permitted to proceed to secondary education. Many children were exploited within the institutions; which doubled as sweatshops for the charities and churches to exploit the neglect of their absent legal guardians.

Across Australia the story of slave labour is similar. In Adelaide, girls under the brutal control of the Sisters of Mercy were forced to do 'strings and tags' as a punishment. Hours spent in this cottage industry brought income to the Sisters of Mercy and misery to little girls, forced to make packaging labels for the local butcher until their fingers bled. Any excuse was used to force the girls to carry out this labour. Confused little girls wondering why they were being punished had no idea the Sisters of Mercy were exploiting their labour to fill quotas.

In New South Wales, boys under the control of Barnardos were forced to carry out manual labour on farms, producing goods to enhance the agency's income. Farm work carried out with empty bellies and the constant threat of a beating if they stopped work. The same at Fairbridge Farm Schools where the labour was masked as 'training', by the organisation's cheerful promise for the future: 'Boys to be farmers, girls to be farmers' wives'. Too bad if we wanted an education. On weekends, boys and girls were 'loaned out' from Fairbridge to local farmers to carry out more manual work - a nice little earner for the 'charity'.

In Western Australia, boys as young as 9 were used on building projects with absolutely no regard for safety. Little boys without shoes were forced onto building sites, on scaffolding without safety rails. Many were injured from falling masonry, lime burns from mixing cement, blistering sunburn. Starved children were forced to carry out backbreaking work, like clearing stumps from fields, building their own institution, their own prison.

There are many examples throughout history where horrendous criminal offences have been committed against innocent people. These atrocities have been acknowledged and condemned by all democratic governments, and by all who respect Human Rights.

Large numbers of children at Christian Brothers' institutions received very little education. The priority was physical labour. ***Complaints about this practice in Christian Brothers institutions had been made by the Western Australian State Government as early as 1940, yet the abuse went on mercilessly into the 1950s.*** Beatings in class, and terror of predatory Christian Brothers lurking nearby left children with little ability or energy to concentrate on an educational program that emphasised religion rather than basic skills anyway.

The high level of illiteracy amongst former Child Migrants today is the legacy of educational neglect and the State Government's failure to act on its own reported concerns.

CHILD BASHING AND TORTURE

Child migrants placed in Australian institutions were frequently subjected to levels of physical abuse that can only be described as torture. Many of our members still carry physical scars from assaults by adults endorsed by the Australian Government to provide day-to-day care. Some of our members have hearing loss from beatings to the head, some carry deformities from constant caning across the hands, some have needed surgery to repair tears to the bowel and anus from torture with weapons and farm implements. We are not merely talking about the odd belting with a strap.

Some children were tied to fence posts, arms outstretched in the shape of a crucifix, and left all day in the sun until unconscious, they were cut down to be kicked and beaten. Children had their teeth knocked out in beatings. Leather straps with metal strips inserted were routinely used on children. Nuns walked the grounds with leather straps hanging by their side, ever ready to beat small children. Children had their bodies mutilated by farm equipment; their hands deliberately held onto electric grinders, boys had their testicles hit with walking sticks, children were given electric shocks in workshops, all done to instil fear and control. All done to satisfy sadistic tendencies and often followed by sexual attacks upon children by now too terrified to speak.

It is sickening to recount the atrocities perpetrated upon child migrants in Australian institutions. Where were their legal guardians? Our members will give you example after example in their individual submissions.

PAEDOPHILES AND PREDATORS

The Christian Brothers in Western Australia cry unfair that they are judged by a few 'rotten apples in the barrel'. Christian Brothers' institutions were paedophile rings. Their Order should be expelled from Australia. It is inconceivable that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church were not aware of the paedophile rings operating within the institutions run by the Christian Brothers. Offenders were moved from one institution to another, where they continued to criminally assault young children. It is also inconceivable that any of the Brothers were unaware of the nightly attacks on children. Children walked around in the daytime bleeding from the anus, we are told. The Brothers made no effort to even disguise the abuse let alone provide medical treatment. Our members recall that those children who complained were beaten, starved and victimised.

Organised paedophile events took place whereby children were selected for a night's 'entertainment'. Children were unsafe everywhere; assaults occurred in:

- the dormitories
- the showers
- on building works
- in the class room
- in the church

The Christian Brothers had no limits to their depravity or savagery. Children were forced to have sex with animals, with Christian Brothers, with each other. Sexual assaults were often combined with violence, increasing the fear. Some children simply passed out with terror. Today many of us suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. The impact upon our lives and adult relationships has been devastating. These are some of the 'unintended consequences of well-intentioned Schemes' Mr Ruddock refers to.

Actions against the Christian Brothers over recent years have exposed them. However; the role of the Australian Government, and the collusion between the State and the Christian Brothers, has not been dealt with. Why has the Australian Government and the West Australian State Government failed to condemn the actions of the Christian Brothers in abusing children in State Care?

