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CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM & FASCISM • WINTER 2002/2003 • £1.00

racism and the market-state

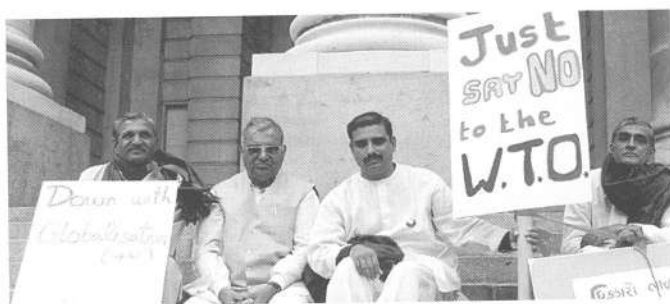


an interview with A. Sivanandan

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When David Blunkett replaced Jack Straw as Home Secretary, around eighteen months ago, the first thing he did was to put himself on the front page of the *Sun* and promise its readers that he would 'blitz asylum cheats'. Since then, Blunkett has barraged the public with pronouncements on not just whom we might marry but also what language we might speak to them. He has accused migrant children of 'swamping' schools and denounced campaigners as 'whingers' and supporters of terrorists. We are now faced with two Acts of parliament which mark the culmination of this authoritarianism: the new Criminal Justice Bill and the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act.

The Criminal Justice Bill, as Lee Bridges argues on page 6, is specifically designed to circumvent the existing checks and procedures which prevent miscarriages of justice. The presumption is that when people are acquitted of crimes, it is because of weak judges, gullible juries or greedy lawyers. Hence the system needs to be 'rebalanced' in favour of the prosecutors. Thus the desire to have more cases dealt with by magistrates (who convict more often), rather than Crown Court judges; without juries (who inconveniently sometimes acquit defendants); and, where possible, without any court process at all – so there are new police powers of 'street bail'. The result is that the burden of proof is in danger of shifting from innocent until proven guilty to guilty if the police say so. And with new figures showing that discrimination against blacks in stop and searches is getting worse, it will be young black men who bear the brunt of these new measures.

In the case of asylum, the new Act, as Frances Webber describes on page 8, prejudices not just individual cases but entire countries. Tory Home Secretary Michael Howard's 1996 'white list' of countries, from which all asylum cases will be rejected by default, has been reinstated. And, further, anyone who claims asylum 'in-country', that is, not at the first port of entry, is now likely to be refused support from the Home Office and left destitute. Similarly, asylum seekers accommodated in the new camps who stay out all night will forfeit support. And as the government plans to deport many more people over the coming years, it is seeking to keep a much closer track on asylum seekers, with new powers to collect data from local authorities, banks and employers. Alongside this, there is a planned four-fold expansion of the immigration detention estate. Prison builders are to do well out of both these Acts.

The interview with A. Sivanandan shows how to understand New Labour's authoritarianism, as symbolised by these two Acts, in the context of global capitalism and the emergence of the 'market-state': a state that no longer works for the welfare of the people but only for the protection of the market system, the global corporations and 'social cohesion'. Following September 11, we are witnessing what Sivanandan describes as the end of civil society, as the market-state has used the war on terrorism as a cover to erode democratic rights and particularly, the rights of migrants and asylum seekers. Hence, more than ever, racism is the litmus test of our democracy. ■

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ISSN 0966-1050 • Printed by Russell Press (TU)



racism and the market-state



In his last interview with CARF, A Sivanandan said that globalisation had ushered in a monolithic economic system, and that September 11 threatened to engender a monolithic political culture, and between them they spelt the end of civil society. We asked him to explain to CARF readers how that process was taking shape today.

CARF First, why do you say that globalisation creates a monolithic economic system?

