

**Stop this**



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**racist violence**

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P L U S S P E C I A L F E A T U R E

**Prisoners of asylum: inside Europe's lock-ups**

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## EDITORIAL

As the racist killings across Europe continue, it is time for us to ask ourselves how we can build a radical pan-European movement that does not simply react to each murder after the event. What steps can be taken to prevent such violence?

One proposal now being canvassed is to call for fascist organisations to be outlawed, following the example of Germany. The German state's banning of a handful of neo-nazi groupings (such as the Nationalist Front, the German Alternative and the National Offensive) is being held up as a positive move.

But CARF believes that such a strategy is short-sighted. It is our job both to oppose the fascists on the streets and, through political campaigning work which is issue-oriented and tactical (as opposed to doctrinaire), to inform and harness public opinion. A state ban imposed from the top effectively nullifies both strategies. We want the fascists up front where the public can see them, and we want to be able to tackle them head-on so that the public can join us.

Furthermore, as we know from our own Left and anti-fascist struggles, state-imposed bans, in the event, are always used more against the Left than the Right. Britain's Public Order Act of 1986 boasted provisions that would stop fascist marches, but its basic thrust was to overturn democratic freedoms – to assemble, to march, to act in solidarity – won by the labour movement over the last century. The marchers who were arrested over the BNP mobilisation in Dewsbury in 1989 were not fascists but anti-fascists; the poll-tax demonstrators who were arrested en masse in Trafalgar Square in 1990 were making a people's protest against the draconian laws of the government, and the NUS march in 1988 to draw the government's attention to student poverty was stopped by mounted police from reaching Whitehall.

In Germany today, Chancellor Kohl has made it clear that his concern is not with fascism per se but with the 'extremism' of both Left and Right. The state's banning of a handful of small, neo-nazi organisations (which can, after all, regroup or lose themselves in other neo-nazi parties) is not a precedent that we should ask the British government to emulate. It is a token gesture, designed to assuage international opinion.

It is also deeply hypocritical. For it is the German state, with its virulent campaign to overturn that part of the constitution that guarantees the right to seek asylum in Germany, that has fomented the culture of fascism and violence in the first place. And it is the German constitution's clause 116, which bases citizenship on (German) blood and not on residence, that denudes 'foreigners' born and bred in the country of the right to fight for their rights, and so disarms them in their battle against fascism.

Besides, there are enough laws in all the statute books of Europe to stem the fascist tide. The point is to use them. ■

### More deaths in 1992

In CARF No 12 we documented 59 deaths that occurred in Europe in 1992. Now we have received evidence of a further 7 previously undocumented murders. The toll for 1992 now stands at 66.

**France:** 29 December North African youth, Bechir, 23, shot dead by security guard at Port-Canto whilst sitting at the water's edge with friends. 31 December Naima Bouchafna, Moroccan girl, 18, shot by snipers who fired through the window of her home in Ariane, near Nice.

**Germany:** November Turk, 24, shot dead by a discotheque security guard in Cologne after the management refused him entry. 15 December 55-year-old disabled man beaten to death by two neo-nazis in Siegen.

**Portugal:** 28 January Angolan shot dead by a police officer in Damaia, a Lisbon suburb, after refusing to get into a police car.

**UK:** March Donald Palmer, 52, African-Caribbean, stabbed to death by two men in Peckham, south London. October Sher Sagoo, Asian stallkeeper, killed by racist gang in Deptford, south London.

# Blood on the streets

As campaigners in Manchester consider the conviction of Wayne Lambert and others for the murders of Siddik Dada and Mohammed Sarwar, the families and friends of other victims of racist murders are continuing their campaigns for justice.

## Birmingham

In Birmingham, various anti-racist groups have united to establish a memorial committee for Ashiq Hussain, the 21-year-old taxi driver stabbed to death last September after going to the aid of a colleague who was being racially abused. Three people have been arrested, one of whom has been charged with murder. There were angry scenes at the committal hearing when one of the accused hurled racist abuse at Ashiq's uncle and tried to provoke a fight.

## Newcastle

In Newcastle, pressure from the Justice for Mr Miah Campaign, formed after 66-year-old Aziz Miah was brutally beaten to death last September, has forced the police to recognise a racial motivation for the murder. The trial of Neils Michael Neilson is expected in May. The group is campaigning against further attacks on the Elswick Estate where Mr Miah's family still live.

The constant attacks and racist abuse faced by the Miah family and other Asians on the estate have, however, failed to touch the local authority, which is still dragging its feet over rehousing families, and the police, reported to have said: 'There's not much we can do about the kids hurling abuse at Asians because they're minors.' Members of the campaign are also suffering harassment. Homes have been vandalised and files stolen.

## Middlesbrough and Nottingham

CARF is investigating two other brutal murders. In Middlesbrough, two white men have been charged with the murder of 30-year-old cab-driver Ghulam Hussain, stabbed to death on night-shift a few days before Christmas. The funeral of another cab-driver, Jehangir Akhtar from Nottingham, was marked by a procession of 100 cabs after he, too, was beaten to death over Christmas.

## London

It was not until a recent trial that the racism involved in the murder last year of Donald Palmer, a 52-year-old African-Caribbean from Peckham, was



Andrew Ward

established. Having disturbed two men in the process of trying to steal his car, Palmer was stabbed to death as they shouted, 'We are the National Front'. Two men have been convicted, one receiving a life sentence, the other 3½ years' youth custody.

Meanwhile, the failure of the police to take action against a group of youths who regularly abused black people in the Deptford area has meant the loss of another life. Sher Sagoo died of head injuries after being attacked by racists as he stood at his stall with his two daughters in Deptford market in October. One man has been charged with manslaughter.

Also in London, Peter Thompson was found guilty of the murder of 16-year-old Rohit Duggal in Eltham last July. But the family and GACARA are still questioning why other members of the gang have not been charged. Despite a gang member admitting in court that he called Rohit a 'Paki', Detective Superintendent Douglas Auld said: 'I personally do not consider it was a racist attack.'

Committal proceedings are also in progress against the alleged murderers of Ruhullah Aramesh, the Afghan refugee beaten to death last summer in Thornton Heath by a gang armed with iron bars.

Campaigners were encouraged by the fact that, for once, a racist murder

had hit the headlines. But where is the public outcry now, they ask, when charges are being dropped at the committal stage against more and more of the accused? ■

**STOP PRESS:** We have just heard of the disappearance of an Asian taxi-driver in Newham, east London. Police have mounted a search in the area.

Ashiq Hussain Memorial Committee, PO Box 1854, Camp Hill, Birmingham B11 4NJ. Rohit Duggal Campaign, 115-123 Powis Street, London SE18. Justice for Mr Miah Campaign, 262 Westgate Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE4.

## Racist murders in Europe

### Germany:

Kerstin Winter died after opening a parcel-bomb at her apartment in Freiburg, southern Germany, on 22 January. The package contained a splinter-bomb wrapped in newspapers. Kerstin had been active in lesbian, left and anti-fascist politics. Police have made no attempt to arrest any fascists, concentrating instead on investigating Kerstin's friends on the radical left in Freiburg.

On 5 February, right-wing youths killed a left-winger in Mulhausen, Thuringen. Police have dismissed the murder as a 'confrontation between rival youth gangs'.

### Netherlands:

A Turkish man, Mr Koksai, died in the Netherlands after being stopped by the police. Whilst driving his car, Mr Koksai suffered an epileptic fit, but the police took his behaviour for drunkenness. Witnesses allege that the police beat Mr Koksai, violently smashing his head on the ground. An autopsy report shows no traces of alcohol, but confirms that he died from a brain injury and that his head and body showed marks of violence.

