

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

Submission to the Senate Community Affairs

References Committee

Inquiry into Child Migration

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CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

The Child Migrants Trust is an Anglo/Australian professional social work agency. The Trust has well established operations in Melbourne, Victoria, Perth, Western Australia and the United Kingdom.

The Trust's Patron, The Rt. Hon. Sir Ninian Stephen KG, AK, GCMG, GCVO, KBE, previous Governor General of Australia 1982-1989, Patron of the Constitutional Centenary Foundation, has recently held the position of Judge of the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and has been appointed Chair of the Australian Citizenship Council.

The International Director and Founder of the Child Migrants Trust, Margaret Humphreys, is a qualified professional worker and is considered to be a world expert on child migration and its long-term consequences. As an individual, Margaret Humphreys has been responsible for reuniting more people with their mothers, fathers and families than any other professional. Mrs Humphreys was awarded the Order of Australia in 1993 - a great honour for a non-Australian - for her work with child migrants in Australia, and is currently the Chair of the UK/Europe Order of Australia Association which works to promote Australia. Mrs Humphreys' work has also been honoured by two leading Universities' Honorary Masters Degrees. Likewise, Rotary International conferred the most prestigious Paul Harris Fellowship.

The Child Migrants Trust is the only specialist, independent social work agency which has pioneered professional services for this unique and special group of people. It was established in 1987 and has subsequently developed considerable knowledge, skill and expertise in the areas of childhood abuse and its impact on adult life and relationships.

The Trust practices and promotes an understanding of the psychological and traumatic impact of separation, loss and bereavement on children and adults, which is vital in order to ensure meaningful and healing family reunions. Margaret Humphreys leads a professional, qualified team of dedicated, committed specialist workers who are both Australian and British.

The Trustees are also Australian and British. The Senior Members are:

- David L. Spicer LL.B. Barrister – a legal expert in child abuse. David Spicer is a Founder Member of the Trust who has visited Australia and met with former Child Migrants and State Officials.
- The Hon. Joan Taylor – a representative of Nottinghamshire County Council, a major financial contributor to the Trust. Joan Taylor has a long association with the Child Migrants Trust and has visited Australia on numerous occasions in her capacity as Trustee. Mrs Taylor meets regularly with former Child Migrants in the United Kingdom and has been instrumental in the formation of the All Party Group of MPs in the United Kingdom.
- Timothy J. Adam, Public Officer – an Australian Solicitor and a Partner at Moores Legal in Melbourne, Victoria. Tim has been a Public Officer for the Trust for the past seven years.

The Launch Of The Child Migrants Trust In Australia

The Trust launched its services in Australia during 1988-1989. At this time the Director appeared on a Peter Couchman Special which coincided with the first transmission of the BAFTA award-winning documentary “*Lost Children of the Empire*”. This documentary charted two years of the Trust’s work in Australia and the U.K. and delivered an in-depth review of the child migration schemes and the urgent need for services. This was a national transmission which attracted a very large viewing audience.

This could be seen as the beginning of a lengthy period of battling for resources to enable the Trust to develop its humanitarian work and for recognition of the issues experienced by this large group of former Child Migrants living in Australia.

At that time considerable optimism was expressed by distinguished members of the Couchman audience. Senator Jean Jenkins (Democrats) spoke of “*the basic human right to identity*” and said the Federal Government must take on the responsibility and fund a team of Social Workers for the Child Migrants Trust. David Hill, then Director-General of the ABC referred to child migrants as “the forgotten children”. With regard to funding for the Trust, he said: “*public awareness will inevitably lead to there being enough resources for this problem.*” Dr Ron Sinclair, a former Child Migrant, spoke of the small amount of money that was needed to fund the Trust. He spoke of the “*scarifying effect*” of child migration.

Twelve years on the need remains desperate and the resources have failed to materialise, despite enormous efforts by the Trust to encourage both the British and Australian Governments to accept their obligations on this matter.

CHILD MIGRATION

Introduction

Like other nations, Australia is blessed by many outstanding achievements – architecture, the arts and sciences and its world-class sporting teams, to name a few. But its history also contains painful episodes. There are many people who still live with the consequences of that history, and that pain.

One virtually contemporary episode was Australia's policy of recruiting child migrants from the United Kingdom for a variety of purposes. It is generally accepted that child migration schemes can only be justified as a short-term measure of last resort in times of war or famine. Australia, however, pursued a sustained policy of actively encouraging child migration during peacetime. Young children were used as a means for promoting defence and economic objectives. They were not seen as valuable individuals in themselves. In addition, these vulnerable children were not adequately safeguarded from abuse, deception and ill treatment during their childhood or provided with adequate explanations or services as adults.

With the United Kingdom, Australia shares joint responsibility for this misguided policy. But while the British Government has recently responded in a positive and constructive fashion to some of its obligations, the Australian Government is yet to accept its full share of responsibility.

We agree with Prime Minister, John Howard, that Australia's past should not become a basis for obsessive and consuming national guilt. But we do think, particularly in this Centenary year, that Australia should face the reality of the historical record on child migrants. We ask only that the Government respond quickly and effectively to address the consequences of child migration policies. Relatively small sums of money could help ageing former Child Migrants to be reunited with their parents and family in the United Kingdom. If this does not happen soon parents and families, and former Child Migrants themselves, will die without ever being reunited with their families.

This is an acute human problem, which can and should be humanely addressed.

CHILD MIGRATION

Historical Background

This brief historical account will provide some of the key background details and dates to clarify Australia's active involvement in child migration schemes.

While child migrants arrived in Australia from the United Kingdom during the nineteenth century, these schemes were generally short-lived and involved small numbers of children.

Just before and after the First World War, a key motivation for child migration was to maintain the racial unity of the Empire. The Government's White Australia policy was similarly designed to preserve the cultural and racial unity of Australia's settler population.

These policies were endorsed by the first Fairbridge Farm School, which was established in 1912 at Pinjarra, near Perth, Western Australia. This development set a number of precedents and trends.

Firstly, most child migrants would be cared for in residential institutions and not fostered or adopted by families. Secondly, Western Australia would become the leading State in terms of the numbers of child migrants received. Thirdly, Federal and to a lesser extent State Governments would play a crucial role in child migration schemes as active agents not passive bystanders. Indeed, each contributed a third of the maintenance costs at Fairbridge.

The First World War acted as a powerful stimulus to increase Australia's small population by immigration. Around 60,000 Australian troops died and needed to be replaced if birth rates were to be maintained.

In the 1920's in New South Wales, fears about the proximity of the massive populations of Asia encouraged supporters of Barnardos to build institutions, including a Farm School, so that child migrants of '*good white British stock*' could help to boost Australia's population. These schemes received financial assistance from the British Government's Empire Settlement legislation.

Such children were also seen as '*bricks for Empire building*' who would strengthen Australia's traditional close ties with the United Kingdom.

In 1925, child migration from Britain to Canada was stopped following an official inquiry prompted by extremely serious concerns about the ill-treatment of child labourers and the suicide of some child migrants. It was considered that children of below school leaving age were too exposed

to the risks of exploitation and abuse. However, Australia chose to continue to recruit these very vulnerable children.

In 1937, the Northcote Farm School was established in Victoria, followed a year later by a second Fairbridge Farm at Molong, New South Wales. Northcote received both capital support and revenue grants from the Federal Government as well as assisted passage fares for the children. A group of 114 boys, also financed by the British, Australian and West Australian Governments, arrived at the Christian Brothers' orphanages near Perth in 1938-39.

The Second World War

Child migration stopped during the war but 577 child evacuees from Britain were cared for by their relatives or by foster parents in Australia, without any financial assistance from either government. However, detailed regulations outlined the very specific obligations of those caring for this group of children. In New South Wales, foster parents were reminded that the wrench of leaving home and the long voyage would produce *'a very considerable psychological effect on the children.'* Consequently *'what the children need most of all is a home... and a home is more than shelter and comfort. What a child's nature asks for even more than food and comfort is love – that is 'understanding' love.'* This home was to be provided by individual families and not a residential institution.

These views demolish the myth that child migrants received a standard of care which was acceptable at the time but would be judged as inappropriate by today's standards. There could be no quarrel with the quality of advice outlined nor the standards expected of carers. Unfortunately, these standards were not applied to the care of child migrants, even those who arrived a decade later in the post-war period. There was a clear understanding of the needs of displaced children in 1940 which, if applied, would have significantly improved the quality of care received by most child migrants.

The Second World War reinforced widespread anxieties about Australia's isolated geo-political position and her small vulnerable population. The fall of Singapore and the bombing of Darwin confirmed that fears of external aggression and invasion were not the product of fevered imaginations but deadly realities which demanded effective remedies.

Consequently, internal factors such as the impact of the 1930's Depression and the loss of troops in two World Wars combined with external threats to generate the post-war slogan: 'populate or perish'. Government sponsored large-scale immigration played a key role in Australia's post-war plans to defend the nation and rebuild the economy. Immigrants from Europe, especially from the United Kingdom, were

actively recruited. Child migrants were viewed as the best immigrant – easy to assimilate and accommodate and with a long working life ahead of them.

Post-War Reconstruction

Perhaps Australia's plans for post-war child migration were the result of panic or genuine fears about invasion. They were certainly over ambitious and totally impractical. Arthur Calwell, the Labor Immigration Minister, intended to bring over 50,000 war orphans to Australia in the first three years of peace. A senior army officer suggested, "*If necessary the children could be taken from defeated countries and given English names.*" Confronted with the lack of available shipping to transport these children, it was proposed that an aircraft carrier should be leased. Fortunately, less than four thousand, rather than fifty thousand, children arrived as child migrants during the entire post-war period.

The Federal Government accepted financial responsibility for the recruitment, medical screening and transportation of all assisted migrants. This included child migrants, who received free passages to Australia, maintenance grants and subsidies towards approved capital expenditure, including buildings erected by approved voluntary agencies. The Federal contribution was dominant as it included both capital and maintenance grants while the State and British Governments also made smaller contributions.

The active and positive role of the Federal Government was underlined by Arthur Calwell in 1946 when he stated, "*no country needs immigrants of the right type more than does Australia. And no country has taken more energetic steps to secure them.*" Consequently, Australia recruited far more British child migrants in the post-war period than any other country.

Thus, the facts of post-war migration clearly indicate that the pull from Australia was far more powerful than the push from the United Kingdom in terms of child migrants. Australia wanted more children more quickly than Britain could supply. This interpretation is confirmed by all three of the major studies published in Australia on child migration. To quote Professor Sherington "*As the war approached its end, the Australian Government had thus moved to adopt child migration as an important plank of its plan for overall post-war immigration. At the same time, the impetus within Britain for child migration had waned.*"

These issues were clarified by the Child Migrants Trust in 1994 with the publication of "*Empty Cradles*" which outlines the leading part played by the Australian Government.

The Trust has no vested interests in holding any one government, charity or church more responsible for child migration than another. The Trust considers that Australia should not have used unaccompanied,

vulnerable children to boost its population and economy in the post-war period. Australia should not have asked and the United Kingdom should not have agreed to send child migrants. Neither government insisted on the strict standards of supervision which would have protected these children. Both governments should accept shared responsibility for coping with the terrible human costs of these misguided schemes. Charities and churches also allowed their values and standards to become degraded by their involvement in these schemes. For example, neither protested about the racist nature of these policies or indeed set appropriate standards of care for small distressed children.

Definitions and Destinations

There have been more systematic attempts over the past few years to compile more accurate statistics concerning child migrants arriving in Australia from the United Kingdom. The British Government's child migrant index at present has details of over 7,000 children sent to Australia from 1920 onwards.

During 1988 the Department of Immigration and Multi-Cultural Affairs suggested that approximately 10,000 British child migrants had arrived in Australia after the Second World War. Recent research suggests that perhaps a third of this total is a more accurate figure.

In terms of definitions, this submission refers to child migrants as children who were sent to Australia while they were below school leaving age. The youngest children were sent at three years of age, the eldest were fifteen years old but the majority were aged between seven and ten. It was never the intention that these children would return to their families.

Migrating Agencies and Motives

During the twentieth century, many child migrants were brought to Australia by specialist agencies such as the Fairbridge Society which was founded with the sole purpose of migrating young children to populate the Empire. The Fairbridge Society sent approximately 2,300 child migrants to Australia. Religious organisations, including the Catholic Church and the Church of England also played major roles. Barnardos sent approximately 2,340 children to New South Wales.