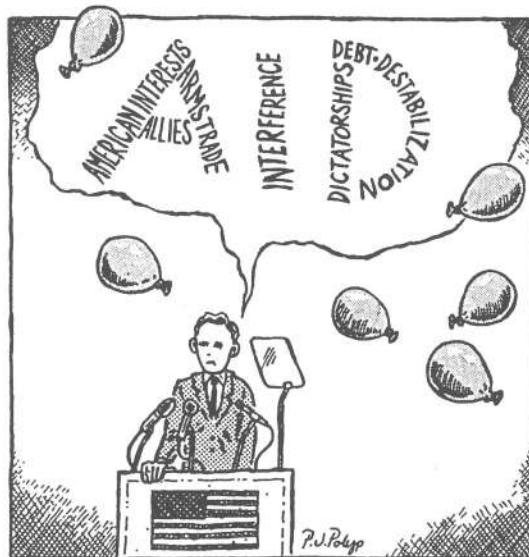
AS When we talk about globalisation we are talking about the globalisation of capitalism – which was made possible by, first, the collapse of Communism and, second, the technological revolution. The collapse of Communism removed all opposition to capitalism as a world system. The technological revolution undermined the opposition to capital from organised labour. (It is likely that it was the micro-electronics revolution itself which, in outdating the industrial mode of production, outdated also the economies of the Communist countries and led to their demise.) The collapse of political opposition, following the collapse of Communism, allowed western capital to enter into underdeveloped countries hitherto aligned to the Soviet Union to set up their own political satraps in power. This, in turn, allowed western capital, through already existing institutions like the IMF and the World Bank and GATT and new institutions like the WTO, to subjugate the economic development of these countries, while the technological revolution allowed it to subjugate their cheap and captive labour forces, creating in the process a new (capitalist) world order, a monolithic economic system.

But what does globalisation do? What are the consequences?

It is a capitalism that is geared a) to a free market and therefore requires b) deregulation and privatisation under the aegis of c) neoliberalism. All of which, in turn, means that the state no longer works for the welfare of the people as such but in the interests of business – more specifically, global corporations which are, in their turn, the effective controllers of the market system. The role of the state now is not so much to engender the welfare of the people as to control those excesses of the market which endanger social cohesion and lead to 'rebellion'. We are moving from the nation state to what Philip Bobbitt, a one-time adviser to the State Department, calls the market-state (except that Bobbitt uses the term favourably).¹ If the nation state was the vehicle for industrial capitalism, the market-state is the vehicle for post-industrial capitalism. Bobbitt goes on to say that whereas the nation state served to look after the welfare of the people, the market-state serves to bring out the maximum potential of the individual. (Thatcher and Reagan, he says admiringly, 'laid the groundwork' for the market-state and Bush and Blair are 'among the first market-state political leaders'.)

The imperatives of such a global economy are the unfettered expansion of the market world-wide, the free access to energy resources (especially oil), minerals etc and a political system that sets limits to such encroachment. All of which provide the *raison d'être* for what Robert Cooper (an adviser to the EU) lauds as 'post-modern imperialism'.²

Globalisation *vis à vis* Third World countries has meant the resuscitation of the imperial adventure so that, if they do not accept western benefice on western terms, they'll have to accept western strictures in order to safeguard western economy and civilisation. In other words, if these countries do not free themselves into a western capitalist democratic system, the western democracies will force them to be free.



And the monolithic political culture, what do you mean by that?

Political cultures generally stem from ideologies. A capitalist ideology produces a capitalist political culture. But global capitalism, as the only game in town, has no need to be blatantly ideological. What it projects instead is a 'commonsense capitalism', a pragmatic capitalism, a capitalism for all the people, a 'classless capitalism' – purveyed by a market-state which functions in terms of the market, pragmatically, not ideologically. Ideology has a value system from which it operates, pragmatism picks up 'values' post hoc. Ideology fashions legislation for social change, pragmatism fashions legislation for social contingencies. Ideology predicates its policies on the basis of its vision

¹ See *The Shield of Achilles* by Philip Bobbitt (Penguin, Allen Lane 2002).

² See Robert Cooper, 'The Post-Modern State' in *Re-ordering the World: the long-term implications of 11 September*, ed. Mark Leonard, foreword by Tony Blair (Foreign Policy Centre, 2002).



of society, pragmatism predicates its policies on the self-interest of focus groups. In sum, pragmatism engenders a political culture based not on a value system but on the interests of power blocs, which then become translated into popular belief through a managed media.

What September 11 did was to organise these beliefs into a pseudo-ideology which sees the world in Manichean terms of good and evil, civilised and uncivilised, developed and underdeveloped. Notice the revival of Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' theory after September 11 and Cooper's 'defensive imperialism' which elects western powers as the new missionaries of western civilisation, taking the enlightenment to benighted countries like Afghanistan and Iraq and the axis of evil, by force if necessary. Whatever differences there might have been in the past between western cultures themselves are being sunk in the world view of the US. So that it is American political culture which sets the tone for western political culture which sets the tone for the rest of the world. That is the monolithic political culture I refer to.

How is civil society, specifically here in the UK, being endangered?