There are other forms of sexual abuse apart from rape and buggery that have lasting effects upon children. Many child migrant girls were victimised by predatory cottage parents or grounds staff in other institutions. In one Fairbridge institution, girls were sometimes stripped and beaten in front of other children. There was a sexual element to the humiliation.

Child migrants from other institutions have reported sexual assaults, although not on the organised scale of the Christian Brothers. There have been allegations against the Marist Brothers in Sydney, the Salesians in Tasmania; against Fairbridge cottage parents, against the Sisters of Mercy. It is likely that legal actions will continue for many years to come.

A JUDICIAL INQUIRY IS VITAL

The perpetrators of criminal offences against vulnerable children must be brought to account.

LIES & DECEPTION

The overwhelming majority of child migrants known to the International Association were told they were orphans when they arrived in Australia. That was a lie. Probably it was done to stop questions being asked. Perhaps it was done to obtain community sympathy and donations. It was still a lie. The deporting agencies knew it was a lie. The authorities knew it was a lie. The State Children's Welfare Departments knew it was a lie. Perhaps in those times people thought it was kinder to tell children there was no hope. We don't believe for a minute that we were lied to as a kindness; or out of concern for our welfare.

The continuation of this deceit amounts to further abuse, which perpetuates our pain and suffering.

Child migrants were lied to about:

- their names
- their ages
- their places of birth
- the reasons for their deportation
- their records did not exist

EVERYTHING WAS A GROSS DECEPTION

The net result was that it was near impossible for us to trace our identities and families. We now know it was vital that we be prevented from tracing our families because we had been illegally deported. Our families were also told lies and deceived by the deporting church and charitable agencies - horrific lies regarding their children's whereabouts and welfare. Many of our parents have died without knowing the truth about their children.

At the very heart of our experience is the unholy alliance between the State, the Church and the so-called "respectable" charities. Whenever these three institutions gather together, someone, or some group is likely to suffer. History will bear this out. One can only conclude that vested interests and cover ups were accepted practices, given that not one element of this trilogy blew the whistle!

One of our members holds a letter of inquiry about his family background, written when he was about 15. The Children's Welfare officer has written an instruction on the bottom of the letter "**say Parents both died while a baby.**" The Child Migrants Trust has since reunited him with his mother in Ireland, and with extended family members.

Why were letters from parents and families held back from children? In later years as adults, many of us returned to the institutions to inquire about our family backgrounds and about our past. Almost without exception we were told there were no available records; they had been destroyed. We were often politely reminded that we should be grateful for the great kindness shown to us by institutions in Australia, undeserving Poms that we are. In the past few years, some of the records that were 'destroyed' have turned up. We have no doubt this has been on legal advice. The deception of the charities, churches and State Governments has become all too clear. The delay in receiving letters sent to us by our families 50 years ago has robbed many of us of the chance of ever meeting our mothers and fathers.

At Clontarf in Western Australia during the 1950s, boys inquiring about their age and family backgrounds were lined up against the fence and given birthdays from consecutive days of the month. We see this practice as the final stripping of our identity. Many of our members have learned in later life that they are up to three years older than they had been told. They have learned their names are different, sometimes there are spelling changes but other times names have been completely changed.

It was common practice in some girls' institutions for names to be changed if there were, for example, too many Marys or Margarets. We were generally not given birth certificates when we left State care. Some of us were unable to obtain a certificate on our own because we had been told the wrong name, wrong year and wrong country of birth. For those of us with literacy problems the obstacles were even greater.

In the context of the abuse and degradation of child migrants, the lies about our identities were not a kindness by ignorant 'caregivers'. It was all part of the stripping of our identity, the brutalisation of small children. It is a practice with precedents in labour camps under brutal regimes. We simply disappeared as individuals. We were given numbers. We were told we were worthless. **Where was our legal guardian?**

SECTION 5 - GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO OUR REQUESTS FOR HELP

THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH AND STATE GOVERNMENTS FAILED IN THEIR DUTY OF CARE

For well over a decade the Director and Founder of the Child Migrants Trust, which is in essence an Australian and British project, has left no stone unturned in ensuring that those Governments involved in child migration, in particular the Australian Government, knew full well of the long-term impact of our ordeal. Advice has repeatedly been given on the appropriate ways forward to help relieve some of our distress.