Many of these agencies operated on the assumption that these British children could be given a fresh start many thousands of miles away from all that was familiar. Contrasts were made between the overcrowded

cities of Britain and the under-populated rural areas in Australia. Thus, when the Australian Government wished to populate an empty continent, these agencies were keen to assist. However, in many cases the standards of childcare provision in Australia were no better and often worse than in Britain.

For example, in Britain in the post-war period, much emphasis was placed on using foster parents and closing large Children's Homes in favour of smaller, more family-orientated homes. Yet in Australia, the legacy of large Farm Schools and the failure to explore family-based care condemned the majority of child migrants to a childhood without warm, close relationships with caring adults. The emphasis on changing the child's external environment did not take into account a child's vital needs for emotional development and security. Even during the early post-war period, this was increasingly recognised in professional circles but child migration policies seemed immune to research findings and at odds with enlightened child care policy.

Charitable and voluntary childcare agencies did not operate under the stricter framework of public accountability which was demanded of local authorities in the United Kingdom. This is one of the main reasons why few child migrants were sent to Australia by local authorities who required Ministerial approval for such decisions.

Child migration was inspired by a variety of motives, none of which gave first priority to the needs of the children involved. It was clear that countries accepting child migrants did not have purely altruistic and humane motives. For example, all excluded handicapped children. In addition, Australia would not accept black children as the White Australia policy continued to influence the selection criteria during the post-war period.

LOOK!

We Are All Ready to Come



You see, there are nearly forty of us who have never had a home (our Mummies and Daddies were killed during the war, and now we have come out here to Australia. We know you'd love to have one or more of us for Christmas, and if you ring Brother Dowd (MWS0), or write to him at Castledare Orphanage, Cannington, I'm sure he'll let us come.

P.S.: We all promise to be good, so please DO invite us.

'Orphans' as solutions and problems

Describing child migrants as 'orphans' or 'war orphans' was common practice in the newspaper stories about Britain's young children and in public pronouncements by politicians. In addition, there was a belief by Catholic agencies that it was better to avoid the stigma of illegitimacy by telling the children that they were orphans. This policy reflected the social values of the time, but this solution

created its own problems. Having led children down the road of deception, it would be difficult to admit the truth later. It also required others to collude with this deception.

Child migrants who were told that they were orphans were given a socially constructed identity which did not reflect the truth about their parents. This label played an important role in preventing children from asking awkward questions about their family background and served the immediate interests, not of the children, but of those responsible for them. Again, there was a profound failure of professional intelligence and imagination. Indeed, there was a corruption of standards and ethics by all those involved. These children would grow up and start asking awkward questions of churches, agencies and politicians.

For other child migrants, similar results were achieved by different means. The fresh start philosophy often assumed that a child's parents were a wholly negative influence. They were seen as a regrettable feature of a child's past life who should be kept in the past and have no influence on a child's future. Consequently, many agencies did not send any details of a child's family background with the child to Australia. These files remained in the United Kingdom.

Rhetoric and Reality

Little attention was given to the long-term implications of separating children from their families, their friends, their social context and their country on a permanent basis.

Had these children remained in the United Kingdom, they would have had an opportunity of finding their families at a later time, or indeed, their families could have found them. Not so for child migrants who were told individually and collectively that their parents were dead, that they were 'war orphans'; that they had nobody in the world and that their country did not want them. The loss and bewilderment was profound. A sense of rejection and isolation was to remain with the majority for the rest of their lives.

After being told fanciful tales of travel to the "Land of Milk and Honey" where children ride to school on horseback and pick up fruit on the side of the road, child migrants were sent to Australia without passports, social histories or even the most basic documentation about their identities. Brothers and sisters were frequently separated on the docks and sent to different institutions in different parts of the country; some were fingerprinted and then loaded onto the backs of trucks for long journeys to institutions in remote regions, only to be put to work as labourers the next day. Most felt an extreme, painful sense of rejection by their family and country of origin. Others felt rather like characters

from one of Kafka's novels; their sentence was obvious – exile from their family and homeland – but the nature of their crime was a complete mystery.

Many of these issues relate to the deeply flawed assumptions which permeated child migration schemes. It was considered that a fresh start in a new country was best achieved by cutting all ties between a child migrant and his or her mother, father and extended family. Only in this context can certain strategies be understood, such as allowing children to believe they were orphans, even though their parents were very much alive, or providing children with only a short birth certificate which gives no details about their parents.

Indeed, if these children had really been orphans it would have made it even more difficult to justify a policy of shipping them thousands of miles away to remain in desolate institutions or farm schools throughout their childhood. The most obvious solution to the needs of such children would have involved attempts to find foster or adoptive parents to try to replace in some way that which they had lost, namely their parents, identities and family life. However, as their parents were very much alive, and being deceived in a similar way to their children, adoption was of course rarely considered because it requires the consent of the parents. Instead, both the children themselves and the wider public were confused and deceived by the inappropriate and untruthful use of the label 'orphan'.

Series of Scandals

Throughout its long history, child migration to Australia and other countries has been punctuated by a series of scandals. The lack of educational provision, the overwork and inadequate pay, the suicides following episodes of ill-treatment, and the appalling evidence of protracted physical and sexual abuse – all have featured in official inquiries or newspaper headlines in both nineteenth century Canada and South Africa as well as post-war New Zealand. Consequently, Australia's experience seems to conform to a common pattern of deceit, betrayal, deception and the corruption of professional, moral and ethical values.

Roles and Resources

While the Australian Federal Government occupied centre stage, the State Governments were given the role of monitoring standards in the institutions caring for child migrants. Voluntary agencies, including specialist organisations like the Fairbridge Society and church-based agencies were encouraged to implement the schemes outlined by the

Federal Government. However, another key feature of these policies which had an adverse impact on all involved was that these schemes were not adequately resourced in financial terms. Thus Barry Coldrey's study underlines the negative results of six Brothers caring for two hundred and fifty boys at Clontarf in Western Australia in terms of close and tough discipline, a lack of attention to individual needs and a completely institutional style of care. In Coldrey's words, "the individual was easily lost in the mass." Clearly, there would be little opportunity for these two hundred and fifty boys to receive the 'understanding love' which had been identified as essential a decade earlier. In addition, there was an educational 'lost legion' who were scarcely literate and lacked the specialist remedial teachers who might have improved their basic skills.

The Cost Of Poor Quality

The Forde Inquiry details the poor quality of care offered to a group of forty eight child migrants placed at St Joseph's Orphanage, Neerkol, from 1951 to 1956.

Only two of these children arrived with the consent of their parents. Many were later employed in clerical, retail or domestic positions while eight found work as nurses or nursing aides in hospitals.

The report argues that institutions like St Joseph's were "physically and emotionally barren places for children in care to live" and were staffed by people who abused children. "This abuse was, in many cases, not simply a one-off incident in an environment that was otherwise caring and supportive. It happened to many children almost daily - and even when abuse was not actually taking place, there was always the threat or fear of it." Indeed, the Inquiry found evidence of "the most brutal abuse and neglect."

This abuse went on unchecked because "complaints mechanisms did not exist, and there was minimal monitoring or inspection" by the State Department. By divesting itself of "much of the financial responsibility for the children admitted to denominational institutions, the government surrendered much of its capacity to act as an arbiter of standards." Inspection reports were bland so as not to antagonise a valuable and cheap service provider.

Clearly, quality control was sacrificed for the sake of economy. The report suggests that "a price has been paid for this policy." (p.36) Given these appalling standards, it does not take much to imagine the unspeakable fear and confusion in the hearts and minds of young British child migrants under this brutal regime.

There were also serious concerns raised by other inspections across Australia in the post-war period. For example, a British Fact Finding

mission inspected twenty eight institutions and ten of these were a cause for grave concern in 1956. (Ross Report)

THE CHILD MIGRATION EXPERIENCE

Introduction

The often devastating circumstances of the Child Migration experience include the following:

- The majority of children arrived in Australia without the knowledge or consent of their mothers, fathers or other significant family members.
- Very few children were given adequate information and honest, straightforward explanations to make an informed choice about leaving their home in the U.K. How could they make this decision – the majority were under 12 years of age, and some were between 4 and 5.
- There was a lack of preparation to equip these children for their new life in a new country with a different climate and culture.
- Child migration selection documents contained scant information and, at times, incorrect factual details about the child.
- Children asking about parents or family left behind were frequently told they were orphans, that their parents were dead. This was clearly untrue.
- At times, children's names and birth dates were changed.
- Brothers and sisters were often cruelly separated and sent to different institutions across Australia. Former Child Migrants often recall brothers and sisters, even twins, being forcibly separated, screaming, on the dockside.
- Many children were placed in large isolated institutions and farm schools away from any community and often experienced severe deprivation and near slave labour conditions. This is particularly the case in Western Australia.
- The unprecedented exploitation of these children in Australia, in terms of child labour, left many deprived of even a basic education.
- Many experienced severe physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

- They were inadequately prepared for life outside of the institutions.
- Few children were given their full birth certificate and details about their family background or medical history.
- As adults desperately seeking information from Government Departments, Church organisations and other agencies, their enquiries were often met with bureaucratic indifference and, at times, a continuation of the deception.
- Many former Child Migrants have been subjected to quite degrading and humiliating experiences as adults by their lack of basic documentation and remain confused about their nationality.
- Parents were led to believe their children had been adopted by families in Britain when the reality was, in many cases, that their children had been migrated to these institutions in Australia.
- Arrangements were not put in place to ensure the children's inheritance rights were protected.
- Significant and important medical/genetic information was unavailable.

While former Child Migrants share many characteristics, they are also a varied group as adults.

On discharge from institutional care, usually around sixteen years of age, many former Child Migrants were placed in labouring or domestic work on isolated farms. Others developed itinerant lifestyles, often using boarding house accommodation but rarely becoming involved in close, long-term relationships. This pattern of adult adjustment seems particularly associated with men who spent long periods in large, single-sex institutions. Among those who report explicit episodes of abuse by those in authority, there is a high incidence of relationship difficulties, alcoholism, low self-esteem, depression and other psychiatric disorders.

Many former Child Migrants have struggled to develop basic skills in literacy and only a small minority were educated beyond the minimum school leaving age.

Certain groups of former Child Migrants remain loyal to the institutions and agencies which provided for their care. There are those who have very positive records of achievement at work and have sustained long-standing marriages. However, their need to know about their families and medical backgrounds remains profound.

Identity and Illegitimacy

Even those with successful careers feel overwhelmed at times by the many experiences of loss and deprivation which they have suffered both before and after their migration. Many lack a coherent understanding of both the reasons for their migration and their history with their families in Britain and in care. Some of the agencies concerned with child migration did not employ qualified social work staff and there was little appreciation of the significance of this biographical information for a child's emotional development, self-image and identity, even in terms of the state of knowledge at that time.

In addition, there was a belief by Catholic agencies that it was somehow better to avoid the stigma of illegitimacy by telling the children they were orphans. Consequently, as adults, many former Child Migrants have experienced considerable difficulties in adjusting to the realisation that their parents are alive today. Their confusion was reinforced by a popular perception in Australia that the majority of child migrants were 'war orphans'. In fact, this description was true of only one or two children, but it served to prevent awkward questions being asked and difficult issues being addressed by those concerned.

It is important to remember that among those former Child Migrants sent to Australia in the post-war period, even the youngest are now middle-aged. Consequently, time is fast running out for many who are desperate to be reunited with their elderly mothers and fathers in Britain before it is too late.

Concerns and Citizenship

Both public and political awareness of child migration as a matter for public debate are now much further advanced in Australia and Britain. This is a result of extensive mass media coverage and former Child Migrants speaking publicly about their difficulties and concerns. In addition, there have been important civil and criminal proceedings against the agencies involved in Child Migration and their present or former staff members. The Child Migrants Trust has played a crucial role in raising public awareness of these issues through its books, articles and award-winning documentaries.

In 1993, the Australian media gave considerable publicity to the formal apology by the Christian Brothers to those former Child Migrants and other children who had suffered physical and sexual abuse at any of

their four institutions in Western Australia. Civil proceedings for compensation by over 250 former residents of these institutions led to an out of court settlement.

It was clear that the Nationality of former Child Migrants was only one of several important issues which had not been given sufficient consideration by those responsible for child migration policies. Many former Child Migrants in Australia did not realise that only those arriving prior to 1944 were automatically granted Australia citizenship. Those migrated in the post-war era had to apply for citizenship and pay a fee. Consequently, a few remain British citizens, either through choice or ignorance about their position. In a very few cases this policy resulted in former Child Migrants being deported back to Britain as adults following convictions for criminal offences. The Trust has advocated on behalf of former Child Migrants in Australia who no longer have to pay an application fee to take up Australian citizenship.