### France:

On new year's eve, an 18-year-old Moroccan girl, Naima Bouchafna, died after snipers shot through the window of her family's flat in Ariane, north of Nice. Although the police are trying to deracialise the murder, several killings of Arabs in France have involved shootings from high-rise apartment windows. Shooting Arabs in the streets from one's window was a well-known practice during the Algerian war.

# The mental violence of racism

For years, community groups have highlighted the reluctance of statutory agencies – police, housing departments and social services – to take racial harassment seriously and protect black families from racial attack.

Here, we report on the mental toll of such harassment.

Evidence is now emerging that people who suffer prolonged campaigns of harassment, may suffer psychological as well as physical damage. The mental toll is clear to those black groups which offer support to families in the community, and yet it is ignored and down-played by the services which are being paid to care.

## Women

Mrs S, an Asian woman estranged from her husband, lives with her 6-month old baby in her elderly parents' house at Custom House in east London. For two or three years, their home (one of only two owned by Asians in a small network of streets) has been targeted by racists. Groups of youths regularly throw bricks through the windows. In one week, Mrs S collected 15 rocks and bricks – one brick had landed in the baby's cot. On bonfire night, a lighted rocket was directed through the letter-box and exploded in the kitchen with a horrifying noise. Now her garden fence has been set alight and a large BNP slogan scrawled on the wall of the alley that runs down the side of the house.

Mrs S is clinically depressed and has spent time in hospital. When at home, she shakes all the time and usually sits and cries. Desperate to alleviate this nightmare of racist assaults, she tries to placate her tormenters. When groups of white youths congregate outside her home, she invites them in and offers them tea. They take it and then they go and break her windows. The police have proved reluctant to prosecute any

Three anti-racists from NMP and CARF were viciously attacked by a racist gang while in Custom House in East London researching this article. After hurling racist abuse at an NMP volunteer, the gang set about them with hammers and monkey wrenches, urging one another to 'get the Paki on the ground'. An NMP worker suffered hammer blows to the head requiring six stitches, while the volunteer sustained severe bruising. Two members of the gang have been arrested.

of the youths, although they were forced to arrest two juveniles by the community group which witnessed an assault.

On the evening before the case was due to be heard, Mrs S's sister, a witness in the case, had her car vandalised outside her home. The council, reluctant to move the family to temporary accommodation because they are owner-occupiers, has offered only to wall up the alley-way which runs beside the house. Mrs S's mental distress is not, apparently, enough to set aside the niceties of council bureaucracy.

But in the case of Mrs J, mental distress caused by racial harassment is being used as a reason not to rehouse her. Mrs J, a 60-year-old African-Caribbean woman, lives alone in a Walthamstow council flat. Her stories of racial harassment are said by the housing department to be too trivial or too much a part of her delusions to warrant her being rehoused.

There is no doubt that Mrs J is

confused and paranoid. Having suffered violent racial harassment for so long, she is now in such trepidation that she feels threatened by a man walking his dog outside on the street and accuses her neighbours of cutting off her gas and electricity. Living in fear of racial harassment has made her unable to distinguish between reality and her own nightmares.

## Children

Children, too, are being damaged by harassment at a very early age. A refugee family from Zaire were being so consistently harassed in their flat in east London that the council rehoused them. But a year later, they were moved back to exactly the same block, where they were once again terrorised. A gang of 12- or 13-year-old white children dug a grave in their garden, rang the door-bell and said: 'This is for your children.' When the Zairean children played in the garden, the gang dropped rocks and bottles from flats above, which smashed on the children's heads. Now the Zairean children are so traumatised that they refuse to step outside the doorway of their home at all.

A young Turkish boy was badly affected when he saw his older sister beaten up by a gang of white children. He became very wild at his North Woolwich school and began to beat up other children. The police were called in by the school to deal with him – a 6-year-old!

## Health and racism

Agencies, whether local authority services or the police, often provide totally inappropriate 'remedies' – not merely because they are insensitive to the mental damage that racial brutality brings, but also because they do not see the racial dynamic of a situation.

A young black juvenile was arrested in east London for indecent exposure. He had been reported to the police by a white family which had repeatedly racially harassed his family. The police took the extreme step of sectioning him. He was taken to a psychiatric hospital and placed in an adult ward



where he became extremely distressed.

CARF is concerned that, since health services do not recognise the racial dimension to mental stress, it is often left to local advice centres and community groups to provide psychological support to families, for which they are ill-equipped and ill-trained. The Newham Monitoring Project in east London, which is concerned about

the rise in mental stress accompanying the increase in racial violence, feels that it is now essential that research is done in this area to alert all the services to what is happening. ■

*NMP and CARF would be pleased to hear from other groups which can provide evidence or support such a campaign.*

special Racial Harassment Squads were set up.

Rather than attempting to make racial harassment subject to special laws and treatment within the legal system, a more helpful strategy – following proposals made by the Legal Action Group in 1988 – would be to seek to amend a wide variety of other legislation in the fields of crime, housing, education and social services, so as to ensure that existing laws can be used more effectively against racial harassment.

As it stands, the Racial Harassment Bill, if enacted, runs the risk of making it more difficult to enforce some laws against perpetrators of racial harassment, either because of the need to prove racial motivation or because of the scope it creates for racists to claim that they are the victims of special 'race laws'.

## Racial harassment is a crime

**In the UK today, racial violence is intensifying. One measure proposed at a parliamentary level to counter racism is the introduction of a Racial Harassment Bill.**

**CARF asks: Will the Racial Harassment Bill provide the black community with the weapon it needs to stop the violence?**

The Racial Harassment Bill starts off by defining a new criminal offence of 'racial harassment', involving a person of one 'racial or ethnic origin' committing one of a number of specified acts – ranging from serious assault to verbal insult – against a person of a different 'racial or ethnic origin'. Presumably, the intention of the Bill's promoters is that 'racial harassment' should be charged as an additional offence, in order to convey to courts the racial character of other crimes that defendants are charged with.

### Creating extra problems

There are a number of immediate problems which stem from this approach. First, all the specific acts mentioned in the Bill are already criminal offences in their own right, some carrying more severe penalties than that proposed for the new offence of 'racial harassment'.

Second, an additional burden of proof would be introduced, because it would have to be proved not only that the criminal act had been committed, but also the (racial) intent of that crime.

Third, the charge of racial harassment, as currently defined, could be used against any person who commits one of the listed criminal acts on someone of a different racial or ethnic origin, whatever the motivation (eg, a black person who assaults or insults a person who just happens to be white).

Remember what happened when the police introduced Racial Harassment Sheets in 1981? It was not long

before the police commander in Brixton was using his data to announce that it was whites and not blacks who were the most likely victims of racial incidents. Ironically, therefore, by deploying an 'even-handed', depoliticised inter-ethnic definition of racial harassment, the Bill hands to the racists and the police a weapon that could backfire against the black community.

### Tackling racial harassment separately

More generally, the Bill falls into the trap of attempting to single out racial harassment as a crime requiring special legal treatment and measures of enforcement – something that community groups resisted strongly throughout the 1980s, when Racial Harassment Incident Panels and

### Learning from the past

We have only to look at the history of the policing of racial violence to know that hiving off racial violence into a special category makes it less, not more, visible. Since the 1970s, community campaigns have been stressing the fact that ordinary criminal laws are there for the using. They have argued that the call for a new law gives the police a ready-made alibi for their failure to act, in suggesting that they are presently unable, rather than plain unwilling, to take action against racists. It is that unwillingness which must be tackled time and time again. ■

For a more detailed analysis see 'The Racial Harassment Bill: a missed opportunity' by Lee Bridges in *Race & Class* (April 1993), and *Legal Remedies for Racial Harassment* by Duncan Forbes (Legal Action Group, 1988).