The response from the Australian Government has been meagre to say the least. The Director of the Trust, Margaret Humphreys, wrote "*Empty Cradles*" in the early 1990's; contributed to the highly acclaimed ABC production of the "*Leaving of Liverpool*"; was instrumental in bringing about the first ever documentary, "*Lost Children of the Empire*" in 1989, together with a book which accompanied the programme. We could devote a whole submission to the work of the Trust and in particular its Director in her attempts to inform and educate Governments to respond to our plight while there was still time, and so much hope for us. We are interested to learn the reasons for the abysmal lack of an imaginative and positive response to this information and advice. The standing and reputation of Margaret Humphreys, both in Australia and the world on this issue is unparalleled. Indeed, Australia honoured Margaret Humphreys with the Order of Australia in 1993. A small group of former Child Migrants and the mother of a child migrant attended the very moving Investiture at Government House, Canberra. The Government can hardly feign ignorance on this matter.

Former Child Migrants are the only group of people to our knowledge (apart from refugees) who have been allowed to enter Australia without passports or visas. However; when we applied for welfare benefits we were treated like aliens, and threatened with deportation.

State Governments made no arrangements for our aftercare. Our records were not given to us, even when we asked for information.

GOVERNMENT INQUIRIES

Two inquiries have been held in Australia that examined issues relating to child migration. The 1996 Western Australian State Government Inquiry was a sham, that gave nothing after many former Child Migrants put themselves forward in the hope of acknowledgement and resources. Much was promised but nothing delivered. The Inquiry was never completed.

In 1998, the Forde Inquiry in Queensland included former Child Migrants in their state-wide brief concerning children in State care. The findings of the Inquiry validated our members' claims of outrageous brutality and human rights abuse at Neerkol. Disappointingly, the Queensland Government has not yet met the demands of former Child Migrants to fund the specialist independent services of a Child Migrants Trust office in Brisbane, so desperately needed.

State Governments have no understanding of the Child Migration issue and failed in their duty of care

State Governments in Australia have little means to offer any services to the child migrant community. We were not adopted, so therefore do not require post-adoption services. Our families, our early past are not in this country, they are elsewhere. They lie within a culture that many workers in the State Government have little or no understanding of. How could they possibly understand the effects on those we left behind? State Governments are unable to reunite us with our families and help us understand our fragmented childhoods. To provide an appropriate level of understanding and insight requires a breadth of knowledge and experience which, with due respect, is not held in large bureaucratic departments. Fragmentation of services should be avoided. It would fail to meet the needs of child migrants and their families, who need to know and understand the people they are working with in order to bring about the best possible chance of a meaningful and healing family reunion.

There exists many smoke-screens put out by the State Governments to avoid, in our view, providing the necessary funds for the Child Migrants Trust to provide its services in those States where child migrants reside. Professional workers in these departments are well aware of the need for independent services where there is evidence of child abuse and human rights abuses. It is not a new concept, and is fairly obvious, even to the non-professional. It is basic common sense. Here is an example from the State of Victoria, which is about as confusing and misleading as you can get. It speaks for itself:

...`I am advised that the primary facilitator of family reunification for former child migrants in Victoria is ISS Australia, with specific purpose funding provided by the British Government under its Support Fund.'....

ISS is not, and never has been the primary facilitator of family reunions for former Child Migrants in Victoria or anywhere else in Australia. ISS were simply asked by the British Government's Department of Health to administer the British Government's Travel/Support Fund. They provide no further services for former Child Migrants and their families. Indeed, they are not funded to do so. Let's be clear about this, the Victorian State Government are perpetuating another myth as an excuse for their abysmal track record on funding the Child Migrants Trust at its Melbourne office.

The Child Migrants Trust opened its first office in Victoria in the early 1990's. From that base it provides services to the Eastern States. Over the last decade there has been no other service provider in Victoria. The Victorian Government, to this very day, has failed to provide one dollar towards this service. The Hon. Christine Campbell is a disgrace to the Australian Labor Party.

The State Governments are clearly involved in the negligence of their duties towards child migrants. Their behaviour then, and more recently over the last decade, demonstrates incompetence and indifference – with the exception of Western Australia. State Governments will be a target for litigation and therefore are unacceptable in terms of direct service providers.

The Commonwealth Government did not recognise us or make any resources available until their limited funding of the Child Migrants Trust in 1990. In 1995 the Commonwealth Government took positive action by waiving the fee for Australian Citizenship, after advocacy by the Child Migrants Trust. This helpful action has been appreciated and shows how simple action to acknowledge our circumstances can help.

STATE GOVERNMENT DATABASES

Some Australian State Governments are claiming to help child migrants by producing databases that list our names and identify where our records are held. It is helpful to know how many children arrived in Australia, but producing a list of all child migrants will not help us to find our families. **We already know the agencies that deported us.** Former Child Migrants have been denied their records by those agencies for decades. Over the last decade the Child Migrants Trust has forced the issue and these records are now available to us, although often little is held in Australia to help us trace our families.

