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New Zealand apologizes for 70s immigration raids – 4th August, 2021

Level 0

New Zealand apologized to people from South Pacific islands. There were not enough workers in New Zealand in the 1970s. Over 65,000 Islanders moved there to help. Police with dogs woke up some Islanders early in the morning. The Islanders had to leave New Zealand. Their children were put in government care homes.

Ms Ardern is sorry for what happened. She took part in a forgiveness ceremony. She said Islanders hurt today because of the early-morning raids. Many still do not trust the police. A princess from Tonga thanked Ms Ardern. She called the apology "a new dawn" for her community. She called the raids "inhumane".

Level 1

New Zealand apologized to people from South Pacific islands like Tahiti, Tonga, Samoa and Fiji. Over 65,000 Islanders worked in New Zealand. There was a shortage of workers in the 1970s. Police with dogs woke up some Islanders early in the morning to deport them. This was known as the Dawn Raids. Police focused on people who overstayed their visas. Police put the children of over-stayers in government care homes.

Ms Ardern said she regretted the raids happened. She took part in a Samoan forgiveness ceremony. She said Islanders still hurt today because of the raids and still "suffer the scars". Many do not trust the police. She said the Dawn Raids policy was wrong. A princess from Tonga thanked Ms Ardern for the apology. She called it "a new dawn" for her community. She said the treatment of her people in the 1970s was "inhumane".

Level 2

New Zealand has apologized to people from South Pacific islands like Tahiti, Tonga, Samoa and Fiji for an immigration policy in the 1970s. The policy was known as the Dawn Raids. Over 65,000 Pacific Islanders lived and worked in New Zealand. That is because there was a shortage of workers. Police with dogs woke up some Islanders early in the morning to deport them. The Dawn Raids focused on those who overstayed their visas. Police put their children in government care homes. Most over-stayers at that time were from the UK, South Africa and Australia.

Ms Ardern expressed "sorrow, remorse and regret" for the raids. She took part in a traditional forgiveness ceremony to apologise. She was covered with a large mat to show forgiveness. Ardern said people still hurt today because of the raids. She said they did not trust or have faith in the police. She said the policy was wrong and that Islanders in New Zealand today still "suffer the scars". A princess from Tonga thanked Ardern for apologizing for the "inhumane and unjust" treatment of her people. She called it "a new dawn for my community".

Level 3

The Prime Minister of New Zealand Jacinda Ardern has apologized to Pacific Islanders for an immigration policy in the early 1970s. The policy was known as the Dawn Raids. These involved police with dogs waking up Pacific Islanders in the early hours of the morning to deport them. Pacific Islanders are from islands in the South Pacific such as Tahiti, Tonga, Samoa and Fiji. Over 65,000 Pacific Islanders relocated to New Zealand for work to help fill a shortage of workers. The Dawn Raids focused on those who allegedly overstayed their visas. Police deported them and put their children in government care homes. Most over-stayers at that time were from the UK, South Africa and Australia.

Ms Ardern expressed her government's "sorrow, remorse and regret" over the raids. She took part in a traditional Samoan forgiveness ceremony as part of her apology. She was covered with a large white mat to show forgiveness. Ardern said people still suffered from the memories of the raids, and that "they live on [today] in the disruption of trust and faith in authorities". She told Islanders: "The treatment of your ancestors was wrong." Ardern said Islanders in New Zealand today still "suffer the scars" from the discriminatory policy. A Tongan princess thanked Ardern for apologizing for the "inhumane and unjust" treatment of her people. She said the apology was "a new dawn for my community".

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