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(Ardern, J. & Sio, A. W., 2021)

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Government offers formal apology for Dawn Raids



RT HON JACINDA ARDERN(/MINISTER/RT-HON-JACINDA-ARDERN)



HON AUPITO WILLIAM SIO(/MINISTER/HON-AUPITO-WILLIAM-SIO)

Prime Minister (/portfolio/labour-2020-2023/prime-minister)

Pacific Peoples (/portfolio/labour-2020-2023/pacific-peoples)

- A formal and unreserved apology for the Dawn Raids
- The Government will offer education scholarships as part of the apology
- Manaaki New Zealand Short Term Scholarship Training courses
- Support Pacific artists and historians to develop a comprehensive written and oral account of the Dawn Raids

P. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has today formally apologised to Pacific communities impacted by the Dawn Raids in the 1970s.

Between 1974 and 1976, a series of rigorous immigration policies were carried out that resulted in targeted raids on the homes of Pacific families. The raids to find, convict, and deport overstayers often took place very early in the morning or late at night. We understand that the raids were severe with harsh verbal and physical treatment, which gave rise to the term the “Dawn Raids”.

“Today I offered, on behalf of the Government, a formal and unreserved apology to Pacific communities for the discriminatory implementation of immigration laws that led to the Dawn Raids,” Jacinda Ardern said.

“The Dawn Raids period cast a shadow over our shared history. Upholding immigration laws is one thing, but the Dawn Raids went well beyond that.

Whole communities felt targeted and terrorised. The raids were absolutely discriminatory.

“Expressing our sorrow, regret and remorse for past actions is the right thing to do and provides an opportunity for closure and reconciliation,” Jacinda Ardern said.

The Minister for Pacific Peoples, Aupito William Sio says looking back it’s clear that the immigration laws were discriminatory.

“Pacific peoples, Māori and other ethnic communities were specifically targeted and racially profiled, which was wrong and should have never happened,” Aupito William Sio said.

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“In 1986 the Race Relations Conciliator found that between 1985 and 1986, while Pacific peoples comprised roughly a third of overstayers, they represented 86 per cent of all prosecutions for overstaying. Racially targeting Pacific communities created a decades long false impression of the status of Pacific New Zealanders.

“During the same period overstayers from the United States and Great Britain who also comprised roughly a third of overstayers made up only five per cent of prosecutions,” Aupito William Sio said.

P. The Government has as part of the formal apology, committed to honour Pacific ways of seeking reconciliation. It will be providing:

- \$2.1 million in academic and vocational scholarships to be available to Pacific communities.
- \$1 million in Manaaki New Zealand Short Term Scholarship Training Courses for delegates from Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Fiji.
- It will also be providing resources that are available to schools and kura who choose to teach the history of the Dawn Raids, which would include histories of those directly affected.
- The Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Ministry for Pacific Peoples will provide support to enable Pacific artists and/or historians to work with communities to develop a comprehensive historical record of account of the Dawn Raids period as an additional goodwill gesture of reconciliation.

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