What we need from State Governments are resources to provide specialist independent services. To date, only the Western Australian State Government has acted with integrity by funding the Child Migrants Trust in Perth.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

National Archives have carried out considerable work in recent years to assist us to locate the limited records they hold. Shipping manifests and Child Migration Selection Documents, showing the identity of the person who authorised our deportation, are held by National Archives in each State. Access to these records is straightforward and their staff are helpful and responsive.

FUNDING FOR THE CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

Initially the Australian Government's support for the Child Migrants Trust gave us some cause for hope. The present government has shirked this issue and abdicated its responsibilities, consistently denying the degree of Federal Government involvement in these Schemes. The Government have entered into a blame culture, placing the majority of the responsibility onto the British Government. Funding for the Child Migrants Trust, initially promising, has been kept to pathetic levels. It is entirely due to the dedication and commitment of those working for the Trust that has enabled so many of us to meet our families for the first time and to benefit from very skilled and sensitive therapeutic relationships with the professional workers of the Trust.

We have in the Trust a social work agency providing services to clients across Australia. There is one social worker to service the entire eastern states of Australia and one social worker based in Western Australia. There is no funding for administration or travel. The level of funding does not reflect a Government who is committed to family reunions for child migrants. Rather, it represents an indifference to a section of the community who deserve and, some would say, have a right to a far greater level of provision. I think we could say without hesitation that discrimination is at the heart of this matter.

The Child Migrants Trust is the only agency funded by both the British and Australia Governments. The Government recognises independence as essential, but fails to adequately resource. The total of Australian Government funding for the last ten years is **A GRAND TOTAL OF \$885,021,00**

The Association understands that the Department of Immigration has asked the Child Migrants Trust to actively seek alternative funding when the current funding period ends in September 2001. At the time of writing this submission we are waiting to learn which Federal Government department is to take over the responsibility for funding this agency. We are of the view that the Department of Immigration & Multi-Cultural Affairs have intended to shed this portfolio for child migration for several years. We see this as just another turn of the screw in this shameful, sorry saga of child migration. We sincerely hope the officials in this department are questioned by the Committee.

Let's bear in mind the pathetic level of funding for the Trust against the \$16million provided for family reunifications for the Stolen Generation. Compare that to the ten years of funding provided to the Trust.

PARITY OF FUNDING

Although the situation of former Child Migrants and the Stolen Generation is different, there are many similarities which we are sure the members of this inquiry will recognise.

Following the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Inquiry into the Stolen Generation and the subsequent release of the Inquiry's "Bringing them Home" report; **the Federal Government provided a \$63,000,000 funding package to address the Stolen Generations needs. This included an independent counselling and family reunion service.**

The Association want to make its position on the funding issue extremely clear so that there can be no misunderstanding or misrepresentation. This is not an issue of 'us versus them;' or about who is receiving the most money. This is an issue about equality – about parity of funding for two groups of people who, because of Australian Government social engineering policies, have had similar traumatic experiences, of forced separation and loss of family life - and now have similar needs.

Both groups should receive the funding needed to provide the services they so desperately need. There should be no discrimination. They should be treated equally. There is discrimination at present, based on race.

While the Association cannot provide accurate figures regarding the numbers of people within each group who require a counselling and family reunion service, we believe the dollar figures given demonstrate clearly that there is no parity of funding between the two groups.

The Association calls on members of this Inquiry to ask the Prime Minister and the Immigration Minister to explain:

- **Why the Australian Government is discriminating against former Child Migrants in regards to funding?**
- **Why they believe the Stolen Generation are entitled to an independent, specialist service – but former Child Migrants are not?**
- **Why they are prepared to put in place policies which will force former child migrants to return to the organisations who were responsible for their deportation and for criminal abuse.**

SECTION 6 - PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Our submission has outlined the service provision we require. That professional service exists. It is in place and operating to a very high level of professional practice and expertise. The Child Migrants Trust has the infrastructure, the knowledge, the expertise, the proven track record and, just as importantly, has the trust and respect of child migrants and their families world-wide. They are funded by Government. The Trust brought about the British Health Select Committee of Inquiry. The agencies work is recognised, acknowledged and professionally respected. They are renowned. We need to urgently further develop their services. It is as simple and straightforward as that, in our view.

FAMILY REUNIONS

Many of our members have been reunited with their families through the Child Migrants Trust. We have witnessed and experienced the effect that reunification has had on our members. It is amazing! It is like meeting a completely different person, a happy, confident, complete person. A person who now knows who they are and where they come from. A person who, after decades of not belonging, knows that they belong; knows that they are a member of a loving family, and knows that they were not an 'unwanted street urchin' – or an orphan when they were deported.

We have also, sadly, seen the tragedy of some of our members undertaking their own reunions without help; sometimes simply knocking on their mother's door without support. The effect of this can be devastating for mothers and former Child Migrants. The lack of preparation and sensitive counselling for family members and former child migrants can often prevent a meaningful reunion.