Campaigns such as the Newham 7 have argued that ordinary criminal laws must be used, rather than giving more powers to a racist police force.

# The CARF interview

The black community has had little faith in the Commission for Racial Equality's ability to fight discrimination. As Herman Ouseley becomes the first black head of the Commission for Racial Equality, CARF asks him how he sees that role.

**CARF:** You have a long track record of links with radical black organisations, many of which view the CRE as essentially peripheral to black concerns. What made you decide to place your energies heading this organisation?

**HO:** The CRE, it has to be understood, is a law enforcement organisation. Whether we accept that the legislation is good enough or not, strong enough or not, the legislation is there and it does contribute to the elimination of discrimination.

An organisation can increase its credibility by the way it operates. While it's there, and commands resources and is supposed to be acting in accordance with legislation, then I feel it is an important organisation to contribute to. And I would want to influence the way that it makes that contribution. I may fail, but it's worth doing.

**CARF:** How are you going to judge that for yourself?

**HO:** By and large, through the contacts I have with the people who are presently out of touch with, or choose to be out of touch with, the CRE because of how they perceive it. I will judge how I feel they respond to the way I contribute my own influences to making it work better.

We have got to set ourselves a series of credible targets that can be achieved in line with the objectives the CRE has. I can't make it do what it's not created by statute to do. We can't make the CRE go out onto the streets and fight racism because I don't think that is what parliament had in mind for the CRE.

We can't make the CRE go out and create opportunities for black people – it doesn't create jobs, it doesn't create housing, it doesn't create the social conditions – but it can make a contribution.

Once those targets are set, we need to see how the people who are supposed to be the beneficiaries of what we are doing judge us on the basis of what we do. But it has its limitations and it's not going to please everyone.

**CARF:** How will a CRE, re-equipped with your particular vision, relate to community campaigns and community struggles?

**HO:** The CRE is not there to supplant grassroots activity or to speak for black, or any other minority, communities. But it can contribute to the space that is necessary for the encouragement of black self-help, for the black voice to speak for itself.



Herman Ouseley

But on some issues the CRE has a role in being able to complement grass-roots campaigns. Take the Immigration and Asylum Bill, for instance. The CRE can support campaigners on the streets by briefing MPs, tabling amendments and speaking to people who would not listen to campaigners on the ground.

We would be complementing all those campaigns which fall within the criteria of promoting equality, fighting discrimination, creating a better environment for better race relations – but we would be doing things differently.

**CARF:** The CRE could argue that it's doing that already. How would you be pushing it?

**HO:** I'm not putting on the table any prescriptions in advance because they become a hostage to fortune. I need to do a proper assessment once I'm there.

One handicap will be that the CRE will have even less resources during the next financial year. The CRE, whether I am there or not, is in a make or break situation.

Firstly, will it get the additional legal powers it wants to be more effective in dealing with discrimination through the courts and investigations? If the government is reluctant to improve and strengthen the Act, there will have to be an ongoing campaign.

How it uses its influence in Europe is another crucial point. What I want to bring to the CRE is the opening up of the organisation to the scrutiny and influence of those communities who, as the victims of discrimination, are supposed to be its beneficiaries.

**CARF:** For over a decade we have had a government opposed to anything it deems 'social engineering' – anything which seeks to influence individual or organisational behaviour. How can the CRE fare in such an unfavourable climate?

**HO:** If that philosophy were overwhelmingly accepted by society at large, then the influence of CRE would be diminished. I don't accept that. I think one can see signs that the government is responding to all sorts of pressures, despite trying to push on with its 'radical' policies of allowing the free market to be the dominant force. Only recently, we have seen the response to the pit closure policy. And there are numerous issues like that which are quite important where the government is forced to be more responsive.

For the CRE, it is an issue of the morality of discrimination. The CRE is there to tackle that head on and, through all the agencies of society, to try to influence behaviour so as to enable black and white people (and other minorities) to live together free from oppression due to race, ethnicity and nationality. That will not in any way be reduced by government philosophy because there are people and institutions who will take that on, either with or without the help of the CRE. ■

# MEPs of the extreme Right

The Technical Group of the European Right (DR) boasts 14 members of the European parliament. Its leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, proclaims that the gas-chambers were built by the Americans in Buchenwald after the second world war.

His German counterpart, Franz Schönhuber, leader of the extreme right Republikaner Party, is no longer a DR member – he left two years ago after an internal duel with his rival Harold Neubauer – but still sits as a non-attached MEP. Schönhuber openly displays his credentials as a former member of Hitler's elite Waffen SS, and has even published memoirs on the subject. Neubauer is himself a former member of the NSDAP-AO, a terrorist organisation calling itself 'The German National-Socialist Workers' Party – Foreign and Development Section', which runs a distribution network for neo-nazi propaganda.

These three men may be termed fascists without any risk of exaggeration. The vision they share is one of a New Europe based on racial exclusivity rather than democratic citizenship. Fortunately, they remain entirely isolated within the European parliament. Due to a political dispute over South Tyrol, the extreme right-wing Italian MSI (Movimento Sociale Italiano), which makes up one-third of non-attached MEPs, continues to camp outside the DR, as do Schönhuber and the two MEPs that left with him.

Although transnational collaboration has increased within the DR since 1984 – the chairman of the (French) NF then summarily dismissed any possibility of cooperation with German neo-nazis – tension is still evident between the French and German factions. With the Republikaner Party making rapid gains in Germany, Schönhuber's political star remains ascendant: Le Pen now realises that his own expertly-guided political opportunism may have failed him, and that he may have backed the wrong man.

DR member Karel Dillen, of the Flemish nationalist Vlaams Blok (VB), is seen as something of a bridge between the two sides. His influence has increased following the meteoric rise of the VB in Belgium, where, in certain areas of Flanders, it now commands 35% of the vote. While five years ago the DR succeeded in getting two

**Glyn Ford, MEP for Greater Manchester East and deputy leader of the Socialist Group in the European parliament, reports on the state of play on the extreme Right in Europe's parliament.**

positions within the parliament (vice-presidency of the agricultural committee and presidency of the Gulf delegation), it currently finds itself empty-handed in the face of united



Franz Schönhuber

opposition. It continues, however, in attempts to disrupt parliamentary reports, particularly those referring to immigration or multiculturalism.

Despite the failure of the extreme Right in internal parliamentary terms, it would be erroneous to conclude that its effect has been minimal. It has succeeded in pulling the parties of the traditional Right to the outskirts of tolerable political debate and, in the process, has realigned the parameters of the debate itself.

In this way, the extreme Right fosters the 'persistence and gradual acceptance of broadly xenophobic attitudes [which] seriously threaten to undermine loyalty to the democratic culture of European societies and may even result in its being openly challenged'. These words, from the European parliament's first Committee of Inquiry into Racism and Xenophobia, give us sufficient warning of the dangers posed by the presence of the extreme Right within our parliamentary procedures. ■

## Racism at sea

The shipwreck of the oil tanker, the *Braer*, off the Shetland coast in January, has once again focused attention on the destructively irresponsible nature of the international shipping industry. But while the media swings between concern for the environment and who did what when, only passing attention has been given to the ruthless exploitation of Third World crews that underpins a large part of the merchant fleets of the world.

The *Braer* was a typical case: a Third World crew (in this case Filipino) who received low pay for long hours, working under European officers (on the *Braer* the captain was Greek, the engineers Polish). In October 1991, the *Braer*'s chief engineer wrote to the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) complaining that the owners of the ship, B & H, treated crew members like 'slaves'. Again, in early 1992, the *Braer*'s former captain wrote to the ITF complaining about conditions of service.