The fundamental rights of people are being eroded right across the board. That erosion is taking place a) directly, through new laws, and b) indirectly, through spin, the media and the distancing of people from democratic practice itself.

a) Of the new laws that undermine civil liberties, we need, of course, to examine those brought in specifically to wage the 'war on terrorism'. So here it might mean examining what the Anti-terrorism Crime and Security Act allows in terms of detention without trial, how the EU's Common Position on Combating Terrorism and other pieces of legislation fail to distinguish between legitimate political solidarity and terrorism. And, under cover of terrorism, has come legislation which attacks the rights of asylum seekers, sets up new (and militarised) methods of surveillance of our borders, and extends the border areas themselves so as to circumvent legal processes and the human rights of people in those areas.

Then there are the laws brought in in the name of the 'silent majority', in the name of 'the populace'. Here I mean things like the resuscitation of stop and search, proposals for on-the-spot fines for anti-social behaviour, the idea of locking up the mentally ill who have committed no crime at all, the punishing of parents for their truanting children and so on. If you examine the recent Queen's speech, there are omens of new forms of repression: the handing of the powers of the court to the police, additional powers being given to magistrates' courts, the publicising of a defendant's previous convictions, the question of removing double jeopardy.

That is a pretty formidable list to be getting on with.

b) The indirect erosion of rights stems from the massaging of popular opinion by populist declamations made by a peoples' government prior to bringing in popular legislation on behalf of the populace. (If that sounds like spin, you are right.) Conversely, to keep its remit as the government of all the people, it takes up the more populist issues as represented by the media and gives them voice. The government is becoming more and more responsive to the media and less and less to the population directly. (The media, of course, is owned either by multinational corporations or international businessmen.)

Look at how Blunkett, before bringing in, say, the Criminal Justice Bill, does a kind of warm-up with the public by going on the offensive against groups like Liberty who care about 'airy-fairy civil liberties'. Remember how Jack Straw did the same thing when he went on the attack against trendy 'Hampstead lawyers' before he tried to reduce trial by jury?

Look at the attack on the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns (NCADC). The Community Fund, an independent quango, made a democratic and informed decision about allocating a grant. The *Mail* and other right-wing papers began a vendetta. Blunkett joined the fray by forcing an inquiry into the giving of the grant, thereby undermining the independence of the Fund. (The *Mail's* campaign and Blunkett's endorsement of it unleashed an unprecedented amount of racist hate mail, including death threats to the Community Fund and its Chair, Lady Brittain.)

Now groups funded by the Lottery have to be extremely careful about the way they criticise the government. A limit is being placed on their political expression. Blunkett even went on the offensive against a family campaign in the North of England because it dared to question the severity of the sentences handed out to young Asians in Bradford who had taken part in street riots last year.

A second way in which this government is indirectly undermining civil society is through a 'philosophy' (as opposed to ideology) which pretends to cohere policies. It is not so much a philosophy as a set of platitudes whose virtue is that they are supposed to be those of the common man: we must fight both crime and the causes of crime, we represent all the British people and not one class, we believe in a consensus politics of the middle way, we are building an enabling state founded on the liberation of individual potential.

Central to this 'philosophy' is the question of rights and responsibilities. And those rights and responsibilities

are always about what is owed by the citizen to the community and/or the state. It is never the responsibilities that are owed by public servants or the state to the community or to its citizens. It's a one-way street where the public servants are not accountable to the public and the state apparatus is not accountable to the people. It holds parents responsible for the actions of their children but does not make the government responsible for the social and living conditions of the parents – thus decitizenising the poor yet further. To put it another way, in the market-state you provide opportunities for individuals to 'maximise potential' as Blair has said, but, if the individuals are not given even the proverbial bootlaces to pull themselves up by, where is the opportunity?

The third thing that is undermining civil society indirectly is the debasement of the democratic process. On the one hand, there is the erosion of local government and its replacement by private or voluntary sector institutions as 'service providers'. The involvement of citizens in local government is being eroded more and more as local authorities have fewer and fewer powers. Is it any wonder that people have lost faith in the practice of self-government, and do not bother to vote? On the other hand, the government (despite all legislative requirements regarding Equal Opportunities) assiduously appoints its own placemen and women without any open competition for jobs. It has recently been reported that the next head of the Commission for Racial Equality (a hitherto politically independent incumbent) would be required to sign an oath of allegiance to the government.

How do we fight back? Do we change our tactics in combating racism?

The fight against racism is still the fight against state racism and its concomitants, institutional and popular racism. But because the nature of the state itself has changed, because it is no longer a welfare state that looks after its people but a market-state which looks after big business, the nature, shape, contours, purpose of racism itself has changed.