Information & Identity

The plight of former Child Migrants in Australia has been of particular concern to the Trust for the most compelling of reasons. Those sent to Australia in the post-war years were subjected to some of the worst levels of care. A vast number have been unspeakably deceived for much of their lives and have suffered the most profound loss. They were stripped of their identities as children and then denied access to information about their families. For years, many former Child Migrants have written pleading, begging letters to the agencies who migrated them only to be met with more lies, evasion and indifference.

Most weeks, child migrants previously unknown to the Trust come forward requesting assistance to find their families, and still often describe themselves as “war orphans”. Regularly, men and women migrated as children, now in their fifties through to their eighties, describe to the Trust’s social workers accounts of trauma and abuse in care. They describe the tangible impact of childhood abuse on their lives, displayed through sleeping disorders and nightmares, episodes of depression, an inability to form close, trusting relationships and a lifetime of despair.

Many former Child Migrants experience symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and recount in considerable detail specific incidents which have left indelible scars. For example, several child migrants have recounted the degradation of having their hair shaved off as a

punishment in the presence of other children. This humiliation was perceived by them as the final stripping of their individual identity.

In addition to the emotional damage and pain, many child migrants today bear the physical scars of their childhood abuse. This includes major hearing loss, often resulting from constant beatings to the head. Some continue to receive surgical reconstructive treatment while others live with constant pain from injuries received as children in the care of religious and child care agencies.

Child migrants who present to the Trust describe an increase in their desperation to find their families as the years advance, linked to their own ageing and the dwindling possibilities that their parents may yet be found alive. Further, they describe an escalation in their sense of loss and confusion as they reach a point where their own children have grown up and they reflect upon the key milestones in their lives and their fragmented sense of identity. Many describe and have written evidence of approaches made to the migrating agencies and the Governments for information about their families stretching back over forty years. Frequently, child migrants approach the Trust with high levels of suspicion because of their previous contact with other agencies. Many insist they would only be prepared to work with the Trust if they were assured that it has no organisational links with Government or with the agencies who arranged their migration. The Trust can cite evidence to demonstrate that former Child Migrants wrote to these agencies over decades for help and assistance in finding some family back home, only to be completely ignored or rebuffed. Regrettably, the abuse did not cease when the children left the institutions.

Routes to Reunions

Former Child Migrants generally present with complex personal difficulties stemming from their migration experience. While the majority approach the Trust to trace their families in Britain, it soon becomes apparent that their search is accompanied by a need to find ways of managing emotional stress fuelled by powerful feelings of loss and deprivation. Many urgently need to vent their feelings of emotional pain or to disclose episodes of sexual and physical abuse. Their migration experiences often produced a fragmented sense of identity and some have acute difficulties in maintaining close marital and parental relationships. Most fear rejection and lack sufficient confidence to trust others as they expect to be betrayed or exploited again. Child Migration was traumatic for young children. It shattered

personal integration at a critical stage in their fragile development. This separation from their families and friends at a crucial time has left many emotionally defenceless and unable to withstand any further traumatic events.

Skilled help is essential to tackle these issues and thus create more favourable emotional foundations for a successful reunion if and when relatives are found. The management of these complex tasks and the reunion of those separated by many decades in a distant culture, requires a specialised, integrated professional service. Such a service must be international, independent, flexible and user-friendly if it is to meet the varied needs of former Child Migrants and their families. Traditional bureaucratic approaches are ill suited to this work.

Charities And Credibility

The experiences of the children should not be divorced from that of their mothers and fathers. The parents of these children are a large, silent group of grieving mothers and fathers whose children became lost to them many years ago. Their grief has been complicated and unending. Whatever the circumstances of the original separation, it was generally the expectation that their children would be returned to them at some point. There was certainly an expectation that their children were protected by those Government Departments and child care agencies who had the responsibility to protect all children.

The stark reality of child migration is quite beyond the comprehension of aged mothers who understood their children had been adopted within the United Kingdom. Many requested short-term care for their children. When they returned they were often told their children had been adopted and in some instances were told their child had died. Now, decades later, mothers in particular are having to deal with strong feelings of betrayal and are often frozen by powerful feelings of guilt. They strongly question how Governments could have allowed this to happen. It has, of course, raised many fears and concerns about the role of church and charities and, in particular, those very respectable U.K. agencies who were instrumental in the fate of their children. Without doubt, there exists a strong concern and a resistance to those very charities involving themselves today.

SPECIALISM & PROFESSIONAL ISSUES

The Specialist, Professional and Unique Role of the Child Migrants Trust in Australia and the United Kingdom

The Trust has a very delicate and demanding role in providing former Child Migrants and their families with a professional service which is highly sensitive to their particular needs. We approach our work with a degree of humility and respect from the outset. Recognition and remembrance of an individual and collective experience associated with childhood trauma, loss and dislocation are essential.

In understanding the adult we need to reach the child within. It is not at all surprising that many remain emotionally frozen at critical stages in their childhood development. Trust is an important strand in any relationship, whether that be personal or professional. This is a particular area requiring considerable focus with a group who have experienced, in the main, betrayal and abuse by those in positions of authority. They frequently felt powerless as children and often lost their sense of personal integrity and autonomy.

For some child migrants, not all, the recovery will be painful and challenging. The context of the abuse in these instances is firmly woven into the child migration experience as a whole. Separation from family and feelings of rejection and abandonment are strong and powerful. These feelings can hardly be separated from the family reunion experience. It is particularly within this area of our work where specialism and experience is vital.

The Trust has developed a deep understanding of the child migration experience and its impact on adult life, both for former Child Migrants and their families. Our understanding encompasses most perspectives: historical, contemporary, the experience of parents and extended families, the moral, social, economic and political values of the day. This overview often provides our clients with a breadth of knowledge which further facilitates understanding of their experiences and helps to restore confidence and self-esteem. It places their individual experience in a much broader context.

We face many challenges in our work. We need to be incredibly flexible and strong enough to withstand and accept the fierce anger which is so often part of enabling our clients to let go of the past and move on in a more positive manner.

Family reunions after decades of separation under these unusual circumstances are very complex. After thirteen years of facilitating and nurturing hundreds of family reunions we have developed professional practice based on the essential components which bring about the reconstruction of personal and family identity and restores a sense of belonging and well-being.

Acknowledgement and advocacy

Decades of denial of their experience has left many child migrants with an enduring legacy of stigma and shame about their status. The decision to seek help is often shrouded in fear that their loss and confusion will be minimised or discounted, or that they will simply not be believed. For those who have sought help in the past from governments and migrating agencies, this fear is often based on the reality of their experience.

The Trust has a record and reputation as an advocate for child migrants rather than being another apologist for the schemes. Its work to expose the long-term consequences of the child migration schemes and the firm ethical position with regard to child abuse gives a clear, unequivocal message that the Trust is a place where they will find safety, acceptance and recognition. The first step in building trusting therapeutic relationships for survivors of childhood abuse is confident and unambiguous acceptance.

For many, the first step in asking for help requires them to face and share the full burden of a lifetime of loss and deprivation. Those who experienced prolonged trauma resulting from physical or sexual assaults while in institutional care, often experience acute anxiety at the prospect of addressing horrific memories they might never previously have shared, even with their partner. The Trust's enduring performance in reuniting many hundreds of former Child Migrants and declared position on the child migration schemes provides safety and hope for those desperately needing assistance but fearful of trusting anyone, but particularly those in authority.

Safe and Welcoming

It is a challenge for most of the general population to deal with large bureaucracies during periods of stress and vulnerability. An upbringing within the safety of family life equips most people with the ability and confidence to advocate for their own needs in adult life. Former Child Migrants were, for the most part, brought up in large institutions where their individual needs were constantly eclipsed by the exercise of rigid uncompromising authority and control. Many report a lifetime of negative encounters with authorities that often mirrors the helplessness of their childhood under authoritarian regimes, leaving them feeling humiliated and stigmatised as adults. Negative encounters with authorities in later life can often trigger episodes of post traumatic stress for those who endured prolonged trauma and degradation, and leave many unable to seek assistance or advocate for their own needs.

The Trust recognises this common element, and early on made the decision to provide services within a warm, homely environment of a house rather than more conventional offices used by most social work services. In this respect, the Trust offers a service specially designed to meet the needs of former Child Migrants. Rather than stepping into waiting rooms crammed with pamphlets and a receptionist behind a desk, the Trust uses living areas within a house/office to meet and work with people. Photographs of child migrants as children, and later as adults meeting their families, convey immediately to new clients that the Trust is about child migrants exclusively.

This would not be possible within a large bureaucracy offering a range of services to various client groups. The Trust's use of houses rather than offices allows greater flexibility for creative casework practice, and provides clients with a sense of ownership of the project. Clients sometimes travel great distances to learn news about their families, and the Trust is able to accommodate them at no charge at our premises in Melbourne and Perth.

Similarly, the Trust's accommodation provides comfortable and appropriate places to support family reunions, and also to accommodate relatives from overseas while they build their newly developing relationships. The Trust's use of houses also provides accommodation for UK based staff while working in Australia, thereby saving on costs.

Continuity

Disruption of relationships with their primary carer in early life is a feature common to all child migrants. This major loss is known to have a devastating impact upon many people who grew up in cold, harsh institutions. Feelings of powerlessness, lack of autonomy, worthlessness, inability to form trusting relationships and to develop intimacy are part of many people's lives resulting from their separation experiences. There is substantial evidence that separating a young child from his or her mother, or primary carer, in childhood can lead to the onset of mental illness, depression and risk of suicide.

The Trust recognises the need for continuity as a vital component of services for child migrants. Continuity of relationships with the Trust workers, some of whom have remained with the agency for many years, provides opportunities for strong therapeutic relationships that stand the test of time. Long term relationships with workers in large bureaucracies are a rarity where most social workers change positions every two to three years.

The Trust operates from houses rather than offices. Many people over the years have placed items, - donations of furniture, photographs, even crockery, that remain with the agency year after year. These items provide continuity as well. They convey that individuals matter, that they have been there before, and that this is their place. Increasingly, child migrants bring their personal photographs and documents to the Trust for safe-keeping. Where the experience of life has been one of loss and disconnection, the Trust has provided continuity for more than a decade.

Social gatherings have developed over the years into a tradition, and they offer opportunities for many child migrants to meet others, sometimes from different schemes, often people they knew as children but have not seen for many years. These gatherings provide continuity as well opportunities for those who have been recently reunited with family to share their experience within a group that truly understands the meaning and significance of a family reunion after decades of loneliness.

The importance of continuity is recognised in developing trust, and an ability to reconnect with others. The Child Migrants Trust provides an environment that fosters both trust and reconnection, and these elements are vital in assisting people to prepare for the painful, joyful and sensitive experience of meeting their families after decades apart.

Bringing the past and present together

Childhoods spent within institutions often deprive children of knowledge and an understanding of their family and cultural background. For child migrants, this loss is compounded by the failure of governments and agencies to provide access to records and documentation. The deception of their status as orphans adds yet another layer to the confusion and misery of their experience, and is a major obstacle to discovering the truth.

The particular circumstances of child migration requires specialist knowledge and skills to provide a service that leads to outcomes of recovery and restitution. Only the Trust works with child migrants from all migrating agency backgrounds, and can help make the links between memory, experience and reality for a group of people devoid of documentary evidence but overwhelmed with feelings and needs.

Many child migrants have been unquestioning about their past until very recently. It is very common for new clients to us: *'I am a war orphan'*; *'my mother abandoned me in a hospital'*; *'my family know where I am and if they want me they can find me.'* Each of these statements has been proved incorrect time and again. It sometimes reveals the extent of fear of rejection that so many child migrants experience at the point they decide to search for their family and identity.

The Trust's experience working with families in the United Kingdom, and specialist knowledge of the schemes, helps child migrants to sort out fact from fiction, against a background of a lifetime of confusion and stigma. Knowledge of their parents' war-time experience, cultural, religious and socio-economic class factors, and an appreciation of geographical issues are all tools used by Trust workers to help child migrants understand the context of their early life, and the lives of their parents.

It would be extremely difficult for a mainstream bureaucracy in Australia to provide this depth of knowledge and experience. The records, and more importantly, the relationships child migrants desperately seek are for the most part only to be found overseas. A fragmented approach, such as records counselling in Australia with no link to the person working with the child migrant's family in the UK, is quite obviously well below a minimum standard of service delivery for a group of people with unique needs. A family-centred approach that bridges the gap brought about by a separation of 12000 miles and fifty years is essential.