We have also heard about the failed reunions for some former child migrants who returned to their deporting agency for a service. For some, lack of trust in those who deceived them in the past has played a part in the outcome. This could be seen as secondary abuse. Fortunately for many, the Child Migrants Trust have been able to recover the situation and bring about a meaningful reunion.

Child Migrants and their families need a service that is independent of the abuses of the past. We need an agency that does the work with our families overseas as well as with child migrants in Australia. **A fully comprehensive service.**

Preparing to meet your family after 50 years should not be done by letter or by sending reports to a State Government social worker who knows nothing about us or our families. We believe this work should not be done by the deporting agencies who have a vested interest in covering their tracks.

This work needs to be done by highly specialist workers; employed by an independent organisation who had no involvement in the Child Migration Schemes. There are so many sensitive and complex issues involved in meeting your family. We need to be able to trust the agency who is tracing and reuniting us with our families. When our elderly mothers and fathers are found often after a long and difficult search, we do not want just anybody to go to see them. Imagine how fearful we are at the point when our family is first contacted. Imagine our need for reassurance and absolute confidence that the agency doing that incredible piece of work knows us personally, and can pass on a personal message from us to our families - the first contact. So much depends on that first meeting. Our families will often need a great deal of support as well. We need the same agency that works with us in Australia to be working with family overseas. Fragmentation of services at that sensitive point will not work.

It is our view that the deporting agencies should not be trusted to work with child migrants. They have limited credibility on this issue, and most people would understand that.

The Child Migrants Trust has offered a blueprint of how services should be delivered. They have the infrastructure in place in the United Kingdom and Australia to provide the complete service that former child migrants and their families need.

SECTION 7 - CONTINUING ABUSE

The Association is increasingly disturbed at the renewed attempts by governments, churches and charities to deceive child migrants and their families with dubious offers of help. For decades the deporting agencies withheld important information and records which would have helped former child migrants to find their families when they were younger. No authority wanted to help us. Now, particularly after the UK Health Select Committee Inquiry Report and Recommendations, child migrants are being seduced into returning for 'help' to the discredited agencies that deceived us and our families when we were children.

Some former Child Migrants have maintained strong links with the deporting agencies. Some still strongly defend them. You will meet them. Often they are the same people who state that they have no desire to search for their families, still holding on to the belief that they were 'abandoned', the stories we were all told as children. They will say: 'if my family want me, they know where to find me.' But the truth is probably very different. In many ways it is like some victims of domestic violence, still clinging to the perpetrators, because the truth is too painful to acknowledge. We remember some of those people as children, and we know what happened to many of them. Some of us used to cling to the agencies as well - despite everything they did to us they were all we had. Until we tried to break free and find our true identities and families. Agencies that lay claim to our identities, for example 'Barnardos' Boy', show little regard for us as individuals and continue to cling to old-fashioned ideas of 'benevolent' child care. We acknowledge that for some child migrants their identity is so tied up with these agencies that liberation, self-confidence, self-respect will be a long time coming – if ever. The shackles that bind us to an abusive childhood can be very heavy.

The migrating agencies and the State Governments denied our needs and our experiences for decades. Many children were abused and brutalised in their care. They hid our records and lied to us about our identities and our families. They exploited our labour and stole our childhood. Now they want us to go to them for services. Many of our members have likened this to asking the Jews to return to the Nazis for counselling.

The Catholic Church is particularly aggressive in its seductive attempts to bring child migrants back into the fold. Their motives are plain, on the back of lawsuits for physical and sexual abuse. They do not warn child migrants of the possibility that using their services to trace their families may lead to a poor outcome. They do not warn child migrants that sending the Church to their mother's door may well lead to the door being slammed. The Church treated our mothers as fallen women 50 years ago. They abused our mothers and stole their children.

Our families were deceived like we were. How likely is it that our elderly parents will be accepting of an approach from the same organisation who deceived them 50 years ago? Their reunion figures prove the point. The Catholic Church peddles the myth that family reunions are rarely successful. They said as much when they were called to give evidence before the UK Health Select Committee. We believe an explanation for their so-called unsuccessful family reunions can be attributed to their lack of independence, rather than to a families attitudes to the past. It is only a matter of time before the migrating agencies will have to account for some of their shoddy practices.

Barnardos in Sydney operate an aftercare service for former residents including former Child Migrants from Barnardos institutions. How can these agencies work honestly with us when they defend their part in our childhood abuse?