Hence, while the state is prepared to accommodate black and ethnic minority citizens and is even prepared to legislate against institutional discrimination, it ratchets up at every turn the racism meted out to

asylum seekers. It legislates against them – in breach of the Geneva Convention on Refugees and the Declarations on Human Rights.

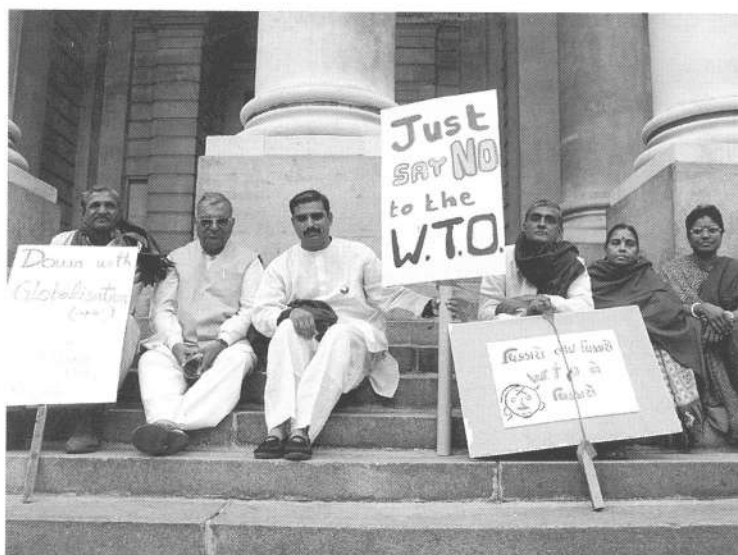
But, at the same time, the market-state is prepared to sieve through these 'new immigrants' to fill in the labour gaps in the economy. Already, there are plans afoot, on the part of the EU, to gather all asylum seekers into regional pools from which the various states comprising the Union would draw their labour needs. In other words, there is to be an organised trade in labour which is to be facilitated by organisations like the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the UNHCR – to manage which, the original functions of groups like the UNHCR have been diverted. In effect, the humanitarian impulse that governed the Geneva Convention and the UNHCR is slowly being corrupted into an economic impulse to serve the market-state.

We are back to the old racism of Empire which reified black labour, fused racial oppression and class exploitation and created labour reserves from which it siphoned off the labour it needed. Except that, after September 11, the classification has become more simplified. It is us and them again, the civilised and the uncivilised, the axis of good and the axis of evil.

The fight against racism is, therefore, a fight against the new imperialism, globalism. Because it is the penetration of global capitalism into Third World countries and poor countries of Eastern Europe that displaces people and throws them up as so much garbage at the gates of Fortress Europe.

But that very same globalism that serves to produce a unified monolithic economic system and culture is that which also allows us to create a unified political struggle. Whether we are against war with Iraq, whether we are for fair (not free) trade, whether we are against the Ilisu Dam project, whether we are for justice for the Palestinians, whether we are against the degradation of women – whatever the issue that we are involved in, we'll find that it is contaminated by other issues and that they all stem from one source: globalism.

Equally, the fight against racism must also take on all the fights that are necessary to preserve the civil liberties threatened by the market-state. Racism is not an isolate: all our civil liberties are being fractured at every stage. Our struggles are not isolates. If they take me in the morning, they'll come for you that night. ■



Above: Demonstration in Austria against the IOM's role in preventing asylum



New Labour and new authoritarianism in criminal justice



With the publication of the government's controversial new Criminal Justice Bill, CARF asked Lee Bridges, Chair of the School of Law at Warwick University for his comments.

A government's authoritarianism is marked by the numbers of its citizens it imprisons. Under New Labour the prison population, already rising under the Tories, has soared to over 70,000, so high that even the prison governors – hardly a liberal lobby group – have called for the powers of magistrates to send people to prison to be curbed.

Yet, both in its rhetoric and in its numerous 'modernising' reforms of criminal justice, New Labour has done much to encourage the courts to send more and more people to prison. And it has been primarily in magistrates' courts that the government has found an enthusiastic response to its populist, law and order measures. Between 1989 and 1999 the number of people sent by magistrates to prison each year has risen nearly three-fold, from 18,200 to 53,000. In the same period, the number of prison sentences handed out by the Crown Court has increased only marginally, from 42,600 to 44,600.

