

### ACTIVITY 1:

Open the interactive exercise at [www.irr.org.uk/black\\_history\\_resource/Media\\_and\\_Racism](http://www.irr.org.uk/black_history_resource/Media_and_Racism).

*Supplementary questions*

1. Do you notice anything about the sort of language that is used in these stories?
2. What kind of images do these words make you think of and how do they make you feel?

### ACTIVITY 2:

➔ Document 1: 'Fight Racism in the Media!' Campaign Against Racism in the Media (CARM), 1977.

1. Using the headlines in Activity 1, and your own experience, which groups of people can you think of that are negatively portrayed in the media?
2. Why do you think these people are portrayed negatively?
3. Divide into pairs. Each pair to write three positive things about one of the groups the class has decided is negatively portrayed.
4. What, according to Document 1, are the dangers of racist reporting?
5. Working in pairs, one person pretend to be the journalist who wrote the first article in exercise 1 and the other a member of CARM. The journalist thinks the CARM member is trying to censor his freedom of speech. The CARM member thinks the journalist is exaggerating to make his story more exciting and encouraging British people to be afraid of foreigners. Can you persuade each other of your point of view?
6. What tactics does CARM suggest using to protest against racism in the media?
7. Imagine that you are in one of the groups the media has written a negative story about. What other ways can you think of to protest?
8. Can you think of other ways people can ensure they are fairly represented in the media?

### EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Design the front page of your own newspaper, reporting things that have recently happened to you. Try to write the stories in a way that is fair, remembering them from your viewpoint and also imagining how someone else might see them. Maybe even interview someone else involved in your story to get their viewpoint too.
2. Look at the National Union of Journalists' website (<http://www.nuj.org.uk>). The NUJ is a trade union. What do trade unions do? Using the website's search function, find the National Union of Journalists' 'Code of Conduct' and its 'Guidelines on Race Reporting'. Choose three of the headlines in Activity 1 and say whether you think they follow the NUJ guidelines, giving reasons for your answers.

## STRUGGLES FOR JUSTICE: MEDIA AND RACISM

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3. Activity 1 contained several headlines from the national press that were biased against minority communities, refugees and asylum seekers. But there are lots of alternative media sources that give a different and more constructive picture of the lives of minority communities, refugees and asylum seekers in Britain and the contributions they make to British society. Choose a positive news item from one of the websites below and compare and contrast it with the stories in Activity 1. Think about what sort of language is used, where the quotes come from and how much background information is given.

IRR News – <http://www.irr.org.uk>

Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR) – <http://www.fairuk.org>

Indymedia UK – <http://www.indymedia.org.uk>

# FIGHT RACISM IN THE MEDIA!

MEETING TO ORGANISE ACTION AGAINST RACIST ATTACKS IN THE PRESS

speakers include DARCUS HOWE Editor, "Race Today"

UPALI COORAY Asian Socialist Forum

A. SIVANANDAN Institute of Race Relations, Director

Members of the NUJ Race Relations Committee

The National Front has had little need to roll its vile presses over the past few weeks: much of the mass media has done the job for them. Headlines like these, with the lying, loaded articles and cartoons beneath them, have spelt fear on the streets for black people as white racists have been spurred on to physical attacks:

4-STAR ASIANS RUN UP £4,000 BILL (News of the World, May 2)

ONE SLIPS IN ON EVERY BOAT (Sun, May 7)

ASIAN FLOOD WARNING (Daily Express, May 17)

JUNGLE JUSTICE (report of Luanda trial, Daily Mirror, June 29)

These are in flat breach of the National Union of Journalists' Code of Conduct. They have revolted many working journalists, and NUJ branches, including London Central, covering Fleet Street, have condemned them and are planning formal complaints against individual journalists. The NUJ Race Relations Committee, which is doing important educative work in holding meetings and setting guidelines for covering stories with a race element, has accused some journalists of inflaming race hatred.

But complaints and resolutions aren't enough. To fight the proprietors, editors and journalists who so eagerly grasp the weapon of racism to intensify the oppression of black people journalists must work with blacks themselves, and with anti-racists in the labour movement.

To start this dialogue and plan the action a group of journalists have started a Campaign Against Racism in the Media. Ideas put forward so far include a big Fleet Street demonstration, an open conference, picketing newspaper offices, particularly local papers serving black communities, and action through the labour movement and within the NUJ. These will be discussed at the meeting, which is being held in the heartland of the racist propaganda machine:

at ST. BRIDES INSTITUTE, BRIDE LANE, off Fleet Street, London EC4.

on THURSDAY, JULY 15, at 7 p.m. All are welcome.

Campaign Against Racism in the Media, supported by Journalists Charter, NUJ Magazine and London Freelance Branches, Asian Socialist Forum. Enquiries to 13, Cleve Road, London NW6. Telephone 01-328-2184.