



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-01028**

BY: **Ms. SGRO (HUMBER RIVER—BLACK CREEK)**

DATE: **DECEMBER 7, 2016**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **MÉLANIE JOLY**

Response by the Minister of Canadian Heritage

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Immigration

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government would like to thank the petitioners for expressing their concerns regarding the treatment of the Home Children/Child Migrants in Canada's past.

The Government of Canada believes in the importance of learning from the past, including the more difficult moments in our history.

Between 1869 and the late 1940s, approximately 100,000 British children, most under the age of 14, were transported to Canada by British religious and philanthropic organizations to work as indentured farm labourers and domestic servants. Although the children were often described as orphans, it is thought that the majority were in British orphanages, workhouses and other institutions because their families were indigent. It is generally agreed that their living and working conditions were poorly supervised in Canada, leaving the children vulnerable to abuse and prejudice.

It is only right that Canadians remember the Home Children/Child Migrants and the contribution they and their descendants have made to the development of our country. 2010 was designated as the Year of the British Home Child in Canada to increase awareness about the hardships many of the children experienced, as well as their strength and endurance. The Year was marked by the issuance of a commemorative poster by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and of a commemorative stamp by Canada Post in September 2010.

The Government has supported a number of outreach, commemorative and educational initiatives to recognize the experience of the Home Children including:

- The Government of Canada designating the immigration experience of former Home Children as a national historic event. Further to this, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board established a commemorative plaque at the site of a former receiving home in Stratford, Ontario, which acknowledges the experience of all Home Children.
- Parks Canada has educational information available on its Web site, as well as at National Historic Sites at Grosse Isle, the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax, and the Partridge Island quarantine station in Saint John, New Brunswick.
- Library and Archives Canada has worked in cooperation with Home Children stakeholder groups to make key archival information available to former Home Children, and their descendants.

The Canadian Museum of History and Telefilm Canada have also worked to document the history of the child migrant movement in Canada.