Challenging lifetime perceptions based on childhood deception and misinformation, bolstered by feelings of pessimism and worthlessness, requires professional confidence and wisdom. The Trust's family-centred approach enables the workers to gently explore issues, both past and present, with all key family members. It opens the pathways to reconnection for child migrants and their families.

Pathways to family

Conventional family research methods are often of little use when tracing families of former child migrants. Lack of contemporary records or identifying information sometimes leave little besides a birth certificate to commence the search. There are many occasions when even this most basic and essential document is missing.

The Trust has developed extensive research skills and methods to locate the families of former Child Migrants. Searches are frequently very complex, lengthy and costly. Swift conclusions are rare. This is another example of specialism that is required in this sensitive area. The Trust has records of all births, marriages and deaths in England and Wales from 1890 to 1998 and holds an extensive library, both print and computer media, of essential public records. Our research work is world-wide and is highly developed. A significant number of mothers and other family members are found outside the United Kingdom. Very recently our researchers have located families in the United States of America, Canada, Africa, Cyprus, Austria and Australia, to name a few.

The policy of the Trust is that key family members must be found, whether they are alive or have already died. The need for remembrance and connection are no less for a child migrant whose mother has died than for a child migrant whose mother is alive and waiting to meet them. Some particularly difficult family searches have continued for years. Where there remains hope, the Trust will not give up on a search unless the child migrant themselves finds the unresolved search too painful to continue. Trust staff have shown great tenacity in pursuing and resolving many hundreds of searches, sometimes to the extent of identifying more than 150 possibilities for a mother with a common name, and one by one locating and excluding them until the correct person is found. In recent times, the Trust has utilised forensic research methods through DNA testing to establish family identity where the final outcome was uncertain, resulting in successful reunions with brothers and sisters.

We believe it is unlikely that any other agency would pursue family searches with the same vigour and to the same extent. We have sighted no evidence of this degree of commitment within other agencies. Like other aspects of the Trust's professional service, family research is much more than merely a tracing service. The locating of families is a risky, sensitive business. The integrity of the search, which protects confidentiality, is a vital component of the Trust's philosophy of treating people with respect and regard. We are often asked, particularly by mothers, "*how did you find me?*". The Trust's workers have to be in a position to be open and honest about the manner in which we conducted our enquiries.

Recently the Trust was confronted with quite a difficult situation in which a former child migrant was given a telephone listing with names matching his mother's by an agency in Australia. He was then funded by the same agency to travel to London, where he sat in a hotel room telephoning elderly ladies in the hope that one of them might be his mother. This man suffers from acute post traumatic stress disorder. Fortunately, this person telephoned the Child Migrants Trust in the U.K. He was understandably extremely distressed and confused. Such insensitive actions by an agency in Australia, purporting to provide services, demonstrates clearly a failure to appreciate the sensitivities of contacting elderly family members in the United Kingdom, and the destructive impact upon the child migrant whose sense of helplessness and despair was greatly magnified by the experience. The agency concerned would, I am sure, protest 'this man is an adult, not a child, and capable of making such a journey without professional assistance.' The outcomes of situations like this could so easily lead to tragedy.

Challenging Questionable Practices

Whenever there are allegations of child abuse and, to some extent, human rights violations, those professional agencies providing services should, in our view, always be independent. It is an ethical position which is essential for the integrity of the service.

One of the strengths of the Trust's position when working with former Child Migrants and their families is, of course, our lack of involvement with the past. Recognition of this strength is not a new concept and is observed both in Australia and the United Kingdom when providing professional services to children who have suffered abuse – in Children's Homes, for example. The therapeutic relationship needs to be free of any perceived conflict of interest if trust is to be developed.

This position, of course, is not possible for those agencies involved in child migration.

In our view there is insufficient information available to child migrants about the implications of choice. For example, a former Child Migrant instigates the search without, we would suggest, being aware of the implications for their families if indeed the Church or migrating agency were to contact their families. This is an area where independence is necessary.

A former Child Migrant pleaded with the Trust to make contact with his mother who had already rejected recent approaches by the migrating agency. His mother did not feel able to cope with the memories evoked by contact with an agency inextricably linked with a particularly difficult period in her life when financial pressures prevented her from maintaining regular payments to that agency. However, she felt less guilty and agitated by these issues when relating to a worker from the Trust. She has now been successfully reunited with her son who has travelled three times from Australia to spend his holiday periods with her.

In other cases, the unmarried father of a child has been a senior member of the Church. This was seen as an extra incentive to consider emigration for a particular child. Clearly, such a situation would pose serious dilemmas for those staff employed by religious agencies. Their duty to provide their clients with a full, factual explanation for their migration may conflict with their loyalty to their employers and thus compromise the healing process.

These are clear examples where a family reunion has been severely compromised due to the intervention of an agency responsible for the past.

Independence and Neutrality

As a neutral agency, the Trust is particularly well placed to offer a service to former Child Migrants, untainted as it is by any involvement in the Schemes or their associated scandals. Consequently, the Trust can focus firmly on the needs of its clients, many of whom still struggle to free themselves from the chains of stigma and confusion imposed by their childhood experiences. Unlike the migrating agencies, the Trust does not have to justify itself in the face of appalling disclosures of abuse by referring to the “standards of the day” or the “good

intentions” behind the schemes. Unfortunately, the fear of legal action casts a shadow over certain agencies and militates against trusting, open relationships between their staff and clients.

For many hundreds of Child Migrants sent to certain institutions like Northcote Farm no after care services were provided. The agencies involved in their migration ceased to exist when the schemes ended. Only the Child Migrants Trust offers a comprehensive, integrated service for all child migrants.

The Trust provides an international and professional social work service from three offices. Each office, whether in England or Australia, operates from the same ethical base and promotes the same social work values. Many clients in Australia have been interviewed by professional staff from the U.K. office to ensure that a co-ordinated service is provided, especially for those who seek a reunion with their families in Britain. The Trust’s services are viewed as an integrated portfolio designed around the specific needs of this unique client group.

The Trust only employs professionally qualified social workers with at least several years’ post-qualified experience to deliver its counselling services. The Trust’s staff have developed skills in many key areas of work including loss and mourning; family reunion issues from the perspective of both former Child Migrants and their families; and personal identity issues, including the impact of child migration on later marital and family relationships.

Flaws and Faults

Much of the Trust’s work is based on an objective analysis of the flaws and faults in the various migration schemes, and the remedies required to compensate for them. This approach is refined by feedback from the Trust’s client advisory groups about the type of services required. For example, little attention was paid to the personal identity and information needs of Child Migrants as evidenced by the failure to provide full birth certificates. There was also a lack of a full and appropriate exchange of information between agencies in Britain and institutions overseas concerning the needs, family backgrounds and circumstances of particular children. Similarly, there seems to have been an assumption that Child Migrants would rarely require any services or after care facilities as adults. Hence, citizenship issues were neglected and there was almost a total failure to predict that, as

adults, this group of individuals would demand not only personal and background information about themselves but also the opportunity to meet their families in Britain.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

A significant number of former Child Migrants remain profoundly affected by their past experiences. Many display symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, including sleep disorders and flashbacks of traumatic events such as episodes of childhood abuse either as witnesses or victims. Their condition may not diminish with time and can often be reactivated by small, seemingly inconsequential stimuli such as a raised voice or a sudden noise. The symptoms of this condition, which may include emotional volatility or even rage, can often intrude into normal daily routines, having a devastating impact upon personal relationships or even the ability to hold down a job.

Clients with these symptoms need to be helped in a safe, neutral setting where their past experiences can be understood and contained. These issues are becoming more widely understood as a result of work with hostages, survivors of disasters and soldiers suffering from shell shock. Where former Child Migrants have experienced significant abuse, whether emotional, physical or sexual, while in the care of the migrating agencies, it is a highly questionable assumption that such agencies can provide a truly therapeutic service for this group of clients.

Relatives & Reunions

Some clients of the Trust have been reunited with large extended families and been introduced to over forty-five relatives during the course of a hectic month's visit. Sadly, of course, some return to Britain to pay their respects at the graveside. However, this at least provides a kind of closure, a resolution of their search for some answers to urgent questions about their life.

Despite myths to the contrary, the Trust's experience has demonstrated that provided sufficient support and time for preparation has been made available to elderly relatives, they can be expected to cope with reunions even after a prolonged period of separation lasting many decades. Reunions involving the same generation, such as a brother meeting a sister or half-sister, tend to pose fewer difficulties.

Age is no barrier to a successful family reunion. The need for identity and belonging surpass the ageing process. For example, a seventy-year-old single man, shipped to Australia in 1938 returned to the

United Kingdom recently to meet his four brothers and sisters. This was the first time in his life he actually felt he was a member of a family. Families can be deeply enriched by the completion of a lifetime's longing.

By the time most of us reach our sixties, many of us have already lost both of our parents. Yet for some of our clients, they are just beginning to re-establish a relationship with their parents and families. Our ageing population means that parents may still be alive well into their eighties and beyond. Thirteen years on, the Trust continues to find mothers and fathers still alive and anxious to reunite with their sons and daughters.

The dominant need and hope of many former Child Migrants is to meet a member of their family in Britain. To ensure reunions meet the needs of all concerned, many hours of counselling and preparation are required. At each stage, including the initial family contact and preliminary exchange of information, all those involved will need much reassurance and expect to participate in key decisions.

Clearly, returning to their country of birth can be an overwhelming experience for those meeting their families after a separation of over forty years. The Trust's clients are met at London's Heathrow airport, frequently at 6:00 a.m., by social work staff who will spend most of the next few days orientating and preparing them for a much anticipated reunion. Many clients benefit from a close professional support from the Trust's staff at this time, especially those who travel alone either because they are single or due to financial limitations. This level of support cannot be restricted to conventional office hours and the Trust has been fortunate in having dedicated staff who frequently work during weekends and public holidays when necessary. However, the physical and emotional demands on the Trust's staff, due to the complexity of the work and from extensive travelling, should not be underestimated.

The success of reunions is dependent on many factors, particularly the need for adequate preparation and support to ensure that mutually realistic expectations can be negotiated, potential difficulties avoided and practical problems resolved. Strong, supportive relationships cannot be built without extensive groundwork and preparation.

Mourning a parent after decades of separation is a complex and difficult process. Helping those involved to come to terms with their feelings of deep disappointment and despair requires much time and skill. However, the Trust has developed considerable expertise in

assisting adults to grieve the loss of a parent whom they have never known. Without this help many remain fixated by their loss, unable to move forward to a position of acceptance or recovery. We have found that an involvement in some form of ritual, whether by visiting a parent's grave, attending a memorial service, or simply retracing the parent's steps from home to the corner shop, often produces a powerful and healing impact. The need for family photographs and memorabilia to assist this process is a critical part of bereavement work. Our work in this area is both innovative and advanced and could be used to inform social work practice in other fields, particularly where children have been separated from their families or country. The Trust has been encouraged by its joint work with local Catholic priests, who have conducted special Church services for those mourning a parent in this way.

Citizenship and Choice

The Trust has a unique role in Australia regarding citizenship issues for former Child Migrants. The Trust's advocacy has led to new regulations so that former Child Migrants sent in the post-war period no longer have to pay a fee to obtain Citizenship. The Department of Immigration has established a protocol with the Trust to enable all former Child Migrants to benefit from this concession. This significant improvement in the position of former Child Migrants is appreciated especially by those who argue that neither they nor their parents had any real choice over their status as immigrants. Many former Child Migrants assumed incorrectly that having lived in Australia for over forty years they were Australian citizens. Others were confused by complex regulations or lacked the necessary documents to confirm or alter their citizenship status. The Trust has been active in helping many former Child Migrants to clarify their status, make informed choices and implement their decisions on this important issue.

Differences and Diversity

In any social process involving thousands of children cared for across Australia in different sized institutions by a variety of agencies, there will be significant differences in outcome. Inevitably, some children were more resilient and more flexible than others and better educated on arrival. Those who were cared for with a brother or sister, those in

smaller institutions which were firm but fair who were given an honest account of their position would be expected to face fewer difficulties or manage them more effectively than those who were isolated in large, cold orphanages with abusive and brutal regimes based on fear and intimidation.

Some clearly felt that they would only succeed in adult life by their own efforts as few external sources of support were available. Some who survived the assault course of an institutional upbringing might be well placed to succeed as rugged individuals in a competitive world. However, one should not assume that material or occupational success is the only or most important guide to adult achievements.

Indeed, sometimes this form of 'success' represents a reaction against a childhood spent in institutions. For example, one client resented being seen as an object of pity as an 'orphan' and feared the arbitrary power of those in positions of authority. These experiences provided a very strong incentive to secure a degree of financial independence and to be self-employed - thus avoiding any further dependency. Others who were less resilient suffered a crushing loss of confidence and feelings of low self-esteem.

