

sense, vulnerable to paedophiles with no-one to turn to. We were rejected and abandoned by our country of birth. We were told we were the children of whores.

- 17.2. For many of us, we were sent to well-established paedophile rings. The Royal Commission hearings in 2014 established that the Order of Christian Brothers had records of paedophile activity going on in their institutions since before World War 2! **[IAFCMF12]**. Who would you tell, when every day of our young lives was about surviving in a world of terror and loneliness? Despair is a feeling that child migrants fully understand.
- 17.3. We do not have information on the response of institutions to any contemporaneous allegations of sexual abuse of former child migrants.
- 17.4. In our experience, over the past 20 years, as the true extent of their shameful practices has been publicly exposed, we have seen the deporting agencies moving begrudgingly into public relations strategies, which minimises their full involvement.
- 17.5. A way of charting this change is to compare the accounts of denial given in 'Lost Children of the Empire' by Bean and Melville, published in 1989 with 'Empty Cradles' by Margaret Humphreys written five years later. This gives details of a faith based agency's public apology in 1993 for the physical and sexual abuse suffered by those in their care in Western Australia. Governments moved painfully slowly so we had to wait another seventeen years for the UK Governments apology, despite our repeated and ignored requests for a comprehensive inquiry.
- 17.6. In the 1990s, when many of our parents were still alive, we needed the practical, professional help of the Child Migrants Trust to find our parents and reunite us wherever possible. Margaret Humphreys is on record as firmly stating the view that there was still so much hope – if we moved swiftly. The Trust was starved of funds, even in the face of this explicit warning. Yet again, we were treated as second class citizens by our own country.
- 17.7. Instead, reactions of denial by the UK government created a type of secondary abuse as many of our parents died before we could meet with them.

## **18. Legal Remedies**

- 18.1. We have, at various times, sought legal advice to resolve the wide ranging issues of human rights violations suffered by us and by many of our parents and families.