Powers to magistrates

Government ministers and officials frequently give voice to their distrust of judges, whom they see as soft on crime, as distinct from magistrates. Hence their drive to have more and more cases dealt with in magistrates' courts. Having failed in attempts to restrict the right

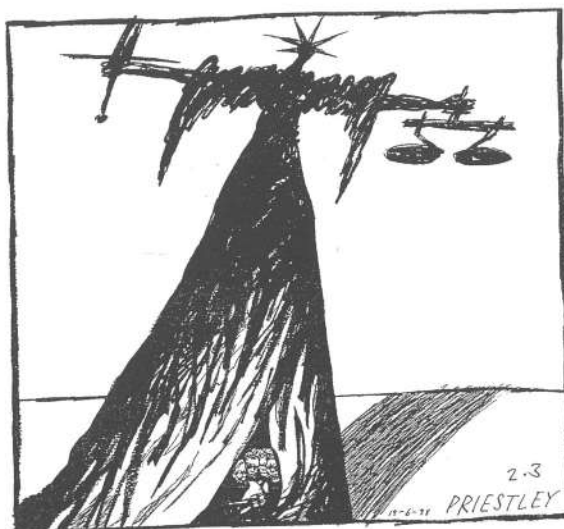
of defendants to elect jury trial in many cases, the government has come up with a new wheeze. It will give magistrates greater powers of punishment, raising the maximum prison sentence they can give from 6 to 12 or 18 months. This will enable magistrates to deal with many of the over 50,000 cases they send to the Crown Court each year, primarily because they consider that the defendants deserve longer punishment than magistrates can give under their current powers.

In a majority of these cases that result in conviction, the Crown Court actually gives either a non-custodial sentence or one of 6 months or less – that is, what magistrates could have handed down in the first place. The implication must be that, if magistrates are given power to send more of these defendants to prison and for longer, they will do so. This is bound to lead to a further surge in the prison population.

These defendants will at least have had the opportunity of a trial, albeit a restricted one before magistrates. Other measures in the new crime bill will result in far more people being sent to prison without having been convicted by any court. In particular, it is planned to create a presumption that anyone who is arrested for a further offence while already on bail from a court awaiting trial, should be denied further bail. It is estimated that 100,000 defendants a year may be affected by this measure.

Provisions of the Bill include:

- **POLICE POWERS** new 'street bail' without taking suspect to station; detention without charge up to 36 hours
- **PRE-TRIAL** CPS takes over charging from police, defence to make greater disclosure
- **MAGISTRATES** sentencing powers increased from 6 to 12 or possibly 18 months
- **PREVIOUS CONDUCT** previous convictions to be disclosed to jury where considered relevant by judge
- **JUDGE-ONLY TRIALS** judge-only trials in complex fraud and financial cases and where evidence exists of jury tampering or intimidation
- **DOUBLE JEOPARDY** to allow retrials in very serious cases with compelling new evidence – to be retrospective and apply to around 30 offences
- **DANGEROUS OFFENDERS** serious sexual or violent offenders assessed as dangerous to be subject to imprisonment for public protection or discretionary life sentence



Guilty until proven innocent



Police and summary punishment

Another indicator of government authoritarianism is its willingness to abandon due process of law in favour of summary punishment. The bill contains provisions to allow the police to impose bail restrictions on anyone they arrest, even before they are charged and brought before a court.

This measure must be seen in the context of the recent rise in the use by the police – spurred on by the government's street crime initiative – of controversial stop-and-search powers, and of even greater black over-representation among those subjected to such treatment. Stop-and-search has long been used in inner city and black communities as a form of general, street-level surveillance and summary punishment, with just one in ten stops resulting in an arrest. But now the police will be able to combine this with more frequent arrests and the power to impose formal restrictions on individuals' liberty through bail conditions, possibly extending over several weeks or months.

In putting forward these measures, the government is in part admitting that its efforts over several years, to bring more of those involved in crime before the courts and to gain legitimate convictions, have failed. Hence the need to by-pass the formal court process and create summary forms of punishment.

Manipulation of court rules

At the same time, New Labour is about to engage in a further round of manipulation of court rules so as to rig the system to ensure more people are convicted.

New Labour has done nothing to reverse the Tory-created restrictions on defendants' right to silence. And it now plans further limitations which will force suspects into making statements – turning the police station into a virtual Star Chamber. Otherwise, their silence under police interrogation – or even a short delay in order to make a written statement following legal advice – will be taken as evidence of their guilt in court.

This will be combined with greater use of previous convictions by the prosecution. Research evidence has shown that while evidence of previous convictions can serve to prejudice juries, this is even more the case with magistrates.