The Present Experience

The largest group of post-war British child migrants arrived in Australia, one of the most distant countries involved. Obviously, it is very difficult, expensive and time-consuming for those resident in Australia to find their mothers, fathers, brothers or sisters in Britain. Even if this were possible, it is not desirable for families who have been separated for more than forty years to be reunited without the option of support from skilled professionals experienced in this delicate and specialised field of work.

The work of the Child Migrants Trust is based on a twin track approach with a counselling service which is complemented by a family history research and record retrieval service. Only professionally qualified, very experienced Social Workers are employed by the Trust for this emotionally demanding work. At the Trust's two offices in Australia in Perth and Melbourne, both funded by the Federal Government, staff liaise on a daily basis with their colleagues in the United Kingdom office.

Needs and Numbers

Undoubtedly, meeting relatives and discarding the role of “orphan” by being someone’s son or daughter, someone’s uncle or aunt has produced the most profound and positive changes in both the outlook and self-image of many of the Trust’s clients.

Over the past decade, the Trust has supported a large number of reunions, despite its limited resources and comparatively small team of professional workers. In 1999-2000, 84 former Child Migrants were reunited with their families. This involved work with more than four hundred individual family members. Reunions were supported in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Australia and the United States of America.

Similarly in 1998-1999, 79 former Child Migrants were reunited with their families by the Trust. In several cases, former Child Migrants met with more than six brothers or sisters, and each reunion required support both before and after the initial meeting. On occasions, former Child Migrants were introduced to large groups of relatives, especially in Ireland where family gatherings were arranged involving cousins, Uncles and Aunts.

Over the past decade, many hundreds of former Child Migrants have met with their families, and others have been supported to revisit their birth place or other significant areas connected with their early childhood years in Britain.

The British Support Fund has financed travel for 181 former Child Migrants involved in first-time reunions. The majority of these are based in Australia and clients of the Child Migrants Trust.

Child Migrants are voters, parents, tax payers, pensioners and members of many varied social networks. Consequently, for those whose lives are transformed by meeting their families, the positive impact of their reunion will reverberate amongst all their friends, colleagues and their own family in Australia.

CHILD MIGRATION

CONSEQUENCES FOR INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

Secondary Abuse

Many former Child Migrants tells us that, as young adults, they returned to the agencies in whose care they were placed in Australia, for records and information about themselves and their family background in the U.K. Repeatedly, child migrants report they were either denied access to their personal records or, more often, told untruthfully that records did not exist. Those experiences, which severely disadvantaged child migrants and often prevented them from searching for their families or proving their identities, could be termed secondary abuse.

The withholding of vital information by the receiving agencies has a further dimension for child migrants who experienced their childhood as a period of captivity under brutal regimes, in whose control they were repeatedly abused and degraded. The act of returning to their former captors for help has been described by many as humiliating and the trigger for anxiety and fear. Child Migrants suffering from post traumatic stress disorder often report a resurgence of symptoms at the point of their renewed contact with the organisation linked to their trauma.

Those agencies involved in child migration run the risk of practising, or being accused of, secondary abuse. This is of course a difficult issue. In the face of some considerable criticism of past practices, professional agencies are often encouraged to make amends by providing services. This is often seen as one strand of reparation. For some child migrants whose confidence and trust has not been shattered, the services provided by the migrating agencies represent choice. We could provide you with evidence of situations where the best intentions of the migrating agencies have severely compromised a family reunion.

These complex issues require further research and debate. These are areas which inevitably create, at times, differences of approach to practice issues. The migrating agencies in the United Kingdom meet regularly as a group. There is frequently expressed a slight criticism of the Child Migrants Trust for avoiding these meetings. Indeed, when the migrating

agencies gave their evidence before the United Kingdom Health Select Committee Inquiry, they actually stated in their evidence they could not understand why the Trust failed to join their support group. However, the Members of Parliament quickly responded by stating they knew exactly why the Trust had taken such a position.

We must all be open to the possibilities of secondary abuse in our policies and practices. The Trust, along with the International Association of Former Child Migrants and their Families, intends to explore this issue at the proposed 1st International Congress on Child Migration later this year. There has been a huge interest expressed internationally in this event. However, we felt this was an area which this Committee may wish to give consideration to when making any recommendations.

Courts and Convictions

There have been several court cases, especially in Australia, involving former staff members of residential institutions involved in the care of Child Migrants. Most, but by no means all, of these cases concern male staff of religious agencies facing charges of indecent assault or sexual and physical abuse of vulnerable children. In 1994, ex-Christian Brother Gerard Dick was jailed for 3½ years for indecently assaulting a boy at an institution in Western Australia.

Despite the difficulties in collecting evidence about offences committed many years ago, convictions have been secured and jail sentences imposed. Public apologies have also been made by Church leaders for the terrible abuses suffered by children, including many former Child Migrants in Western Australia and at an institution in Neerkol, Queensland.

These court cases have been extensively reported by the media, who have thus maintained an interest in issues concerning former Child Migrants. In addition, several autobiographies by former Child Migrants have been published in Australia as well as an increasing number of histories concerning particular aspects of Child Migration. These have reinforced the impact of current affairs programmes and television news items often featuring either controversial developments and revelations or the more positive developments for child migrants when they meet their families at long last.

Former Child Migrants now realise that their voices are much more likely to receive a sympathetic hearing before a more receptive audience. The walls of disbelief and indifference have crumbled down as more allegations of ill treatment have been proved, more perpetrators imprisoned and more apologies given.

CHILD MIGRATION

ETHICS & AGENCIES

In Australia, the Trust has encountered some tensions in its relationships with certain agencies which do not subscribe to or appreciate the demands imposed by a professional code of ethics. For example, the Trust will not divulge any casework or client information without the client's consent. This refusal to disclose information to unauthorised third parties has been interpreted as 'unhelpful' rather than the response of a professional social work organisation. Similarly, lawyers acting for the Christian Brothers in Western Australia being sued by former Child Migrants, issued a subpoena ordering the Trust's staff to produce confidential casework material. As a professional body, the Trust had no option but to resist this tactic and employ a barrister to argue its case in court. The surrender of files would have breached professional ethics and inevitably undermined our clients' confidence in the integrity of the Trust's work. Sadly, a significant sum from the Trust's limited funds had to be diverted to pay the legal costs of defending its professional credibility. These costs were not reimbursed when the settlement was finalised.

This lack of appreciation for a code of ethics also applies to secular migrating agencies, especially those who do not employ any professionally qualified social work staff. Some of these agencies fail to recognise the significance and impact of sensitive, personal information on clients. For example, one middle-aged former Child Migrant wrote to the Trust during 1989 after receiving her agency file in the post:

"I am devastated by the information contained and finding it difficult to come to terms with the terrible treatment meted out to my mother and then to myself..... I got these documents in July last year and the whole mess is breaking my heart - please help as I don't know where to turn. To add insult to injury quote "We hope you will find this interesting rather than upsetting" was written by (agency staff) in July 1988. I am not that strong."

Protocols and Procedures

Many former Child Migrants left institutional care with no personal documentation or perhaps only a short birth certificate. The majority did not realise and were not informed that a full, more detailed birth certificate could be obtained from Britain. Consequently, it is not uncommon for former Child Migrants to experience difficulties in obtaining passports, citizenship rights or pensions. Many former Child Migrants innocently assume that the absence of their parents' names on a short birth certificate is further proof that they are orphans rather than a way of disguising their true origins.

One eighty-year-old former Child Migrant, previously in the care of two major agencies, was never provided with a birth certificate. Given his unusual surname, it was not difficult for the Trust's researcher to obtain a full birth certificate for him. However, this showed that his assumptions about the spelling of his surname and his date of birth were both incorrect. In order to travel to Britain he needed his birth certificate to obtain a passport.

The Trust has established protocols with most migrating agencies and Government Departments to retrieve files and documents on behalf of former Child Migrants. Very positive working relationships have been developed between the staff of the Trust and the Australian Archives Department. Thus, information from shipping lists, for example, can be given to former Child Migrants who need to confirm their date of immigration. There has been a gradual and welcome improvement in terms of opening files to former Child Migrants. However, a few agencies maintain policies and procedures which take little account of the potentially damaging impact of providing information to former Child Migrants without the option of counselling facilities being made available. One client was devastated to discover from her file that her emigration followed a breakdown in her adoption in Britain. This was the first time she realised she had been adopted as a young child. Her file was sent to her by post without any warning about its highly sensitive contents or any provision for counselling.

Constraints and Complaints

It remains a major challenge to provide a comprehensive, professional service to former Child Migrants and their families in 2001. There are many difficulties which arise from the nature of their experience and the complexity of their needs. There are also political and other

sensitivities which have arisen from the role of the Trust in exposing the human costs of Child Migration.

Some of the difficulties faced by this agency arise from the:

- Anger and despair of former Child Migrants waiting for a conclusion to their search for their families. Some have been waiting for years; there are more coming forward every week.
- Inadequate financial resources which have denied our staff any security of employment, and have led to staff working excess overtime, simply because it is clear to each staff member that families need to be found quickly.
- Lack of any travel budget which has meant that clients in Australian states other than Western Australia and Victoria have had to wait for long periods for the Trust to visit, or rely on contact by telephone, a poor medium for dealing with such sensitive matters.
- Complexity of each case; our clients need a highly specialised and individual service. Yet our present funding by the Australian Government allows for only two workers who have caseloads in excess of two hundred each.

Most of these issues focus around resource shortages. Indeed, the very small grants in Australia have to be supplemented by the Trust's private donations given in Britain to offer even the present minimum level of service.

PREVIOUS INQUIRIES & POLICY RESPONSES

Benefits & Betrayal

In 1996, the Western Australian Parliamentary Select Committee issued an Interim Report following a review of the past and present position of former Child Migrants in Western Australia. Despite some positive contributions in terms of promoting further understanding of many of the difficulties faced by former Child Migrants, the Committee's existence inevitably raised hopes but later failed to deliver results. The Report created much anger and disappointment by its narrow focus on only one conclusion - that the Committee's work should be expanded and extended into the following year. When this proposal was eventually rejected, many former Child Migrants felt betrayed as the Committee's significant investment of time, money and other resources seemed to have produced no tangible benefits.

United Kingdom Health Select Committee

Throughout the 1990s, the Trust lobbied the British Government to hold an Inquiry into child migration. With the support of the All Party Group of MPs, the newly elected Blair government announced a Select Committee Inquiry in July 1997. The Trust prepared a substantial written submission and gave oral evidence in the House of Commons in June 1998. Members of the Committee travelled to Australia and New Zealand to hear from former Child Migrants and meet with Commonwealth Government representatives. More than 300 submissions were received.

The Trust's key recommendations were adopted and presented within the Select Committee's report to the British Government in July 1998. The most significant outcomes were the acknowledgement by the British Government of the child migration schemes as 'misguided policies'; establishment of the Support fund for reunion travel,

substantial increase in the Trust's UK grant over a three year period, and the establishment of a database.

Unfortunately, the Trust's recommendation for discussions between Commonwealth Governments to bring about a resolution for child migrants world-wide was not pursued. As an international issue, it seemed reasonable that international co-operation should be part of the solution, given its earlier role in the genesis of the Schemes. The Trust has continued with plans for an international forum and last year announced the First International Congress on Child Migration to be held in the United States in late 2001.

The Health Select Committee recommended that the government of Australia hold an inquiry into the serious allegations of abuse in Australian institutions. The Australian Government rejected that proposal in its long awaited response, finally delivered in January 2000.

Overall, the U.K. Health Select Committee brought about a range of significant improvements in services for former Child Migrants. Positive action in the U.K. would benefit from reciprocal action in Australia.

Support Fund & International Social Services

In its submission to the UK Health Select Committee Inquiry, the Trust recommended the establishment of a travel fund as part of a package of measures to address the needs of former child migrants and their families. Over many years, the Trust had witnessed the desperation of child migrants whose elderly mothers and fathers were found living in the United Kingdom, but their reunion was prevented by a shortage of funds to meet the considerable expense involved in overseas travel. On more than one occasion, former child migrants were robbed of the chance to meet their family because their elderly mother died while they were desperately saving for the journey. In one tragic situation, a client's mother died a year after she was located by the Trust, but only three days before her son was due leave for England. He arrived in time for her funeral.

The Trust recommended that the travel fund be managed by another agency with no involvement in casework with former Child Migrants to avoid conflicts of interest in decision making for eligibility to access the Fund.