Fairbridge was one of the largest deporting agencies, but they offer nothing to former Child Migrants - no funding for services. The International Association respects the decision by the Fairbridge Board to avoid any involvement in professional services - but that does not absolve them of their responsibility to provide resources to deal with the tragedy and loss they played a part in. They should be encouraged to provide funding for the Child Migrants Trust, who work with so many old Fairbridgians. They could also support the International Association. Given that Fairbridge was established solely for the purpose of migrating children, we should, we believe, expect a rather different approach to the one presented to the UK Health Select Committee. Their Director was unrepentant and was labelled as complacent by members of that Committee.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Issues of historic abuse are unfortunately not new to us. We live in an age where the disclosure of the abuse of young children is almost a daily occurrence. The role of the Church has been exposed in recent times. There is hardly a day goes by when there is not a report of abuse being perpetrated by Priests, Brothers and others in position of a sacred kind of trust. For all decent thinking people, this exposure of the evils within our society, has come as a great shock. We have to come to terms with this gross betrayal and devise policies and practices which reflect the repugnance of society for these institutions, organisations and individuals who have committed acts of gross abuse on young, vulnerable children – whether it be today or in the past. A crime against a child, is a crime against a child, whether it occurred yesterday or 50 years ago. It is a criminal offence and an abhorrence to right-minded people. Governments must, and should, take the lead in these matters. Otherwise, unhelpful litigation will waste financial resources which could be better used in providing reparation. There are other ways also to bring about reparation, and that is the way Governments respond to organisations which betray the community.

It is clearly financially advantageous for any Government to take the view that those responsible for abuse should provide the post-abuse services. It is purely financial. It is morally abhorrent and ethically questionable.

The argument often put forward to give the agencies a contemporary role is the notion of choice. But we see no evidence of the deporting agencies providing pamphlets clearly outlining what those choices mean. If you smoke cigarettes there is a warning on the packet, yet the deporting agencies in their propaganda provide no warning on their leaflets. They fail to say *“we lied to you and your mother in the past, and therefore your mother may not want us over her doorstep, so the potential for your reunion will be compromised.”*

There is without doubt, in our view, a clear conflict of interest between the duty of an employee to their employers and the needs of our members. Let’s bear in mind – it was not the social workers in these migrating agencies who exposed this human rights tragedy, or asked for a Judicial Inquiry – they kept quiet for decades but got found out. However, these are large, powerful institutions who still try to wield their power in a world that is becoming increasingly questioning.

We look to this Committee to recommend a different approach by Government to those organisations and institutions which so badly let us down. In a society where the care of children is paramount the Christian Brothers, as one example, should in our view have been ordered out of Australia. Those in the Order who themselves were horrified and ashamed to be associated with such a past should bear the responsibilities of their Order. It would have been an act of respect for those who perished, physically and emotionally, at their hands.

SECTION 8 – THE WAY FORWARD

Clearly there is a need for reparation, which is the appropriate response to violations of human rights. According to international legal principles, reparation has the following components:

- acknowledgement of the truth and an apology
- guarantees that these human rights will not be breached again
- returning what has been lost as much as possible (known as restitution)
- compensation

The authorities clearly failed in their duties of care to the majority of former Child Migrants.

There are many measures which should be taken to build upon the positive outcomes of the United Kingdom Health Select Committee Inquiry. The result of this investigation by the British was very encouraging as a first step. It is unlikely, in our view, that the British Government will continue to foot the bill without a significant and lasting contribution from the Australian Government.

We are strongly of the view that the British and Australian Governments should form a working group of those in positions of power and influence that could bring this unhealthy impasse to a satisfactory conclusion. The Australian/British Governments together brought about these schemes which resulted in devastating consequences. It would now be reasonable to expect them to work just as hard together to remedy this appalling situation.

Child Migrants are disadvantaged in many aspects of their lives. There are many measures which could be put in place to alleviate the difficulties which have arisen as a direct result of their removal.

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

The most urgent and pressing need, in our view, is for increased funding for the Child Migrants Trust. It is vital that this professional service is supported and extended as a priority. The finding of our families and family restoration is of the utmost importance. It is the most crucial aspect of our being. It restores our sense of dignity and self-worth. We become equal to the rest of society. It is the start, for some, of a healing process. Time is running out, and the Government have known this for thirteen years. If they had acted promptly and adequately when first approached by the Trust every child migrant in Australia would know their family now.

We do not need to reinvent the wheel. The way our families are found, the integrity of the search is all linked to good outcomes. The service is in place. The expertise is there. The respect and regard for this agency is well known. Get on and fund it !

TRAVEL FUND

For the overwhelming majority of former Child Migrants the cost of being reunited with their families is prohibitive, and they cannot raise the necessary finances to make this vitally important visit. When our families are found, we are still 12,000 miles apart. Many of us have spent our life savings so we can be reunited with our families. Many have taken out loans that have placed enormous stress on their future financial stability and well-being.