State power over the individual

All of this is supposedly being done in order to 'rebalance' the system more in favour of victims of crime. In reality, it is the state – the police, prosecution and courts (especially magistrates) – whose powers over individuals are being greatly increased. And it is precisely those communities that most suffer from crime – in the inner cities and on disadvantaged estates, where victims and those targeted as so-called 'persistent offenders' live side-by-side and often in the same families – that will now face the brunt of the new authoritarianism.

These communities are crying out for effective – but also fair and just – policing and criminal justice. What they are going to get is increasingly arbitrary use of state power which will only serve to further alienate them from a supposedly democratic society. ■

the end
of civil society

asylum: the end of the road



As new immigration laws come into force, we asked human rights and immigration barrister, Frances Webber, for her view on recent developments.

Within days of the 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act coming into force on 7 November, and even before it was published, the first Czech and Slovak Roma were being bundled out of the country under its provisions. The first week's crop included a woman who had been raped by police, and a husband and wife who were being sent to different countries. (And we only know about them because lawyers were able to stop their removal by seeking judicial review.) The government has not only re-introduced the infamous 'white list' of the Tories' 1996 Asylum and Immigration Act, but has gone further than the Tories by removing, rather than merely curtailing, in-country rights of appeal by asylum seekers from countries on the list unless they can rebut the 'presumption of safety'. They argue that the ten 'accession states', the countries of central and eastern Europe accepted for membership of the EU in 2003, are safe and democratic and so no-one coming from them is expected to be a genuine refugee. Tell that to the Roma, the most despised and persecuted group in Europe.

Appeals become meaningless

Ironically, it was the Tories who introduced in-country rights of appeal for asylum seekers, in 1993, in response to a threatened condemnation from the European Court of Human Rights which never materialised. Now, not only has Labour taken those rights away from central and eastern European asylum seekers, but, through procedural rule changes, it has made appeals

by asylum seekers from many other countries virtually meaningless, by creating a super-fast appeals track allowing appeals to be heard within days of refusal. This gives asylum seekers absolutely no chance to get medical or other evidence in support of their claims, and condemns thousands to removal to countries where risk to life, liberty and bodily integrity are real and immediate.

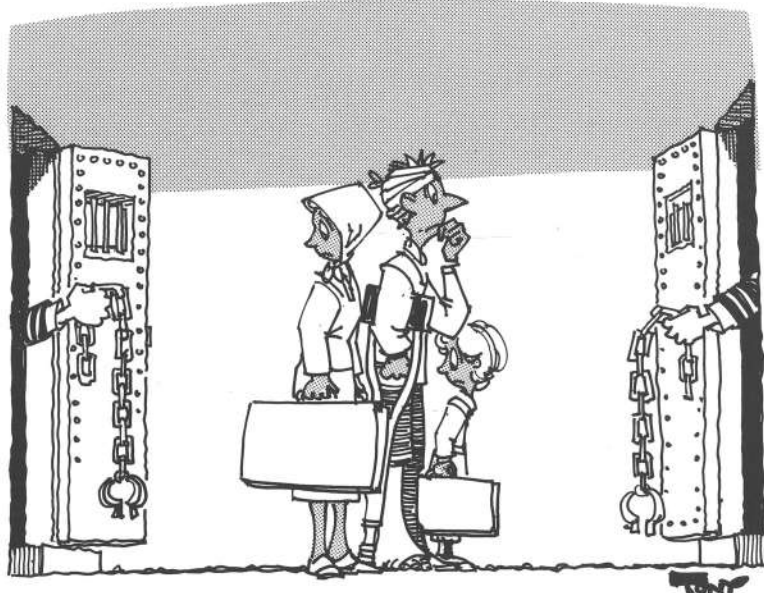
Resistance to the Act in and outside parliament focused on the segregation provisions – the plan to house destitute asylum seekers in large 750-bed camps miles away from anywhere, with their own on-site educational and health facilities, so as to prevent asylum seekers' children from integrating in local schools, thus making their removal difficult. The last-minute horse-trading to prevent the Bill's falling on the last day of the 2001/02 parliamentary session resulted in only very minor concessions. But the government's profound authoritarianism comes through in many other provisions.

Gathering more information

The Act contains yet more policing powers for immigration officers and information gathering by the Home Office. Bio-data such as iris imprints may be required in any applications, and a databank of such bio-data can be set up to check and prevent forgeries. The bodies from which immigration officers will be able to demand information about immigrants and asylum seekers include local authorities, Inland Revenue, banks and employers. Thus the government will be able to keep tabs on all immigrants and asylum seekers who are not detained, checking not only whether they are committing offences but also where they are living, whether and where they are working, and what assets they have.