The British Government accepted this recommendation and announced that £1 million (\$A2.5 million) would be made available for first time reunions with close family members over a period of three years. The Support Fund was launched in April 1999.

The establishment of the Support Fund aroused much controversy due to the limited eligibility criteria. Applications are means tested, and involve only first time reunions with mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts. Visits to other relatives such as cousins, or to pay respects at a parent's graveside, are ineligible for funding. The criteria is considered by many child migrants to particularly discriminate against older, pre-war child migrants whose nearest living relative is often a cousin who carries all the family history and is anxious to welcome their relative home to the U.K.

The UK Department of Health contracted the management of the Support Fund to International Social Services (ISS), a voluntary agency with existing operations in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. ISS was not contracted to provide services to former Child Migrants and their families, nor has this ever been their focus. They are not a competitor with the Trust for resources to provide counselling and family tracing services. Their role is to provide information about the Fund, and process applications which are then referred to the London office for a decision regarding approval.

The Trust has negotiated protocols with ISS to prepare applications on behalf of clients. Successful application to the Support Fund relies upon a close family member having been located and willing to meet with their child migrant relative for a first time reunion. This opportunity placed increased pressure upon the Trust's already stretched family researchers, to enable as many clients as possible to access the Fund within its three year availability.

Once a child migrant's family has been found and the initial interviews have been completed, our workers in Australia assist our clients to prepare for their family reunion. A component of preparation is making application to the Support fund via ISS. ISS' role in this process is purely administrative. The Trust has made extensive use of the Support Fund which is expected to be fully subscribed, despite the very limited eligibility criteria, within the three year period to April 2002.

Child Migrant Central Information Index

All children migrated to Australia after 1920 have been included on a central database established by the British Government. The Index was another measure which compliments the Support Fund and acts as a signpost for former Child Migrants who wish to locate their records in the United Kingdom.

The Index contains the names, dates of birth and migration details of over 7,000 children migrated to Australia after 1920. It is not a complete record as some migrating agencies no longer exist. Others, such as the Salvation Army, advise that their records were destroyed during the last war.

The Index is managed by the National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations based in London on behalf of the Department of Health. Access to the Index is limited to former Child Migrants or their authorised agents.

The Index enables former Child Migrants to locate their records which may provide clues for those trying to trace their families. However, it does not provide a direct link to locate family members as much of the information is often fifty years old. One positive use for the Index is as a tool for family members in the United Kingdom searching for missing relatives who may have been migrated.

Despite considerable publicity, the Index has only achieved rather limited success.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

Despite considerable progress in promoting awareness of the often sad and occasionally tragic consequences of the migration schemes, the Trust has been disappointed by the inadequate response of Governments and migrating agencies to the incontrovertible need for urgent and substantial resource provision. With some notable exceptions, there has been a lack of imagination and leadership in the response of the agencies, coupled with a reluctance or refusal by Governments to fund the necessary services. It has taken too long for agencies to move beyond reactions of denial before assuming more constructive positions and policies.

The Trust's initial request to the migrating agencies for financial assistance fell on deaf ears, despite their considerable resources, influential supporters and fund-raising potential. As some of these agencies spend more in a single week than the Trust's total expenditure over the past ten years, a more creative and generous response would have been appropriate. Fortunately, the Uniting Church in Australia did not follow this pattern and provided a grant to cover the cost of urgently needed administrative support in Victoria.

While the Australian Government demonstrated a more flexible and willing approach at first, the Trust has struggled to develop an adequate level of service provision to match the range and diversity of its clients' needs.

It is difficult to understand the Australian Government's response to the recent British package of measures to assist former Child Migrants. There is a clear joint responsibility between Australia and the United Kingdom for the position of former Child Migrants. The Australian Government was not a passive victim but an active, energetic instigator and chief architect of policy to boost Australia's population and economy. British children were seen as the ideal raw material for nation building.

Australia's response could be described as an attempt to ignore its substantial role and responsibilities in this sad affair.

The most obvious, simple and humane reaction would have been for Australia to match Britain's level of funding for the Trust and the Support Fund. This would have acknowledged Australia's shared role and enabled the Trust to open offices in Queensland and New South Wales.

Instead, the Government took a year to announce that in essence there would be no fundamental change in Australia's existing level of funding. There was not even an acknowledgement that Australia should consider making a contribution to the Support Fund. Indeed, no explanation was given for the failure to offer any extra funds.

The result of this position is that although Australia actively recruited child migrants in the post-war era, it will not provide any financial help to those who cannot meet the costs of travel to be reunited with their families overseas. This is despite the fact that these former Child Migrants may well be Australian citizens.

Similarly, the failure to increase the Trust's resources ensures that former Child Migrants across Australia do not enjoy the same opportunities to make full use of the Support Fund. This would have been possible if the Trust had been able to open offices in Queensland and New South Wales.

Indeed, it can be argued that the Australian Government have actually taken a step backwards by proposing that, in future, child migrants should seek help from mainstream services.

CONCLUSION

A DECADE OF POLICY RESPONSES

The Trust can justly claim a significant share of the credit for translating the private troubles of individual former Child Migrants into matters of public concern. Although child migration was only a small chapter in the history of twentieth century immigration, the particular concerns of child migrants themselves were both invisible and unknown to the general public before the Trust was established in 1987.

Naturally, a small group of dedicated individuals – the paid and unpaid staff of the trust – required the assistance and support of other larger organisations to promote greater awareness and understanding of the predicament and problems facing former Child Migrants. The Trust's participation in a television documentary *'Lost Children of the Empire'* was shown in the United Kingdom in 1989 and later the same year in Australia. A book with the same title was co-written by one of our Trustees and included a brief historical account of child migration as well as oral history. This generated considerable controversy and led to the first grant received from the Federal Government in 1990. *'Lost Children of the Empire'* was the inspiration for *'The Leaving of Liverpool'* – an award winning Australian television drama screened in 1992.

At this time, the Australian Government offered more active and secure funding for the Trust than the British Government – which only provided a small grant for one year in 1990. The Department of Immigration grant lasted for three years. It was renewed and a second grant allowed the Trust to open an office in Perth in 1995. However, these grants did not include any provision for inter-state travel or for administrative support to the one Social Worker employed in Melbourne and Perth. The Trust's grants were renewed after a funding gap of two years in Britain – but again at a minimum level from 1993. Fortunately, the Director received firm, consistent support from her local authority, Nottinghamshire County Council.

It is crucial to understand the full context of the Trust's funding because the Trust has tried to develop its services in a balanced, synchronised manner in both Australia and Britain. The Trust wishes to deliver a

seamless, integrated professional service. It cannot function efficiently if its British resources are not evenly matched by Australia.

The landscape of government funding in Britain was transformed after the Parliamentary Inquiry in 1998 led to the Support Fund of \$2.5million over a three-year period and a significant increase in the Trust's funding. In April 2001, for example, the Trust will receive \$500,000 for its family research and counselling services. This encouraged the Trust to seek additional grants in Australia so that clients in New South Wales and Queensland could be offered a local service. However, this request was rejected by the Department of Immigration. Consequently, the Trust has only two offices – in Perth and Melbourne – supported by government grants, which total \$120,000 per year. Australia is clearly the weakest link in the Trust's service provision.

There has been no Australian contribution to the Travel/Support Fund, no increase in the Trust's grant, and no commitment to an inquiry into the Government's past role and present responsibilities in respect of the welfare of former Child Migrants. Despite this minimalist response by the Commonwealth Government, there have been some positive developments at State levels. For example, the Federal grant, which supports the Trust's office in Perth, is now matched by a similar grant from the West Australian government. Other State Governments are reviewing their provision and considering outsourcing provision to external providers like the Trust.

Justifications

There have been several attempts to defend child migration policies. For example, although it is conceded that many children suffered from various forms of abuse and ill treatment, as long as the road to hell was paved with good intentions, no valid claims for compensation should be entertained or criticism accepted.

However, this defence requires close scrutiny. Does this apply when the particular road selected by government has been previously rejected as too dangerous for vulnerable children by other countries like Canada? Does this not suggest a reckless policy with those children who committed suicide or who died in various accidents as the most obvious victims of this policy?

It can be argued that good intentions are a necessary but insufficient basis for effective policy. For example, we may assume that doctors generally have their patients' best interests in mind but this does not excuse them from criticism if their practice is dangerously out of step with modern standards. Policies need to be well intentioned as well as tested and evaluated. Similarly, lessons should be learned if policies have been tried and found wanting in similar contexts. Good intentions should be the start not the end of our examination of the costs and benefits of

social policy. To claim that policies are well intentioned or in the best interests of their target population is often merely part of the ritual of policy presentation.

In addition, there are difficult judgements to be made about the reasonably foreseeable consequences of child migration policy. For example, a reading of the history of child migration suggests that children will always be vulnerable to abuse and at risk. Indeed, warnings were not heeded during Australia's post-war period of child migration based on the adverse experiences of pre-war child migrants. Moreover, there is a catalogue of missed opportunities to protect the interests of these children. It could be said, this continues even to this day.

Conclusion

Perhaps Australia needs to rediscover its active role in the recruitment of child migrants and enable them to rediscover and reconnect with their families overseas. Former Child Migrants were socially disconnected from their families and true identities, not by a court order, but by government sponsored emigration. They retain their full legal rights to inheritance and they carry and embody a genetic inheritance from their parents. As children, they experienced a second class quality of care in Australia. Indeed, hundreds experienced abuse by cruel institutional regimes. As adults they need a specialised, skilled service to enable them to secure basic human rights which the vast majority of us take for granted- a knowledge of their personal, medical and family history, the opportunity to make contact with and meet their families overseas.

For many, the charities, the Federal and State Governments created a Bermuda Triangle where identities, positive standards of care and self-esteem disappeared from view. Child Migrants need to be afforded dignity and respect and to be freed from the lies and deceptions of their past.

Even modest investments in services to assist former Child Migrants can yield significant returns. Profound and positive changes in the lives of many families are within our grasp. The Trust has the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to reunite many more families. It merely lacks adequate financial resources. Even at this late stage, so much more can be achieved.

For those of us who have always known and been cherished by our families, it is hard to understand the impact of a reunion upon those who have lived all their lives without families. The joy of receiving a mother's first birthday card is a priceless gift of belonging after a lifetime alone.

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

RECOMMENDATIONS

A range of measures are urgently required to ensure former Child Migrants receive the specialist services they so desperately need. Even now at this late stage so much can be achieved. Family reunions, in our view, are one of the most constructive and positive ways forward.

1. The Trust needs a secure and moderately substantial funding base in Australia to enable the agency to develop and complete its specialist humanitarian family reunion service.
2. The establishment of a Travel Support Fund to complement the existing British Governments' three year fund.
3. The establishment of a Committee/Working Group with representatives of both the Australian and British Governments to ensure the needs of former Child Migrants and their families are firmly placed on the political and policy agenda.
4. Bi-lateral discussions between the British and Australian Governments with regard to Social Security issues. There needs to be a review of the regulations which at the present time disadvantage former Child Migrants when visiting their families in the United Kingdom.
5. We recommend that measures are taken to ensure uniformity across Australia with regard to the Statute of Limitations. This would enable individual former Child Migrants to instigate proceedings in cases of historical abuse.
6. We support the views of the International Association of Former Child Migrants and their Families, in that the establishment of a Tribunal should be considered to address issues of compensation.
7. The Child Migrants Trust's Oral History Project in Australia and the United Kingdom is a vital component to ensuring the experiences of former Child Migrants and their families are not lost to us now, or in the future. We consider this to be invaluable and seek Government support to ensure this project is developed and brought to a satisfactory conclusion.
8. The 1st International Congress on Child Migration has been planned for 2001, with the co-operation and support of the International Association. The support of the Australian Government is requested.
9. A research project to objectively assess the work of the Child Migrants Trust over the last decade, particularly in the area of family reunions, would provide a valuable assessment of outcomes which is crucial to many areas of our professional work with families who have been separated.
10. The Trust supports the International Association's recommendation for relocation packages to be an integral part of provisions for former Child Migrants and their families.

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

CLOSING STATEMENT

Child migration policy represents a classic case of governments resisting the lessons of history and reinventing the wheel, usually with tragic or damaging consequences for the children concerned.

Why did Australia believe it could succeed where Canada failed? If the Canadian scheme demonstrated that young children were extremely vulnerable on isolated farms, even to the extent of individuals being murdered or committing suicide, what might be the consequences of grouping children together on large farm schools? In the worst case scenario, large groups of children would be abused – physically, sexually and emotionally. This is precisely what happened in Western Australia to many children in the care of the Christian Brothers.