Many people seem to believe that once a former Child Migrant has been reunited with their mother, father, or family member, that everything is 'hunky dory' and everyone lives happily ever after. They seem unable to comprehend that this first visit is the start of the reuniting process, that it is the first chapter in a very long and often painful story. A bittersweet story often, which can bring great joy and great sadness at the same time. Thirty, forty, fifty or sixty years of loss, pain, grief, anger and sadness cannot be resolved in one short visit and Australia will always remain 12,000 miles away.

When we have been reunited with our families we live emotionally in two countries. While the British Government have put in place a Travel Fund to assist child migrants to be reunited, the criteria are restrictive and discriminatory. Child Migrants whose close family have died are ineligible. At the end of our lifelong search, we are denied the chance to grieve our families in the most normal and acceptable manner - that is to attend the funerals of our families, lay flowers at their graves, which we all know is but the start of a mourning process.

The Association calls on the Australian Government to put in place a Travel Fund to assist former Child Migrants to meet their families while there is still time. The precedent already exists in relation to the Stolen Generation. A travel fund is a vital component of a package of services needed to address this Human Rights issue.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND APOLOGY

Many of our members have quite bluntly said: 'stuff the apology, what we want are the practical solutions the Prime Minister talks about'.

However, the majority feel that if the injustices they have suffered because of the Australian Government's role in the child migration schemes, and its failure to protect their human rights, are to be acknowledged and accepted; that an apology from the Prime Minister is vitally important.

RESETTLEMENT/RELOCATION

While the overwhelming majority of former Child Migrants wish to continue living in Australia, there are some, having been reunited with the families, who want to return to the United Kingdom to live close to their families. This is particularly true of child migrants whose elderly mothers and fathers have been found, and there is often so little time left. **There are also some family members of former Child Migrants who desperately wish to emigrate to Australia to be closer to their sons and daughters for their remaining years.**

We call on the Australian Government to put in place the appropriate funding, and to review the immigration policy in regards to these issues.

These measures would return to former child migrants and their families the right of choice – which was taken from us by the British and Australian Governments.

PENSION ENTITLEMENTS

The Australian Government's decision to refuse pension entitlement after February 2001 to former Child Migrants now permanently living in the UK to be with their families, after spending their entire working lives paying taxes in Australia, is deeply disturbing; and grossly unfair. This matter must be reviewed immediately.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

Social security issues should be reviewed to ensure that child migrants currently receiving benefits are not penalised for travelling to be reunited with their family overseas, as if they are going on a holiday. Rents still have to be paid and bills do not stop when we finally manage to return, often too briefly, to meet our families after a lifetime apart.

STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

Changes should be made to the Statute of Limitations that presently permit the criminals who bashed and raped us in Australian institutions to dodge justice. This could be achieved through a short-term amnesty to deal with historical charges, or a permanent amendment to the legislation.

It is wrong that the people responsible for abusing former Child Migrants when they were children should walk free, simply because as children we had no advocate to help us seek justice.

AUSTRALIAN CHILD MIGRATION HISTORY

Former Child Migrants and the Child Migration Schemes have been ignored in Australian History. The Immigration Museum in Melbourne proudly displays the arrival of immigrants from all over the world, and their subsequent contribution to Australia as a nation. Typically there is no mention of Child Migrants, or the Child Migration Schemes. Furthermore, at the initial Federation celebrations in Sydney during January there was no representation or reference to Britain's former Child Migrants. This again provides another example of the indifference we receive from those in power on national occasions of this kind. The Child Migrant Schemes are a part of Australia's History. Is it any wonder that former Child Migrants believe they are the **Forgotten Generation**.

AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

Australia's History of Child Migration should be acknowledged. The International Association is working closely with the Child Migrants Trust to ensure the experiences of those involved in the child migration schemes are recorded for future generations. There are obvious advantages in learning about the long-term implications of these misguided schemes. The Association and the Trust would welcome the support, both financial and otherwise, of the Australian and the British Governments in ensuring that an appropriate Centre of Remembrance and Learning is established. Plans have already started to develop this project further.

COMPENSATION - REPARATION

Reparation is the appropriate response to gross violations of human rights. That is according to international legal principles. For the child migrants there is no amount of compensation which can ever give us our childhoods back. We cannot turn the clock back – as much as we would all wish, this cannot happen. However these sentiments, while true, should not be used as an excuse to avoid the just payment of compensation.

In a quote from The Age – “Extend ‘*stolen*’ tribunal” of 16 August 2000, the Northern Territory Chief Minister Denis Burke asks why British former Child Migrants should be excluded from reparation tribunal.

British children sent as ‘orphans’ to Australia ... were as deserving of federal Government compensation as the stolen generation of Aborigines, Northern Territory Chief Minister Denis Burke said yesterday.

‘I don’t believe a reparation tribunal would be anything but divisive if it were put in place for one group of Australians’, Mr Burke told parliament.