One-third of all tankers are

registered under the flag of convenience of either Panama or Liberia. The *Braer* was registered in Liberia which, like similar Third World countries, depends on registration fees for a significant proportion of its GNP (in the case of Liberia, about 10%). Such countries have much weaker registration conditions, fewer personnel to enforce regulations and are often not signatories to international agreements.

For instance, the *Braer* was caught dumping off the US coast in 1990 in contravention of an IMO convention to which Liberia is not party. The present concern about irresponsible profit-hungry shipping companies should also focus on the exploitation of Third World seamen. For any new international regulations to be just, they must include guarantees of both improved conditions of work and the continued employment of Third World crews under such improved conditions. New rules for employment should not be the occasion for a shift to European and North American crews. ■

# Prisoners of asylum

Across Europe, governments are bringing in new laws to keep out refugees from the Third World – all part of the EC design for an impenetrable Fortress Europe. But what of life for refugees inside Fortress Europe? CARF has received disturbing evidence of degradation and violence inside Europe's asylum prisons and refugee camps.

Whilst politicians blither on about the tolerant and liberal traditions of civilised Europe, asylum-seekers are increasingly being incarcerated for long periods – and the UK has the worst detention record of all. They are held in prisons, detention centres and anchored ships, or compulsorily housed in refugee camps, which can mean living in tents and prefabricated containers. All very inhumane, but the politicians daren't admit it, employing instead a mendacious double-speak.

## Europe's double-speak

In Holland, justice minister Kosto compares border prisons where detention is increasingly the norm, to 'semi-hotels' with 'conditions that would, under the circumstances, be very comfortable'. In the UK, a recommendation was recently made to the Prison Inspectorate that a prison holding asylum-seekers be called a 'Home Office Holding Centre', as though changing the name altered the reality.

German ministers at least openly admit to the construction of 'concentrated camps', with all their Nazi connotations, and to the introduction of measures designed to 'reduce the country's attractiveness', including a compulsory period in camps, a prohibition on employment and restricted rights to movement and welfare benefits.

## Fewer rights than prisoners

But according to the Amsterdam-based Autonom Centre, which has been exposing violence and neglect of asylum-seekers, 'the reality is that the conditions in which refugees are kept are worse than in prisons'.

And this is really what lies at the heart of the matter.

True, prisoners across Europe have few rights, and what rights they have are routinely violated. But asylum prisoners are quite literally incarcerated without committing a crime, without a trial, without even the right to know when they will be released. They are detained without a family to support



them, to publicise any abuse of their rights, to ensure that international standards surrounding detention are upheld.

Asylum-seekers, terrified to assert their rights for fear it will prejudice their asylum application, are, more than any other group of prisoners, at the mercy of individual prison officers. And, as 'foreigners' caught up in an unfamiliar system, it is easier for the authorities to neglect their material needs. For instance, on the Danish floating ship *Norrøna*, docked in Copenhagen harbour, where refugees are kept pending a decision on their asylum application, 12 men occupy a single room, without windows or adequate ventilation. In Germany, army barracks, often run by private companies, are used as refugee camps, housing up to 1,500 people.

## Safety & health

In the UK, a private security firm runs Harmondsworth detention centre. Following the death of Siho Iyiguen, a Kurdish refugee from Turkey, who set fire to his bedding and died from subsequent burns, it emerged that Group 4 Security did not have to abide by the same safety standards as prison managers.

Following the suicide of Zairean asylum seeker Kimpua Nsimba, it emerged that Group 4 also knew nothing about Home Office guidelines on suicide prevention.

In Holland, the Autonom Centre

has exposed the medical neglect of asylum seekers. It cites the case of a Liberian man whose complaints that he had shrapnel lodged in his head led to the prescription of paracetamol and then to treatment for a psychotic disorder. Only later did doctors find that he did, in fact, have shrapnel lodged in his head. Although the authorities deny it, observers believe it was also medical neglect that led to the death of the 7-month pregnant asylum-seeker Jacqueline Mulata in Holland (see CARF Nos 7 and 12).

## Violence

Most shocking of all is the violence that refugees are subjected to, both in prisons and refugee hostels. In Denmark, recently rocked by 'Tamilgate', a judicial inquiry is under way into allegations made by two prison nurses in 1988 that asylum-seekers, then detained with ordinary prisoners, had been subjected to racist insults in Copenhagen prisons.

In an article in *Amnesty Nyr*, the nurses further alleged that special cells existed, in which detainees were strapped down and bright lights were left on continuously. Following this scandal, the Danish authorities decided to remove asylum-seekers from ordinary prisons and establish special centres such as the anchored ship *Norrøna*. Progress indeed!

In Britain, at the inquest of Zairean asylum-seeker Omasase Lumumba, disturbing evidence has emerged of institutional violence at Pentonville prison. He had been placed in a segregation unit following a 'disciplinary dispute'. On the day of his death, prison officers attempted to remove his clothes forcibly, placing his wrist and ankles in locks.

## Hostels

At a superficial glance, refugee hostels may not appear to be prisons, but there are a whole range of measures deployed, such as curfews and denial of freedom of movement, that parallel a prison regime.

Asylum-seekers in refugee hostels

in Germany have also been subjected to violence, but this time from local police forces, themselves influenced by local hostility towards the refugees.

In June 1992, police in special combat gear and carrying batons raided a hostel for asylum-seekers in Granitz, near Freiburg, in the eastern German state of Saxony. The male occupants, many of whom were assaulted, were ordered out of their beds and into a room, where they had to stand with their faces to the wall, their legs apart and with their arms raised or their wrists handcuffed.

Similarly, in November 1992, 200 policemen searched a refugee hostel in Augsбург, Bavaria, looking for six asylum-seekers accused of forcing residents to refuse canteen meals and organising a strike. The official police report said they discovered a large number of weapons and drugs, but it later transpired that only a few baseball bats and iron bars were found.

### Punishment of organisation

The Augsбург incident reveals that police violence comes when refugees have the temerity to organise themselves. Despite their acute political vulnerability, refugees, as the hunger strikes across Europe show, are not

passive victims. But, at the point at which they combine together, in the hostels or the prisons, the system punishes them for doing the unthinkable – publicising the seamy, degrading side of Europe's double-speak.

According to the Dutch refugee support group 'Platform', asylum-seekers at a detention centre in Seewolde are being punished for trivial incidents by being placed in solitary confinement.

Meanwhile, last November, riot police entered Grenshospitium, a closed-off location for asylum-seekers at Schiphol airport in Amsterdam. Their aim was to transfer 10 refugees – who, on the previous day, had complained about medical provision, food, and length of detention – to remand prisons. A Nigerian refugee, who says he was beaten around the head with a truncheon, was given two paracetamol to ease the pain and denied medical treatment for four days. The Department of Home Affairs claims that his wounds were a result of having fallen out of bed!

In recent months, according to Anke Bahr of 'Asyl e.V', German police, in response to self-organisation amongst refugees against racial violence, have been raiding refugee

hostels, particularly around Berlin.

There are other ways, too, of punishing asylum-seekers who step out of line, which involve criminalisation or casting them into the limbo of illegality. Three Zairean refugees, accused of unruly behaviour (including playing their music too loud), were thrown out of a detention centre in Slagharen, in Drenthe, Holland, over Christmas and told they could return on 7 January. Two of them managed to find shelter, but one was found wandering confused around railway stations.

The refugees transferred from Grenshospitium were taken to other prisons, kept in solitary confinement, with no notification of their whereabouts given to lawyers. Three were subsequently released with no papers and no money, and given 48 hours to leave the country. According to the Autonom Centre, 'They have, conveniently for the Justice Department, disappeared. They no longer exist.'