It is to be hoped that there will be proper and full recognition of this tragic chapter in the history of child migration to Australia. No honest account of this policy would seek to minimise the scale of this disaster in the lives of hundreds of vulnerable children.

Denial

For example, when a British civil servant was asked about government funding to the Trust by the Select Committee inquiry, he replied that the Trust had received a grant every year except one. In fact, the truth was that the Trust only received one small grant during a three year period. Assuming this answer was not a deliberate lie, it seems entirely possible that this civil servant could not bring himself to admit how small government's attempts to help child migrants had been. The Christian Brothers could not accept at first how many Brothers had been involved in the abuse of children. The numbers seemed to increase year by year as the Brothers gradually accepted more responsibility.

Governments played a major role in child migration. In Australia, post-war immigration was a Commonwealth initiative which was inspired and financed by the Immigration Minister. There would seem to be a clear responsibility for a Federal initiative to help former Child Migrants in

significant ways. Perhaps the present marginal level of assistance might be appropriate if the Federal Government had played a marginal role in these schemes. However, in Australia, as in Britain, before the Select Committee Inquiry, no genuine efforts have been made by government to assess their full responsibility for child migration and thus their obligation to offer at least a reasonable level of provision. Governments carry a special degree rather than a general degree of responsibility for this group of people.

Bridging the Gaps

There are many gaps which need to be acknowledged and bridged. There is a serious gap between the intentions of child migration schemes and their dreadful outcomes for hundreds of men and women.

There is a major gap between the Government's level of responsibility and active involvement in the creation of the difficulties experienced by former Child Migrants and the minimalist provision to help them. There is, consequently, a significant gap between the Government's rhetoric of offering constructive and positive help and the reality of its extremely limited funding of services. This funding has not increased as a result of recent British initiatives and may even decrease next year. Denial of responsibility and denial of the damage suffered by former Child Migrants leads to a denial of proper, decent amounts of funding to provide a reasonable level of service.

There are at least two painful realities associated with child migration policy. Firstly that it continued in Australia as recently as the 1960s with devastating consequences for so many and, secondly, that even by the twenty-first century Australia had failed to offer a reasonable level of help to those so cruelly affected.

As children, child migrants were treated as second class citizens. It is time for them to receive a first class service. We cannot replace their damaged childhood but we can take positive action to fill the void in their lives. Gaps of knowledge about their medical background and their family relationships can be filled. Missing relatives can be found. Lies and deceit can be replaced with truth and knowledge.

First, however, we must bridge the gap of courage and compassion. This is the major roadblock preventing politicians from making a significant contribution to the resolution of this problem. The moral courage not to wash their hands of this issue or walk by on the other side. The compassion to help those fellow citizens, to whom we all owe a special obligation.

We end this submission as we began. This is an acute human problem which can, and should be, humanely addressed while there is still time.

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

Agency Liaison & Contacts

Over the past thirteen years the Child Migrants Trust has developed contacts with the migrating agencies, particularly surrounding professional, procedural and protocol issues in relation to client files held by these agencies. The following lists many of the Trust's agency contacts:

- ❑ National Archives, Australia
- ❑ Barnardo's Australia & U.K.
- ❑ Big Brother Movement, NSW
- ❑ Bindoon, W.A.
- ❑ Burnside, NSW
- ❑ Catholic Migrant Centre, W.A.
- ❑ Castledare, W.A.
- ❑ Clarendon Children's Home, Tasmania
- ❑ Clontarf, W.A.
- ❑ Catholic Children's Societies, U.K.
- ❑ Christian Brothers Ex-Residents Services, W.A.
- ❑ Church of England
- ❑ Crusade of Rescue, U.K.
- ❑ Departments of Family & Children's Services, Australia
- ❑ Dhurringhile, Victoria
- ❑ Father Hudson's Homes, U.K.
- ❑ Fairbridge, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe
- ❑ Fairbridge, Pinjarra, W.A.
- ❑ Fairbridge, Molong, NSW
- ❑ Goodwood Orphanage, Adelaide
- ❑ Middlemore Homes, U.K.
- ❑ National Children's Homes, U.K.
- ❑ Nazareth Houses, U.K., Ireland & Australia
- ❑ Neerkol, Queensland (St Joseph's)
- ❑ Northcote, Victoria
- ❑ Psychiatric Clinics & Hospitals
- ❑ Quarriers Homes, U.K.
- ❑ Salesian Brothers, Tasmania
- ❑ St John's C.of E., Victoria
- ❑ St Mary's, Kent, U.K.
- ❑ Swan Homes, W.A.
- ❑ Tardun, W.A.
- ❑ U.K. Local Authorities

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

Key Milestones of the Child Migrants Trust

- 1986 1st request from a former Child Migrant in Australia
- 1987 1st reunion in England between mother and daughter
- 1987 Margaret Humphreys research visits to Sydney, Canberra & Melbourne
- 1987 Child Migrants Trust established
- 1987 Articles published in Observer newspaper
- 1987 Director seconded to C.M.T. from Nottinghamshire County Council
- 1988 Research visits to Canada & Zimbabwe by Margaret Humphreys
- 1988 Visit to Australia by Margaret Humphreys & David Spicer, Barrister and Trustee of the Child Migrants Trust
- 1988 Filming for Granada's documentary "*Lost Children of the Empire*"
- 1989 Transmission in the U.K. of "*Lost Children of the Empire*" and publication of a book of the same name
- 1989 Thousands of calls received on Help Lines following screening of the documentary "*Lost Children of the Empire*"
- 1989 "Lost Children of the Empire" transmitted in Australia. Director appeared on the Peter Couchman programme before an invited audience of former Child Migrants including David Hill, then Director-General of the ABC.
- 1989 Three members of the Child Migrants Trust U.K. team travelled to Australia to staff the Help Lines following the transmission. Again, hundreds of calls were received from very distressed and angry former Child Migrants in Australia. Many were sobbing down the telephone, relating their accounts of physical and sexual abuse.
- 1990 Child Migrants Trust receives a one year grant from the U.K. Department of Health
- 1990 C.M.T. receives a three year grant from the Australian Government, Department of Immigration & Ethnic Affairs
- 1990 29th June – C.M.T. officially opens its first U.K. office
- 1991 C.M.T. opens an office in Melbourne, Victoria and appoints a qualified

and experienced Social Worker

- 1992 December '92 to April '93 – Director counsels clients in Western Australia from a rented house in Perth
- 1993 C.M.T. receives a further grant from the Department of Health
- 1993 “*Leaving of Liverpool*” transmitted in the U.K. in July following political pressure on the BBC. Nottinghamshire County Council provided free telephone Help Lines, staffed by the Child Migrants Trust, for two evenings. Computer monitoring recorded over 10,000 calls were made.
- 1993 Investiture at Government House, Canberra, attended by former Child Migrants from each scheme, Margaret Humphreys receives the Order of Australia medal from the Governor-General.
- 1994 The Director’s book, “*Empty Cradles*”, launched at the House of Commons, London.
- 1994 Lawyers acting for the Christian Brothers subpoenaed C.M.T. files. The Director & Trustees successfully resist the subpoena in order to preserve the confidentiality of its clients and protect its therapeutic relationship. This was a costly and stressful time for the Trust and its clients.
- 1994 The Trust presented a written submission and oral evidence to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration.
- 1995 Following C.M.T.’s submission, citizenship fees are waived for former Child Migrants, thus effectively recognising their uniqueness in Australian society, as well as the expertise of the Trust in verifying the bone fides of former Child Migrants seeking Australian citizenship.
- 1995 The Child Migrants Trust opens an office in Perth, Western Australia.
- 1995 The Trust is short listed for the prestigious Guardian/Jerwood Foundation Award for “excellence and innovation” as a small charity.
- 1995 The Trust receives a grant from the Uniting Church of Australia, Victoria
- 1996 Appointment of the Rt. Hon. Sir Ninian Stephen as Patron of the Child Migrants Trust.
- 1996 Margaret Humphreys is awarded an Honorary Degree of Master of Arts by Nottingham Trent University in recognition of her contribution to knowledge of child care, social policy and practice.
- 1996 The Trust gives evidence, both written and oral, to the Western Australian Select Committee of Inquiry into Child Migration.
- 1997 Grant obtained from the U.K. Lotteries Commission to fund two full-time social workers and one part-time administrator over a 3 year period.
- 1997 The United Kingdom Health Select Committee announce they are to hold an Inquiry into the Welfare of British Former Child Migrants.
- 1997 August – “*Leaving of Liverpool*” receives its second screening in the U.K.
- 1997 The International Association of Former Child Migrants and their Families is launched in Perth, Western Australia

- 1997 Margaret Humphreys is named a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International
- 1998 The Trust gives evidence to the United Kingdom Health Select Committee at the House of Commons, London
- 1998 Senior Staff and Trustees support former Child Migrants giving evidence before the Health Select Committee in Melbourne and Perth
- 1998 The Trust opens the evidence sessions at the Forde Inquiry in Brisbane
- 1999 Trust participates with New York based CBS to produce “60 Minutes II, *The Lost Children*”, filmed on location in Australia and the UK. This production is transmitted in 50+ countries and wins a prestigious Emmy Award in 2000.
- 1999 Trust secures a 3 year grant from the U.K. Department of Health which significantly increases the U.K. funding
- 1999 Adjournment debate in the House of Commons in support of the work of the Child Migrants Trust
- 1999 CBS “60 Minutes II, *The Lost Children*”, is transmitted in Australia. The Trust participates in a live telephone and internet link-up with the viewing audience.
- 1999 Child Migrants Trust receives a two year grant from the Western Australian State Government
- 1999 The Trust receives a second grant from the Western Australian Lotteries
- 1999 The Trust participates in the filming of a BBC documentary “*Britain’s Shame*”, filmed in Australia and the U.K.
- 1999 The Director addresses a meeting of all State Directors in Perth.
- 2000 The Trust this year reunites a record number of former Child Migrants with their families
- 2000 Trust announces the 1st International Congress on Child Migration, a joint venture with the International Association of Former Child Migrants and their Families.

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

Global Service Provision

The families of former Child Migrants have been found in the following countries:

- Austria
- Australia
- Canada
- Channel Islands
- Cyprus
- Denmark
- England
- Fiji
- France
- Germany
- Ireland
- Israel
- Isle of Man
- Irish Republic
- Malta
- Middle East
- Scotland
- South Africa
- The Netherlands
- Wales
- United States of America

The Director has visited and counselled former Child Migrants in:

- Canada
- Canberra, ACT
- England
- Republic of Ireland
- New South Wales
- New Zealand
- Northern Ireland
- Queensland
- Scotland
- South Australia
- Tasmania
- Victoria
- Wales
- Western Australia
- United States of America
- Zimbabwe

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

Case Studies

CASE STUDY 1

1947 - A group of seven and eight year old boys board a train at Liverpool's Lime Street Station bound, they thought, for a 'holiday' in Australia.

Over the years several of these boys, now men, have reported to the Trust a particularly vivid and traumatic incident. As the train pulled away they heard a woman screaming for her son 'Peter'. They saw her running along the station platform desperately searching for him.

A few heard Peter shouting through the window for her; crying out that he would never forget her. Some said they still dreamt of the horrifying, frantic image of this distraught and helpless mother.

This group of small boys travelled together to Australia. Peter was placed in an institution. He experienced severe physical brutality, which left permanent damage to his spine. An X-ray revealed splintered bone chips.

Peter was told he was an orphan. In 1997 the Child Migrants Trust found Peter's mother, very much alive, in the South of England.

Peter's mother, Mrs McKay, told the Trust that without financial support she had no choice but to place her son in care. On one of her weekly visits, Mrs McKay arrived to see Peter only to be told he had been sent to Australia that very morning. She had not given her consent.

Last year Peter and his mother were reunited after a separation lasting fifty years. They met near Liverpool's Lime Street Station, where they had been parted so heartlessly.

Their reunion has been successful in that they are in contact with each other and have a sense of control in being back in touch. But Peter still needs surgery for his childhood injuries and his mother wonders whether she will ever recapture the feeling in her heart that was extinguished when her son was stolen away to a foreign land.

CASE STUDY 2

Jim Waters is a fifty-four year old former Child Migrant who was sent to Australia at the age of six. As a child he was repeatedly told he was a 'war orphan'. Following publicity in the early 1990's about reunions between supposed 'orphans' and their parents in Britain, Jim approached a Church agency which found his mother.

However, Jim was informed that his mother “wanted nothing to do with him”. The Church advised Jim to “leave an old lady in peace”, as she would probably not respond to another approach.