The consequences of the Commonwealth Governments' Child Migration Schemes have had long-term devastating effects. We were:

- deported from our countries
- used for political and foreign policy purposes
- deprived of our mothers, fathers and other significant members of our family and our communities
- deceived about our families and the reasons for our migration
- for over fifty years were denied documents and information such as birth certificates and other vital information about our families
- stripped of our identities
- denied citizenship in Australia for decades
- deprived of vital genetic and medical information
- failed by Governments in their duty of care

The majority of former Child Migrants suffered psychologically from these experiences and many continue to suffer. Large numbers, according to the overwhelming number of allegations, were physically abused and many were sexually abused. Many were treated like slaves and received little, if any education. Many had their names and/or birth dates changed.

The Minister for Immigration continually talks about the many former Child Migrants who have 'done well' from being deported to Australia; minimising the fact that there are large numbers who have not 'done well', and large numbers who, as vulnerable young children, were criminally assaulted in Australian institutions. The fact that we have survived does not make the crimes against us any less serious.

There are large numbers of former Child Migrants who have not 'done well' financially. Some have been buried in pauper's graves. Many are pensioners or on low paid wages and cannot afford the cost of passports, let alone travel expenses. Many have financial difficulty keeping in personal contact [through phone calls] with their families when they have been reunited. The majority cannot afford to return to the UK to spend the time needed to build on their relationships with family after they have been reunited.

The financial stress this places on former Child Migrants is unacceptable. A lump sum compensation payment would go a long way in alleviating this stress. It would give former Child Migrants the opportunity to have a more peaceful and positive future with their families.

The Minister's determination to 'talk up' the experiences of a few former Child Migrants, while ignoring the plight of the majority is disgraceful; it perpetuates our pain and suffering. The Minister also ignores the fact that those who have 'done well' in Australia, would, in all probability have 'done well' in the UK.

The Association believes the Australian Government should put in place a commission to examine and deal with the compensation and reparation issue. There must be some child migrant representatives on the board of this commission.

The Association believes that former Child Migrants are entitled to compensation for the following reasons:

- loss of family life
- deprivation of liberty
- pain and suffering
- abuse
- labour exploitation
- economic loss
- loss of opportunities through poor education
- denied access to documents

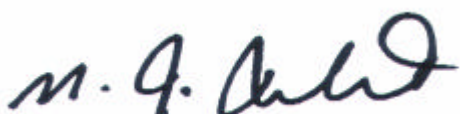
SECTION 9 - RECOMMENDATIONS

We strongly urge the members of this Senate Inquiry to recommend to the Australian Government the following course of action:

1. A full Judicial Inquiry.
2. An acknowledgement and apology from the Australian Government for their part in promoting child migration and then failing in their duty of care, which led to the violation of human rights of thousands of children placed into State care.
3. The Child Migrants Trust requires urgent secure funding to maintain and further develop its services across Australia. We recommend a Federal/State funding package for a four-year period with a built-in review and evaluation. The Child Migrants Trust has been the preferred agency for Government funding both in Australia and the United Kingdom. **This recommendation must take priority.**
4. A Travel Fund should be established by the Australian Government to complement the existing Travel/Support Fund provided by the United Kingdom Government.
5. The establishment of a Tribunal to provide the means for reparation and to deal with monetary compensation. A tribunal is the fairest way to establish liability and fair compensation.
6. A Commission should be established with representatives of both the British and Australian Governments, the Child Migrants Trust and representatives of the International Association and others, to ensure that appropriate services are in place with the consultation of those that provide the service and receive it. The Child Migrants Trust is in an ideal position to further this objective.
7. There is a need for uniformity across Australia with regard to the **Statute of Limitations** which presently permits child abusers and paedophiles to dodge justice.
8. The deporting agencies records should be moved from their agencies to one central point. These records are often used as a means of control and further access to former Child Migrants.
9. Support should be given for the establishment of a Centre of Remembrance and Learning. The Child Migrants Trust, at our request, have started an

Oral History project, both in the U.K. and Australia. It is vital this important project is financially supported.

10. The First International Congress on Child Migration is planned. We would like the Australian Government to participate in this venture and provide support and funding. This Congress is organised by the Association and the Child Migrants Trust.
11. Social security legislation should be reviewed to ensure that child migrants currently receiving benefits are not penalised for travelling to be reunited with their family overseas.
12. Relocation packages for child migrants who wish to return permanently to the UK to live with their families should be provided. Discussions between the Australian and British Governments are urgently needed to resolve the many relocation obstacles, particularly relating to income security. The Australian Government's decision to refuse pension entitlement after February 2001 to former Child Migrants now residing in the UK to be near their families, after spending their entire working lives paying taxes in Australia, is grossly unfair. This matter should be reviewed immediately.



Norman Johnston
President

Harold Haig
Secretary