Another incident reported to CARF by the Berlin branch of SOS Rassismus concerns a police raid on a refugee camp in Falkenrehde, Brandenburg, on 3 January. The roots of the incident lay in the fact that the German government recently cut social



Campaigners in Holland protest against the imprisonment of asylum-seekers.



Hunger strikes of refugees are taking place all across Europe. In Britain in January, Kurdish asylum-seekers began a hunger strike outside the Home Office in London. Meanwhile, the Refugees Ad Hoc Committee for Asylum Rights continued its campaign against the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill with a lobby of parliament on 4 March, the day of the third reading of the Bill. (RAHCAR, tel: 071-738 6408)

Darren Jakobsen

assistance and cash payments to refugees, replacing them with food and goods parcels – with the result that refugees cannot buy things suitable to their dietary needs. When refugees at Falkenrehde camp refused to accept a parcel (which, amongst other things, contained no baby food or nappies), the governor of the privately-run camp called the police.

The police, who arrived in three vans with the immigration police in tow, told the refugees that if they did not accept the parcel, they would be deported. They then proceeded to remove a refugee family and another single refugee to an inaccessible camp in Wachnow.

### Fight-back

Refugees who organise protests inside prison are being victimised. But, with the help of their own communities and refugee-support organisations, they are fighting back, ensuring that information about their predicament reaches the outside world. This has led, on several occasions, to the intervention of human rights groups like Amnesty International.

Europe's politicians, who see Amnesty's role as exposing human rights abuses in the 'uncivilised world', are uneasy when its beam is turned on them. Following the intervention of Amnesty, Saxony's Ministry of Justice has announced a judicial investigation into the allegations of police ill-treatment at Granitz.

Amnesty has also been asked, by SOS Rassismus, to take up the incident at the Falkenrehde camp, and publicity

in the Dutch liberal paper *De Volkskrant* has led to an official investigation into the riot police operation at Grenshospitum.

Meanwhile, Platform has announced a new initiative: a caravan is travelling from detention centre to

detention centre across Holland to warn the public about deteriorating conditions and to demand 'Rights for Asylum-Seekers'. ■

Platform voor illegale Vluchtelingen (PIV), Haarlemmerplein 17, 1013 HP Amsterdam. Tel: 010-20-6272408.

## Sanctions against Iraqi people

CARF reports on how illegal international sanctions are devastating Iraq's people.

The International War Crimes Tribunal British commission of inquiry is stepping up its efforts, alongside Arab and Third World organisations, to get sanctions against Iraq lifted after judging the behaviour of allied forces to be criminal and their governments to be in breach of international law.

Two years after the Gulf conflict, sanctions are still being rigidly imposed, despite efforts by the Iraqi government to meet the proposals of the allied nations, who are determined to destroy the country's former economic and political independence.

It is a violation of international law to obstruct the provision of a country's food, yet the freezing of Iraqi assets has prevented the importation of essential foodstuffs and medicines. Seventy per cent of Iraq's food products used to be imported. The trade embargo has destroyed import and export facilities and has led to rapidly rising inflation rates. Last year, prices increased, on average, by 255%.

Factories, which, along with vessels carrying food supplies, were targeted by the US military during the war,

have not been rebuilt. Milk is now practically impossible to obtain. Estimates of 300,000 children dying as a result of bombings and sanctions are considered conservative.

There is growing evidence that shells used by allied forces contained nuclear waste which is causing cancer, diarrhoea and nausea in young people. Health services lack basic supplies, such as painkillers and antibiotics, and diseases like typhus, caused by insanitary conditions, are common.

Before the military assault on Iraq, 93% of the population had access to health care and 92% to clean water – without investment from the IMF or the World Bank. ■

Supporters of the Tribunal should contact IWCT, BM 2966, London WC1N 3XX.

5-13 June. 'Water Not Weapons Week' organised by the Campaign Against the Arms Trade, 11 Goodwin Street, London N4 3HQ. Tel 071-281 0297. Resources spent on arms could be used to provide water for millions of people currently without a safe supply.

# Storms subside after 'Tamilgate'

In January, Denmark's prime minister resigned after a High Court inquiry concluded that he had helped cover up an illegal decision to stop Tamil refugees from bringing their families in.

Cath Mersh, a British journalist working in Denmark, explains what happened.

There are no precise figures on just how many Tamils seeking to join relatives in Denmark died when the Danish immigration authorities put their applications on hold for more than a year. The High Court inquiry into the Tamilgate scandal put the official death tally at 'at least' four, but the real total is probably more like 250, mainly women and children.

## Illegal decision

The report which caused the downfall of Denmark's 10-year-old Conservative/Liberal government on 14 January found that prime minister Poul Schluter, two former justice ministers and a series of parliamentary advisers all knew about an illegal decision to stop Tamil families being reunited with their fathers and husbands in Denmark. And, what's more, they lied about it.

In the mid-1980s, Tamils fleeing Sri Lanka's bloody civil war saw Denmark as a place of sure refuge. Karunahara Kariresan, a school teacher who arrived in 1986, received his residence permit within three weeks – one of the 2,381 Tamils, mostly young men, granted asylum in Denmark that year. It was a year before Karunahara's wife and young daughter could join him. Immigration officials took seven months to issue a visa and Karunahara needed three months to track his family down. 'We didn't know we could have our family here until Danish Refugee Help told us our rights', he says.

In 1987, 337 Tamils used their family reunion right, bringing 870 people to Denmark in all. But, in September 1987, the stream of reunions suddenly stopped. It was some time before the penny dropped that no one was dealing with the applications any more. In fact, a year passed before a flood of complaints aroused the suspicions of parliamentary ombudsman Hans Gammeltoft-Hansen.

The man responsible for the decision to 'deprioritise' Tamil cases, justice minister Erik Ninn-Hansen, knew his action contravened international conventions. The inquiry report confirms that he also tried to hinder the

ombudsman's investigations. But the attempted cover-up came too late, and Ninn-Hansen has become the pariah of the Danish Conservative party.

Prime minister Poul Schluter resigned after his claim to parliament in 1989 that 'nothing has been swept under the carpet' was exposed by the report as 'directly inconsistent with the truth'. Former parliamentary speaker H P Clausen, who gave the ombudsman and MPs misleading information, is another casualty. Reprisals are also likely for other MPs and for officials involved in the case. With their fall, an entire government came tumbling down. Real justice at last – but little help to those who died.

## The situation today

Today, Tamils, who spent up to two years fearing for their families' lives, are largely unwilling to talk of their experiences. Karunahara still dreams of going home. Unemployment is hard to accept after a useful school-teaching career. But the chances of returning to Sri Lanka are slim. He has now set his sights on South America. 'I feel very uneasy because I don't have a job', he says. 'They give us money here but there's no respect.'

According to an opinion poll carried out in December 1992, 60% of Danes consider that too many asylum-seekers are allowed into the country. In interviews, people voice concern and sometimes threaten the newcomers with downright aggression. But Danish politicians have not all bowed to popular racism.

While still opposition leader, Social Democrat Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, tackling the refugee question from another angle, invited his parliamentary colleagues to debate the real issues. A newsletter, to help the general public make an informed opinion instead of one based on rumour, and improved cooperation between local communities and asylum centres, also formed part of the package. While the plan received a cool reception from Poul Schluter while he was prime minister, Nyrup Rasmussen is now prime minister himself, and is unlikely to be

short of support in his new four-party coalition.

Shortly before Christmas, Central Democrat leader Mimi Jakobsen, now minister for trade and political coordination, presented parliament with a bill to stop immigration authorities delaying decisions on children's asylum applications. Promising a new start for Denmark, the leaders of the four coalition parties have relieved the troublesome justice ministry of all refugee and immigration issues. Now, perhaps, as Denmark takes a step away from the protectionist Right, there may be some grounds for hope. ■

● Only a week before the publication of High Court judge Mogens Hornslet's report, the immigration authorities turned down a 17-year-old Tamil boy's application for asylum. More than 40 Tamil children went on hunger strike in protest. Within days, 200 Tamils in asylum centres all over Denmark, all fearing deportation back to an insecure homeland, had joined the strike.

## NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION & RALLY IN BOLTON SATURDAY 3 APRIL

(Assemble 12.30pm at Sunninghill School,  
Derby Street, Daubhill, Bolton)

**AGAINST THE ASYLUM BILL  
AGAINST THE DEPORTATION  
OF THE RAHMAN FAMILY  
AGAINST ALL DEPORTATIONS**

The Rahman family in Bolton is now fighting deportation. Mrs Rahman came from Djibouti for cancer treatment. She still has cancer. Her daughter, Shabana, has multiple handicaps and is now in a special school in Bolton. But the Home Office wants to deport the family.

Many other families are in a similar situation.

The Rahman Family Defence Campaign, Socialist Club, 16 Wood Street, Bolton BL1 1DY.

# Fascist round-up

## National Front

NF losses over the past few months have been BNP gains. The Cannock (West Midlands) branch of the NF has, for instance, transferred en masse to the BNP.

But despite this gloomy reality, NF leader Ian Anderson continues to live in cloud-cuckooland. Not surprising, given increasing rancour in NF circles over Anderson's financial scams—in particular, his apparent unwillingness to pay back £9,000 of party funds secretly signed over to him by the National Directorate (Acton, Martin and Tina Wingfield, Peter Cox and John Hill) in 1990. Some of the money (which his opponents claim to be part of a £30,000 bequest, intended for setting up a NF HQ) has been, it is said, used to pay off the mortgage on Anderson's East Ham home, which also houses all the NF's printing equipment (also alleged to have been purchased in Anderson's name).

NF internal circulars refer to the 'dramatic start' to 1993. Anderson's appeal to members to mobilise throughout the south-east for the anti-

**Western Goals is kaput. The National Front is in terminal decline. And tensions exist within the BNP.**



Third Way paper seller at anti-Maastricht rally.

Maastricht march on 17 January – so as, in his words, to ensure that 'NF members make up the majority of the march' – led to approximately five NFers turning up, outnumbered even by Patrick Harrington's Third Way.

## Western Goals

In matters financial, Anderson may feel he has something to learn from the scams of Western Goals, which has now closed down its bank account. Following accusations in *Private Eye* – that AVR Smith has been involved in arms dealing in the Philippines, and is being investigated by the police in connection with Gregory Lauder Frost's embezzlement of £111,000 from Riverside Health Authority – Stuart Millson and Jonathan Bowden have bid a hasty retreat, immersing themselves in the Revolutionary Conservative Caucus.

## British National Party

Following a *Guardian* exposé, linking the BNP to Combat 18/Redwatch, Tyndall (who made a right plonker of himself on TV's 'Public Eye' programme recently) is more worried than ever about party discipline – ie, keeping his members out of prison and the clutches of Combat 18. When police raided the homes of BNP Chesterfield organiser Simon Chadwick and BNP member Graham Trasker, following an attack on SWP paper-sellers in Mansfield, Combat 18 hit-list plans were found, says Notts Anti-Fascist Alliance.

Meanwhile, AFA Northern Network reports increased BNP activity in Halifax, where neo-nazis have been campaigning against the opening of an Asian women's refuge. The BNP themselves boast new branches in Coventry and Skipton, Yorkshire. At the time of going to press, CARF is investigating claims that east London BNP has set up an office in Hoxton.

In May, the BNP will be fielding candidates in elections in Staffordshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Durham, South Herts, South Glamorgan, Derby, Lancashire, Essex and Surrey.

## Blood & Honour

The infrastructure of the Blood & Honour movement took a nose-dive in February when brothers Roy and Kevin Johnson, who ran Skrewdriver Services, were jailed for six months for incitement to racial hatred. The brothers, both KKK members, were arrested after a raid on their Harlow home in 1990, which was itself the result

## Documents received by CARF

Dear Tina,

This is to confirm that:-

- 1) The National Front is to lend me the sum of £4,000 to be repaid in equal monthly instalments of £200. Interest to be calculated at the rate of 12% p.a.
- 2) The National Front will pay to me the sum of £5,000 which is to remain the property of the National Front and is to be held by me in an account with the Cheshunt Building Society. The National Front may demand the return of this money at any time and on such demand the money will be returned together with such interest as has accrued.

Signed:

*I. H. M. Anderson*

Ian Anderson

Dated: 30-4-90

Date:

31st May 1990

Dear Mr Acton

I enclose herewith the Deed which you have requested me to draw up in respect of Mr Anderson together with two copies. The document should be signed by Mr Anderson in the presence of an independent witness who is not one of the lenders. The witness should sign his name and give his address and occupation where indicated in pencil on the document. The document should then be dated and the loans made. One of the copy Deeds should be handed to Mr Anderson for his retention and you should keep the original Deed and there is also a further copy for your use.

I take this opportunity of enclosing my account for your kind attention.

of the police intercepting quantities of racist material from the US to Stansted Airport.

Records which formed part of the Crown Prosecution Service case included: 'There is only one ... Public Enemy' (Public Enemy – *not* the rap band), 'The New Storm Troopers' (No Remorse), 'Our Time will Come' (Squadron), 'Storm' (Sudden Impact) and 'No Surrender' (various artists including Skrewdriver).

One interesting item that turned up at the Johnson's home was a letter from erstwhile political soldier Nick Griffen, offering help with printing and the services of his father to do the accounts. ■

Alex Ednie, Harlow & Epping Herald & Post



## Around the courts

**This new feature provides a glimpse into the legal world not generally offered in the press. Contributions from readers are welcome.**

■ The Race Relations Act of 1976 has long been criticised as weak and ineffectual. A recent case highlighted a particular defect. Ms X applied for a job as a Cosmos coach tour escort. Having previous experience, she sent off her CV with her picture, as required by the advert, confident of at least an interview. But a rejection letter arrived, and Ms X, a black woman, alleged racial discrimination.



Cosmos strongly denied this, so Ms X went to an Industrial Tribunal. But it stopped the proceedings without any investigation. Why? Because the job was to be done outside Britain. The Race Relations Act covers employment in Britain only. So even though the selection process took place here, the case could not go on.

■ Racism on juries is not a new issue, but a case in January showed how badly it can affect the course of justice. The police were being sued by a Nigerian-born woman, Ms U, for wrongful arrest and unlawful detention, before a jury of four black and four white members. Though upset at times, Ms U gave evidence in a perfectly intelligible manner. One elderly white juror, however, exclaimed out loud that he couldn't

understand a word she said. When a black juror replied that he could understand her perfectly, a second white juror snapped, 'That's because you speak her language!' The language spoken? English, of course. There were other interjections throughout the trial, and Ms U's barrister finally applied to discharge one of the racist jurors. The judge would hear none of it, however. Discharging jurors is about as difficult as getting a policeman to tell the truth, and bias, even where expressed, is not a good reason for getting rid of one. And yes, you guessed it: the case ended with the jury completely divided.

■ Before the 1988 Criminal Justice Act, the defence could 'challenge' potential jurors. By this means, up to three jurors could be replaced at the request of each defendant. This right was used effectively in cases where black defendants were on trial and the interests of justice demanded that they should have a multi-racial jury. Since the abolition of this right of 'peremptory challenge', black defendants have been at the mercy of racist juries. But the right of challenge did not help the victims of racist crimes.