New conditions on non-citizens

To naturalise as a British citizen, candidates must now possess not only a clean criminal record and adequate knowledge of the language, but also an understanding of 'democratic' values assumed to be uniquely British, and British citizens can have their citizenship withdrawn if they do anything the Home Office considers seriously prejudicial to British interests. As for asylum seekers, those in the camps who stay out all night could have their asylum claims withdrawn, while those not living in the camps must report periodically to 'reporting centres'. Asylum seekers needing support can no longer opt for subsistence support enabling them to live with friends, but must take a package of subsistence and accommodation



which will remove them from their communities. The price of community support will thus be destitution. And asylum seekers and refugees who commit offences could have their claims or their status withdrawn.

Although the new camps for destitute asylum seekers are not detention centres, they may as well be, isolated as they will be from communities, and magnets for racists' attention. But many more asylum seekers, including families with children, will be detained as the government's immigration detention estate continues its four-fold expansion.

No right to work

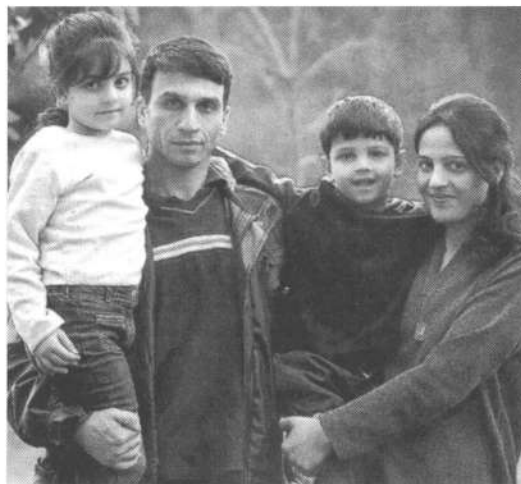
The measures of segregation, surveillance, detention and removal show that Labour's asylum policy continues and intensifies the trends of punishment and deterrence begun with dispersal in the 1999 Act. It is driven not by principle or human rights but by the politics of toughness. Principles of humanitarian compassion, common sense and economy would allow asylum seekers to make use of their education and skills to work while they wait for a decision on their claim. This reduces their dependency, enhances their dignity, provides them with a bit of cash to supplement or even replace the sub-subsistence benefit they get (70 percent of income support), and brings into the economy much-needed skills, often in nursing, construction or engineering, all defined as shortage occupations. None of this is controversial. But the government has not only repeatedly refused to extend asylum seekers' rights to work, but has recently removed altogether the right to work of asylum seekers who had been waiting over six months for a decision on their claim. Such is its determination to ensure the total exclusion of asylum seekers from society – even though around half will eventually prove their entitlement to stay.

Denying benefits

Another of the Act's provisions which is guaranteed to lead to more social exclusion is the denial of even the miserable provisions of asylum support to single asylum seekers who don't claim as soon as 'practicable' after they arrive in the UK. This is a grotesque echo of the Tories' removal of benefits from asylum seekers in 1996, on which the Labour party took a principled stand in opposition, and an index of how far Labour has moved to the right since then.

Removal at any cost

The government's determination to remove asylum seekers at all costs, even at the cost of serious psychiatric damage and possible suicide, has been shown up in a number of recent cases in the High Court. The Ahmadiis won their judicial review of their removal to Germany – a brutal operation involving the destruction of the door of the mosque where the family were staying, the separation of children from parents as the Ahmadi parents were detained, and the subsequent detention of the children when they went to visit their parents in detention. The operation was also, it turned out, unlawful. The Home Office seriously misled the family by reassuring them that they would be given a secure status in Germany when no such decision had been taken in Germany and no such status was granted to them there. This has serious



repercussions for Mrs Ahmadi in particular, in the light of her extremely vulnerable psychiatric condition and the lack of treatment for those without status in Germany.

Independent judiciary?

Although he upheld the Ahmadiis' complaint, the judge refused to order their return to the UK, ruling (at the urging of the Home Office) that video links would enable them to exercise their right of appeal in Germany. The appeal started in November, then stopped owing to Mrs Ahmadi's fragile health, and is due to resume shortly. It is set to take a total of ten to twelve days – a record for an immigration appeal – because the Home Office believes that losing the case will create an important precedent for those not wanting to be returned to a European country to have their claims dealt with under the Dublin Convention, and is pulling out all the stops to win the case. Another High Court judge ruled in late November that the removal of a psychiatrically disturbed asylum claimant to Germany would contravene fundamental human rights. But in a third case, involving the removal of a suicidal Ivorian woman to France, the Home Office barrister argued that 'to create a de facto rule that anyone attempting suicide will not be removed would be to encourage asylum seekers to make suicide attempts'. This argument won the day, the judge ruling that the woman could be removed notwithstanding the risk of self-harm.

