

[NEW ZEALAND \(/NEWS/NATIONAL\)](#)

Children exiled to NZ not ill-treated - Bennett

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The Government says child migrants who came to New Zealand from Britain were treated far better than those who went to Australia.

On Monday, Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd delivered an emotional apology for abuse and neglect suffered by many of the 7,000 children sent to Australia under the Child Migrants Programme. Some were sexually and physically abused, dumped in institutions or used as labourers on farms.

Under the same programme, 549 children came to New Zealand in the 1940s and 1950s.

Social Development and Employment Minister Paula Bennett says most were placed in foster care rather than state institutions.

Even so, Paula Bennett says life was difficult for many, which is why the previous National Government granted them financial help to track down family and apply for New Zealand citizenship.

Ms Bennett says a state apology is unlikely to be made.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown has announced he will make a formal apology next year for Britain's role.

NZ child migrant says apology too late

One of New Zealand's child migrants says a formal apology by the British government comes too late for some and will never heal the pain endured by those who were deported.

Malcolm Axcell was one of the children sent to New Zealand under the scheme and says though it is good an apology is being made, it will never heal the pain that child migrants endured.

Mr Axcell, now 72, was the first child to step off the *Rimutaka* when it landed in Auckland in 1949 and was unsuccessful in trying to reunite with his mother.

He told *Morning Report* the apology will never heal the tough times child migrants went through, including himself.

"Some of them had a shocking time from the time they arrived until they got to that 18 year old age where they could move on their own lives."