The problem of racist juries acquitting racists was vividly illustrated in the Los Angeles trial of the policemen who beat up Rodney King. But, closer to home, a distressed and angry woman contacted CARF in February about her experience as a member of an all-white jury trying some skinheads accused of attacking an Indian restaurateur. The man was left partially blinded, and our juror thought it

a clear-cut case. But some virulent racists on the jury managed to wear down the others over a number of hours, so that the skinheads were finally acquitted, by a majority. It is time for the campaign for multiracial juries to be re-launched.

■ A partial victory was celebrated at Knightsbridge Crown Court in London when four Asians charged with affray were acquitted in February. The men were moving furniture for a relative who was moving in to a white-dominated estate off the Edgware Road, when they were surrounded by a gang of white youths leaving a pub, and attacked. The Asians ran away and called the police, only to find themselves arrested and accused of assaulting an elderly white man. The case against them collapsed when the prosecution witnesses told conflicting stories. But the men's relief at their acquittal was soured by the knowledge that the racists had achieved their aim – the relative decided against moving into the area.

■ It seems likely that the High Court will soon be petitioned to overturn a prison governor's decision to provide halal meat to a Muslim remand prisoner only once a week. Prison rules do not specifically refer to the provision of a diet by reference to religious or cultural tradition. But Home Office guidelines clearly do. The outcome of the case will have wide-ranging effects ... watch this space.



# INQUEST

**Medical neglect of prisoners has recently hit the headlines.**

In February, two police doctors were jailed for manslaughter after recklessly prescribing a dangerous cocktail of drugs to a remand prisoner who died, and a High Court judge pronouncing on the death of John Ryan (in Winson Green in 1987), said that prisoners deserved the same medical care as anyone else and he was 'convinced that the standard of care in the last few days of his life fell below that to be expected'.

The same could have been said of the black prisoners who continue to be particularly at risk of medical neglect. Andrew Ohene, a Ghanaian, was found hanged in Swaleside Prison, Isle of Sheppey, on 13 June 1991. A jury decided on 5 February that his death was 'aggravated by lack of care'. His suicide, like those of Edwin Robinson, Delroy McKnight and so many other black prisoners before him, could probably have been prevented. He was known to have a history of mental illness and yet, in the words of the coroner, 'at no time was there any real assessment of this man's condition. By the time he died he had still not received any medical or psychiatric treatment.'

A Community Truth Campaign has been launched to reopen the case of Ian Francis, who died on 5 September 1992, and to reverse the inquest verdict of 'natural causes'. Ian injured his ankle on 25 August during a football match at Send Prison. Despite complaining of pain, having a temperature and feeling dizzy, he was provided with scant medical care at the prison - occasional bed rest and paracetamol. A day after being admitted to hospital, he was on a life support machine. A day later, he was dead.

Stephanie Patterson, twin sister of



Omasase Lumumba

Leon, who died on remand in Ashton under Lyme police container cells last November, is still trying to ascertain exactly how he died. Why, she asks, was there bruising on his face and feet and how could such bruising be, as police claim, self-inflicted? Moreover, if the post-mortem was correct and he died of a drugs overdose, how did he have access to the drugs in the first place?

On 19 February, the inquest into the death in jail of Omasase Lumumba was adjourned for the family to seek judicial review of the coroner's refusal to allow

the jury to consider verdicts of unlawful killing or lack of care. A nephew of former Zairean president Patrice Lumumba, Omasase, an asylum-seeker, had been arrested in September 1991 on suspicion of stealing a child's bicycle. Mr Lumumba had been extremely distressed at his arrest and repeatedly requested to see a doctor. He died on 8 October during a 15-minute struggle in which he was held down by seven prison officers. ■

Inquest, 330 Seven Sisters Road, London N4 2PG. Ian Francis Community Truth Campaign, Old Library Project, 14-16 Knight's Hill, London SE27.

## M25 Three appeal

**The hearing for leave to appeal for the M25 Three is expected to be heard in June after repeated delays.**

In March 1990, Raphael Rowe, Michael Davis and Randolph Johnson were convicted of murder, robbery, grievous bodily harm and firearms offences and all sentenced to life imprisonment.

The charges related to a series of violent attacks and robberies committed by a gang of three men around the M25 in the Surrey area in December 1988. The victims of the crimes gave evidence that two of the perpetrators were white and one black. The police said in a television appeal that they were looking for two white men and one black man. All three convicted men are black.

Police conducted at least one unrecorded interview with three suspects. These suspects became key prosecution witnesses. They admitted in court to stealing and disposing of a car used by the gang, supplying the masks used by the attackers and possessing the air pistol used in the crimes. They were never charged with any offences.

Textual analysis experts have tested a 'statement' allegedly made by one of these suspects while alone in his cell, then read into the police interview tape. Their conclusion is that the 'statement' was the product 'of more than one person'. The only possible co-authors were the police officers conducting the investigation.

There is considerable doubt about the evidence relating to the time of the first attack given by one of the victims. He changed his original timings because police said they did not 'fit'. Seven witnesses gave an alibi for Rowe and Davis. This alibi evidence was never challenged in court. There was no forensic, direct or confession evidence.



Raphael Rowe

The men's hearing for leave to appeal was held in October 1992 and adjourned. The judges held an *in camera* hearing, following which, in January, they ruled that certain evidence held by the Crown did not have to be disclosed to the defence. The case was once again adjourned.

For the January hearing, Raphael Rowe was transferred from Gartree to Wormwood Scrubs, so that he could more easily consult with his lawyers. Whilst at the Scrubs, he alleges that he was viciously beaten and racially abused by prison officers.

The M25 Three Campaign is working to ensure these racist convictions are quashed. It is desperate for funds to continue its work in support of the men in the run-up to the June hearing. ■

For further information and copies of the support campaign petition, write to M25 Three Campaign, c/o Joanne Rowe, Ground Floor, 42b Copplestone Road, London SE15 4AD. Please make cheques payable to the 'M25 Three Campaign'.

## FOOTBALL

## ■ Franco's fans

In November 1992, armed men burst into a disused discotheque, home to Dominican workers, in Madrid and shot dead a 33-year-old Dominican woman, Lucrecia Perez. The policeman who fired the fatal shot has been charged with murder. But it has since emerged that three 16-year-old youths who participated in the assassination are connected to the Real Madrid 'Ultrasur' supporters group.

Real Madrid itself has a history of support for Franco and fascism. The Ultrasur has around 800 members and is led by Jose Luis Orchaíta, a member of the Real Madrid supporters club until his expulsion in 1987. A police raid on one member of the commando group led to the discovery of an arsenal of weapons, including guns, knuckledusters, clubs and bullets, as well as nazi paraphernalia and right-wing propaganda, such as the magazine of Bases Autonomas.

The killers of Lucrecia Perez were all fellow-travellers of Bases Autonomas, one of several nazi groups active in Madrid over the last few months. Two of the arrested youths attended their meetings regularly and all of them participated in the annual pro-Franco rally on 10 November.

Meanwhile, the revelations have led to renewed demands from the Football Anti-Violence Commission for a thorough police investigation into right-wing activities at football grounds. One member of the commission has accused the clubs themselves of indirect responsibility for the foundation of neo-nazi groups. Rafael Cortes Elvira, the commission's president, has gone so far as to say that clubs such as Real Madrid are directly financing groups of 'extremists' and refusing to cooperate with attempts to crack down on violence.

• A fixture in January between the Dutch

teams Ajax Amsterdam and FC Utrecht led to an outpouring of racism. Ajax Amsterdam's stadium was sprayed with racist slogans and swastikas, and trainloads of FC Utrecht fans were turned back by the police after chanting racist slogans, handing out anti-Semitic pamphlets and giving nazi salutes.

