

FOR NO ONE CAN FAIL TO BE TOUCHED BY THE TERRIBLE HUMAN SUFFERING THAT SPRANG FROM THE MISGUIDED CHILD MIGRANT SCHEMES SUPPORTED, AS THEY WERE, BY SUCCESSIVE UK GOVERNMENTS.

MANY OF YOUR STORIES SPEAK OF CRUELTY AND NEGLECT; OF THE PHYSICAL, SEXUAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE IN UNCARING AND BRUTAL INSTITUTIONS; OF THE UNRELENTING HARDSHIPS SUFFERED BY YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES; OF THE UTTER DEVASTATION WROUGHT ON YOUR LIVES; AND OF THE GHOSTS THAT HAUNT YOU TO THIS DAY.

AS AESCHYLUS FAMOUSLY WROTE: ‘...AND EVEN IN OUR SLEEP, PAIN THAT CANNOT FORGET, FALLS DROP BY DROP UPON THE HEART.’

HOW MUST IT FEEL TO BE TORN FROM YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER AS YOU STOOD, FRIGHTENED, HOLDING HANDS ON A COLD AND WINDY DOCKSIDE AND PUT ON BOATS TO DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, NEVER TO SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN?

HOW MUST IT FEEL TO BE FIVE OR SIX AND TOLD COLDLY BY SOMEONE YOU HARDLY KNOW THAT YOUR PARENTS ARE DEAD WHEN REALLY THEY ARE STILL ALIVE?

HOW MUST IT FEEL TO BE SYSTEMATICALLY DEPRIVED OF FOOD AND STARVED OF LOVE? AND HOW MUST IT FEEL AS A CHILD TO NEVER CELEBRATE YOUR BIRTHDAY; NEVER UNWRAP A CHRISTMAS PRESENT; NEVER BE HUGGED?

I CAN BARELY IMAGINE. BUT MANY OF YOU HERE TODAY – YOU KNOW. AND THAT IS A STAIN ON THIS COUNTRY.

IT IS HARDER STILL TO GRASP THAT THESE TERRIBLE EVENTS HAPPENED NOT IN THE OPENING CHAPTERS OF

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