Jim did not wish to hurt his mother, but neither could he lose the opportunity of seeing her – if only for one brief visit. In a state of considerable turmoil, Jim asked the Child Migrants Trust to intervene.

Jim’s mother was quite anxious when contacted by the Trust’s social worker but felt reassured when she realised that the Trust was working on behalf of her son and not the Church. She explained she had been made to feel ‘guilty and sinful’ by the Church when her child was born. She felt she had not been given choices and had wanted to keep her baby. Sadly, with no financial support, she recalled bitterly the day her baby was taken from her and placed with the Church agency. She was allowed only one visit a month.

Jim’s mother was told there was a local church-going family who wanted to take her baby, and that she should be thankful somebody was prepared to ‘pick up her mistake’. Against her better judgment, she stopped visiting her son, believing always that he was living in England with a caring family. She was horrified to discover that Jim had been sent to an institution in Australia.

Jim has been reunited with his mother and maintains regular contact with her. The Trust’s neutral position and specialist skills played a key role in reassuring Jim’s mother and enabling her to meet her son again.

CASE STUDY 3

Eileen is 57 years old and lives in Brisbane. Migrated in 1950 to a Catholic institution when she was seven, Eileen approached the Trust for assistance to locate her family in 1995.

Eileen grew up with the belief that she was an orphan. As a young teenager, Eileen was often puzzled by the Nuns’ comments that she would probably become ‘loose’ like her mother, and developed a sense that there was something very shameful in her background.

Conditions in the convent in Australia were very harsh.

‘My whole life was scrubbing and polishing. When the work in the kitchen was done we were made to polish the floors on our knees, then the brass doorknobs, and the polished wooden banisters on the stairs. There was always a Nun walking by ready to slap you across the head if you stopped working. God help if you if you were caught talking. I was only 8.’

Punishments in the convent were strict and degrading.

‘I used to wet the bed, and the Nuns would make me walk around with urine soaked sheets draped around my head. Going to sleep became terrifying; sometimes they would appear in the night to check that I was still dry. I was always watchful, waiting to be hit. Even in my sleep. Today I’m still a very anxious person.’

At the age of 19 Eileen married, and needed her birth certificate. She was told at the convent that there were no records.

'I was so humiliated, when I got married I had no proof of who I was or how old I was. The Priest wrote me a letter, but I felt kind of second class.'

After seeing a program about child migrants on television, Eileen wrote to the Trust in Melbourne. In Brisbane, Eileen was given her birth certificate, and records that showed her arrival in Australia. For the first time in her life, Eileen knew her mother's name. She was then 52 years old.

The Trust located records in England that showed Eileen had been in her mother's care until she was two years old. The search for her mother was complicated because the Church had no records to identify where her mother came from or even her age. Research carried out in England and Southern Ireland traced her mother's marriage within a year of Eileen's placement in care. A further 18 months research was needed to locate her mother, now aged 81 years, living in Galway.

The Trust's first meeting with Eileen's mother, Kathleen, was very moving. The worker was practically pulled through the front door.

'You've come about my baby. Please God, tell me she's alright.'

Kathleen related a tragic account of her life in England during the Second World War. She took domestic work where her baby could stay with her, but when Eileen was two, the local Priest placed Kathleen under pressure to have her baby adopted into a 'decent' home. At the same time, Kathleen lost her job, and found she had no option but to place her child with the Nuns at Bristol.

Kathleen's next domestic position was a long way away, and she could visit Eileen only once a month. Transport was still very difficult because of the war. The visits were very painful, and Eileen became very distressed when her mother had to leave.

Within a few months, Kathleen met her future husband and they were married six months later. Kathleen returned to the convent to take Eileen home but was told that she had been adopted and taken to America. She had never signed adoption consents and had continued to pay maintenance for her baby. With no one to help her, Kathleen left a photograph and a letter for her baby, in case Eileen ever tried to find her.

It was not easy to gently explain to Kathleen that her daughter had never been adopted, but was migrated to an institution in Australia four years after she had returned for her.

'They kept her from me. She must have been right there when I went back for her. All these years, there's never been a day she wasn't in my prayers.'

In 1997, Eileen was reunited with her mother, and her seven brothers and sisters by the Trust in Ireland. She has returned three times to stay with her mother, and has re-mortgaged her home to fund the visits.

Eileen and her mother struggle to understand the deliberate deception that kept them apart for nearly fifty years.

'It was all about power. I was ear-marked for servitude, they kept me until I was big enough to hold a scrubbing brush and then sent me off to work.'

CASE STUDY 4

Sandra was sent to an institution in Australia from Birmingham in 1951 when she was nine. She asked the Trust for help to find her family in 1997. Sandra had been trying to trace her family since the 1970s, and had been back to both institutions in Australia and the UK. Limited information was available in England, but in Australia she was told there were no records at all.

'It was hard being in care when I was a kid, but that's over now, I just want to find my family and know who I am.'

The Trust retrieved records in England that had been denied to Sandra. They showed that her father had asked for her to be returned to his care her only six weeks after she was migrated. Consent for migration had been given by the superintendent of the institution. Sandra's father was told simply: *'There is no child of that name in these homes.'*

Research in Australia revealed more disturbing news. The institution that had told Sandra in 1974 that they held no records, in 1998 provided an original letter written to her by her mother, sent via the institution in England, but held back from Sandra in Australia. The letter gave her mother's married name and address in 1952.

Sandra's mother's letter was the key to the search. Within three months the Trust traced Sandra's mother. She had died one year before. Sandra was her only child. The Trust was able to locate friends of Sandra's mother who provided photographs, and memories.

In her letter to the institution, Sandra's mother blamed herself for losing her daughter. She states that she had now married, and went to see Sandra at Christmas time where she learned Sandra had been sent to Australia. She wrote:

'...if only I had went to see her perhaps I should not have the heartache of knowing she is now too far away...'

In his letter to the same institution, Sandra's father wrote:

'I am her rightful father, and would like to make a home for her with me. She would have every care and attention. I sincerely hope you can help me in this matter.' Sandra's father died in 1974.

CASE STUDY 5

Kevin first asked the Trust for help in 1995. Migrated to Western Australia in 1952 when he was six, Kevin grew up to become successful in business and by the early 1990s he had two shops and a bright future. However, in 1994 Kevin's marriage broke down, and within 18 months his fortunes changed dramatically for the worse. After property settlement and business losses he was struggling to pay bills. Kevin's relationship with his adult children all but stopped through an acrimonious divorce, and he became depressed and isolated.

Thoughts of his family in the UK had been pushed to the back of his mind, but always resurfaced at traditional family times, such as Christmas and birthdays. Kevin tended to withdraw at those times. In his mid twenties he had asked the State Government for any records about his background but apart from his birth certificate, no information had been provided. Kevin, like so many others, had been told he was an orphan when sent to Australia. His memories of England were just fragments of walking in the snow, and of a lady who used to hold his hand. He had always wondered who she was.

The breakdown of Kevin's marriage and work life triggered strong feelings of loss from his childhood. For the first time in his life he found himself remembering many details of his life as a child in harsh institutional care, and of his isolation and fear. Kevin began to experience many symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder; flashbacks of abuse, nightmares, and a sense of fear quite unrelated to his present circumstances. On two occasions Kevin had panic attacks which left him feeling that he was losing control of his life.

The Trust worked with Kevin over a period of many months to unravel his experiences of childhood loss and trauma. At the same time, research in the United Kingdom began to fill in the gaps in his personal and family history.

In 1996, Kevin's mother was found living in London. She was 76 years old. The Trust met with Kevin's mother and learned that she was a young unmarried mother of 17 when Kevin was born, and had placed him for adoption at the age of six months when she had no way of caring for him and supporting herself. She revealed that Kevin's father had also been only 17, and when they reached 21 years they had married. Kevin now had four full brothers and sisters. Kevin's mother was shocked and distressed that her son had been denied any family life as a child. She told the Trust worker that her one consolation had been the promise that Kevin would be given a good home with a loving family.

Kevin's mother sent photographs and gifts for her son, and urged him to come home to her as soon as he could. The impact upon Kevin's life was profound. He began with letters but soon moved to telephone contact with his mother. The fear and apprehension of first contact very quickly gave way to feelings of warmth and acceptance and Kevin began to desperately try to find the funds for travel to meet his family.

The Trust continued to meet with Kevin's mother, and she spoke of her painful experiences as a young mother forced to give up her child for the first time in over fifty years. At her suggestion, the Trust met with Kevin's brothers and sisters to help them begin to understand their mother's experience.

Eight months after they first had contact, Kevin's mother suffered a serious stroke, and lost her ability to speak. Kevin had not managed to save more than a few hundred dollars towards the airfare, and in desperation borrowed money from friends to get to his mother's bedside while there was still time.

The promise of a healing, joyful reunion was cut short by Kevin's mother's critical illness. Kevin reached his mother before she died, but she could not speak to him, only hold his hand while the tears rolled down her face. Kevin stayed in England for his mother's funeral.

Had Kevin's airfare been available through a Travel Fund, Kevin could have met his mother in very different circumstances. Every day counts when working

with elderly people. The Trust's work with Kevin to help him make some sense of his life has continued.

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

The following letter was obtained from a migrating agency file in the United Kingdom and written by a former Child Migrant enquiring about his family.

Dear Miss Sanderson
 I am writing this letter
 because I thought you might help me to
 find ~~out~~ ^{out} if I have got any Parents or Brothers
 or sisters I have been wanting to know for
 a couple of years now I will be very happy
 if you find out one time I told one of
 the Brothers to ask but I didn't hear any more
 I know you are a very busy person but
 I know you will try to find out I am settling
 in well here I am looking after my clothes you
 gave me I am not very good at writing
 letters and I can't think of anything more so
 Good bye and God bless you
 I remain your sincere friend

Write soon please

say - Parents both died while a baby.

Dear Miss....

I am writing this letter because I thought you might help me to find out if I have got any parents or brothers or sisters. I have been wanting to know for a couple of years now. I will be very happy if you find out. One time I told one of the Brothers to ask but I didn't hear anymore. I know you are a very busy person but I know you will try to find out. I am settling in well here. I am looking after my clothes you gave me. I am not very good at writing letters and I can't think of anything more so goodbye and God bless you. I remain your sincere friend. Write soon please.

Agency notation at the foot of this letter reads: "**Say Parents both died while a baby.**"

The letter is dated 1955 when the former Child Migrant was 15 years old. He was eventually reunited with his mother.

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST



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Ref: 1604/4/DM

Mr Mick Lyons, MSc
 Chief Executive
 Nottingham Shire County Council
 County Hall
 West Bridgeford
 NOTTINGHAM
 ENGLAND

Dear Mr Lyons

I write to thank you for the tremendous work the Nottinghamshire County Council has done in supporting the work of the Child Migrants Trust.

Your decision to second Margaret Humphreys to this formidable task was both generous and far-sighted. It has produced benefits which I am sure far exceed any that you could have hoped for.

Although we cannot be precise, we believe that there may have been as many as 3000 child migrants brought to Western Australia. Many hundreds of these have now been re-united with parents, brothers, sisters and other relatives of whose existence they were previously unaware or whom they had been told were dead.

It is impossible for those of us who have not been through such an experience to understand its effects on personal development and peace of mind. However, I have spoken to former child migrants who have been re-united with their families and I count it as blessing to have seen the difference it has made in their lives.

They speak of having been adrift in a wilderness until the Child Migrant Trust started its work in 1987, and now of experiencing a physical, emotional and spiritual contentment that they could not previously imagine.

As Premier of Western Australia, I want you, your colleagues on the Social Service Committee, and the ratepayers of Nottinghamshire, to know that the Government and people of Western Australia appreciate the commitment and dedication that led you to this fruitful work.

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CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

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Your choice of Margaret Humphreys to undertake the task was truly inspired. She has shown extraordinary ability in guiding so many people through a tumultuous experience to a time of great personal peace. She continues to help large numbers of Western Australians and we appreciate her efforts.

Your generous support of the work of the Child Migrants Trust has created a special bond between the people of Western Australia and the people of Nottinghamshire. We will always value that bond.

Please accept our thanks on behalf of all child migrants and their families and friends here in Western Australia.

The extent of that appreciation is revealed by the grant to Margaret of an Order of Australia Medal (AOM), an honour which makes her unique in Britain outside the Royal Family.

With kindest regards

Yours sincerely



RICHARD COURT MLA
PREMIER

16 APR 1993

CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

The following letter texts have been consulted in the preparation of this submission:

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Gill, Alan, *Orphans of the Empire*, Random House, 1998