## ■ Tower Hamlets condemned

The High Court has condemned Tower Hamlets' housing policy for homeless people, 69% of whom are Bangladeshi, as 'unfair, arbitrary and irrational'. The cases were brought by four Bangladeshi families after they were offered substandard, overcrowded and unsuitable accommodation in high-rise flats. A couple with six children aged between 1 and 18 were expected to live in a three-bedroom maisonette on the 4th and 5th floors of a tower block.

Under the new policy, introduced in 1986, Tower Hamlets reduced the number of offers of flats to homeless people housed in temporary accommodation to just one. The flats offered were frequently too small, high up in tower blocks and in areas of Tower Hamlets renowned for racial harassment and violence. If an applicant refused the offer, the council considered its duty to house them was discharged and families faced the prospect of being put out on the streets. Appeal rights to a council sub-committee were removed in 1991.

Tower Hamlets council's attempt to sue the Institute of Race Relations for libel has failed after the House of Lords ruled in February that local and central government must be open to 'uninhibited public criticism' and have no right to sue. An article published by the Institute in 1990 had accused the council of racist policies.

## ■ Winston Silcott defence campaign

After presenting a 6,000-name petition to the Home Office last November, the family and friends of Winston Silcott are continuing their campaign for his release. Despite being cleared of the murder of PC Blakelock, Winston is starting his seventh year in prison for the killing of Antony Smith, even though evidence shows that he acted in self-defence.

The campaign is calling on supporters to write to the Home Secretary, urging him to refer the case to the Court of

Appeal. The campaign has also produced a pamphlet of Winston's prison poems, *Innocent I'll Always Be*, available for 25p plus postage.



You can write to Winston Silcott (B74053), HMP Gartree, Market Harborough, Leics LE16 7RP. Winston Silcott defence campaign, Selby Centre, Selby Road, London N17 8JN, tel: 081-365 0448.

## ■ Kurdistan: the other Middle East question

On 18 January 1993, the Kurdish Human Rights Project was launched by Kurdish community groups, lawyers and academics, with the stated aim of 'calling to account the governments of Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria for the treatment of the Kurdish population'.

The project will be monitoring, documenting and publicising the escalating human rights violations in Kurdistan – violations which now extend to many thousands of deaths, disappearances, widespread detentions without trial and torture, as well as the daily experience of persecution and discrimination arising from the criminalisation of the Kurdish language, culture and association.

The project's work is built on the foundation that it is the denial of the right to self-determination which is the key to challenging the individual violations.

Kurdistan Human Rights Project, Crown Estate, Room 620, Linen Hall, 162-168 Regent Street, London W1R 5TA, tel: 071-287 2772.



**Life on the Ocean Estate:  
a photo exhibition**  
27 April – 17 May

An exhibition of photographs  
about the besieged black families  
in a racist stronghold of east  
London.

Whitechapel Art Gallery

**Victory for Gill Smith** • Gill Smith, the woman who alleges she was racially abused, assaulted and strip-searched by Newham police (see *CARF* No 12), was cleared on 2 February of charges of threatening behaviour and disorderly conduct after the Crown failed to offer any evidence. Gill is planning to take civil action against the officers who arrested her.

**Imbert family** • On 12 January, Colin Imbert was cleared of two charges of assaulting police. The charges arose out of a police raid of the Imbert's Newham home, during which Colin's mother suffered a heart attack. She is now recovering from her ordeal and the Imbert family are planning to sue the police.

**Mike Smith** • Having been cleared in October of charges of violent disorder and assaulting police officers, Mike Smith has referred a complaint to the Police Complaints Authority about his arrest at Christmas 1991 outside the Wolverhampton nightclub where he worked (see *CARF* No 10). Mike, who suffered a fractured spine during the arrest, is alleging assault and battery, wrongful arrest, false imprisonment and malicious prosecution.

**Vincennes evictions** • Following *CARF*'s exposé of the police evictions last October of 312 homeless black families from Vincennes, south-east of Paris, Lambeth Council has agreed to break links with Vincennes, to which it was previously twinned. Instead, the council is to establish links with the Vincennes committee of MRAP.

**Gerhard Bögelein** • In December 1992, Gerhard Bögelein was released from prison, having served two years of a life sentence for the murder of a Nazi military judge in a Russian prisoner-of-war camp in 1947 (see *CARF* No 10). The authorities have released Bögelein on the grounds of ill-health. However, campaigners are demanding his full rehabilitation and call for continued international pressure on the German government to achieve this.



Mark Salmon

Join Vinesh Chudasama in his fight against deportation. Contact West Midlands Anti-Deportation Campaign, tel: 021-551 4518.

## JANUARY

- 6 BNP member cleared of race hatred charges after distributing stickers in east London.
- 10 CRE to investigate the Bar's law school.
- 11 Only one in 20 asylum-seekers given refugee status in 1992 in Britain.
- 12 Hounslow Council and Brentford Football Club warn off right-wingers from distributing racist leaflets.
- 15 Appeal court rules that defence cannot see new evidence in M25 case.
- 17 The lawyer of Bashir Uddin, victim of race attack charged with assault, to make formal complaint to DPP after CPS repeatedly supplied her with false information.
- 20 Police case against three black people randomly arrested after a BNP election meeting in east London last April collapses.
- 22 Wayne Lambert jailed for 25 years for murdering two Pakistanis in separate racist attacks in Manchester last year ... Employment appeal tribunal told how Turkish policewoman was refused promotion by senior officer who had racially abused her.
- 23 Mass rally in Vienna against Freedom party's anti-foreigner petition (420,000 sign it, forcing parliamentary debate).
- 24 Bar drops investigation into DPP decision not to prosecute police over Oliver Pryce's death ... Italy's Northern League, aided by ex-Communist PDS, wins control of Varese city council.
- 25 Swedish government considers emergency legislation to curb asylum-seekers
- 26 Top judges call Asylum Bill's provision to withdraw immigration appeal rights 'draconian' and 'vicious'.
- 27 Metropolitan police paid £776,327 in damages over claims for wrongful arrest, false imprisonment and assault in 1992 ... Social Trends annual survey says that 17% of male prisoners aged over 21 are non-white, and almost 30% of prisoners serving sentences for drugs are African-Caribbean.
- 29 Office for Standards of Education says too many children are being excluded from school ... Rastafarians not 'ethnic group', says Court of Appeal.

## FEBRUARY

- 1 Black man viciously attacked by racists at London's Surrey Quays shopping centre ... Amnesty International report accuses police in Europe of race attacks.
- 2 EC sets up K4 committee to implement Trevi Group initiatives.
- 3 French writer Marguerite Duras fined for calling NF murderers and scum.
- 7 14-year-old Abid Ali needs 18 stitches after racist attack in Oldham.
- 8 Black youth worker freed after 13 months

in prison for robbery after real culprit confesses ... Germany offers Poland funds to strengthen borders.

- 9 Parents of 3 black children excluded from Birmingham schools stage protest.
- 10 Asian family win battle to stay in Scotland after being threatened with deportation unless they invested £45,000 in their business ... 17-year-old Ranjit Gill loses sight after racist attack in Isleworth, west London.
- 11 Two white men push black youth on to railway tracks in west London after racially abusing him.
- 12 DPP sent report on claims that 3 Nottinghamshire policemen went to nightclub dressed as Ku Klux Klan members ... Police submit report to the CPS following raid on west London house revealed racist and anti-Semitic material.
- 14 Only seven former West Midlands serious crime squad members to face disciplinary charge.
- 15 Appeal of five people imprisoned for drugs on evidence of east London's Stoke Newington police postponed again.
- 16 Amendment to Asylum Bill to keep appeal rights for visitors and short-term students fails in House of Lords.
- 18 14-year-old found guilty of conspiring to shoot Orthodox Jews with 'lethal' air rifle in east London.

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