Detention deemed lawful

As the provisions for automatic bail hearings, passed in 1999 but never implemented, were repealed, the government's plans to detain many more asylum claimants were endorsed by the House of Lords, which in October upheld the right to detain any asylum seeker in Oakington and similar short-term detention centres for up to seven days to decide their claims. This was the end of the challenge to Oakington detention which saw temporary success in 2001 when a High Court judge ruled that arbitrary detention of asylum seekers was a breach of the European Human Rights Convention.

And as the country's most senior judges in the House of Lords extinguished the last hopes of those who believed that Australian-style detention can't happen here, another band of judges, hardly less senior, in the Court of Appeal held that there was nothing unlawful about the provisions of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime ►

and Security Act 2001 allowing for the indefinite detention of foreigners suspected of being 'international terrorists'. The judges endorsed Blunkett's decision that a 'public emergency threatening the life of the nation' exists so as to justify derogating from fundamental human rights guarantees which prohibit such open-ended detention. They endorsed too his blatant discrimination against foreigners, on the incomprehensible basis that foreigners don't have the right to live here, so that makes it all right to lock them up without trial or charge. Of course, their detention is subject to review by the Special Immigration Appeals Commission, so it is not purely by executive diktat. But the usefulness of that independent scrutiny of national security detainees' detention has been severely undermined by the judges' extremely deferential, not to say obsequious attitude to ministerial decisions in the national security field.

The judges' performance in these cases is exactly the opposite of what a robust democracy needs. Effectively they have surrendered their independence, by saying that the ministers know so much more than they do about the issues that they should not presume to overrule them on what constitutes a threat to national security. ■

Picket outside Harrow Crown Court at pretrial hearings for the Yar's Wood defendants



Yar's Wood – defendants kept waiting

As a result of disturbances at Yar's Wood detention centre during which it was burnt down in February 2002, thirteen men were charged with arson and violent disorder, and one with assault. Already in immigration detention, nine of the men were then remanded in prison as a result of the charges. Over the past year, two have been granted bail.

Then, on 8 November, at pre-trial hearings at Harrow Crown Court, the remaining defendants' hopes were first raised only to be dashed again. The trial judge granted bail to four of the men, as custody time limits had been exceeded. The men were collecting their belongings when they were re-detained under immigration powers by Group 4 officers. But by the end of the following week, after legal challenges, all four men had been released on bail yet again. Another man was released on bail the following week. The remaining defendants are being held at Wormwood Scrubs and Feltham Young Offenders' Institute.

The trial is not due to start until April 2003, by which time the defendants in prison will have spent 14 months there – and this does not include their time spent as immigration detainees. ■

■ Please write to the defendants

Klodjan Gaba (EM9676) and Aliane Ahmed (HE5354) at HMP Wormwood Scrubs, PO Box 757, Du Cane Road, Acton, London W12 0AE.

Nassem Mosstaffa (HF5951) is at Feltham Young Offenders Institute, Bedfont Road, Feltham, Middlesex, TW13 4ND.

■ Please support the campaign

Campaign for Justice in the Yar's Wood Trial,
Tel: 07786 517 379 Email: ginn_emma@hotmail.com

roundup: as

Ay Family

In October, Mrs Ay and her four children, Beriwan, Medya, Newroz and Dilowan were refused bail and detained in Dungavel detention centre, Scotland. This Kurdish family was refused bail because of its 'immigration history'. Psychologists' reports have now found that 12-year-old Newroz and 11-year-old Dilowan could suffer serious damage caused by stress if they were to be removed to Germany. The family is awaiting the resumption of their Court of Appeal hearing which was adjourned until 17 December, pending the decision in the Ahmadi family's appeal (see previous page).

■ Ay Family Campaign,
c/o NCADC, 131 Camberwell Road
London SE5 0HF
Email: ncadc-london@ncadc.org.uk

■ Haringey Kurdish Community Centre
Tel: 020 8880 1804

Bakkari Adoui

A Tanzanian asylum seeker is currently facing deportation. He has been living in Edinburgh since 1998, having been forced to flee Tanzania after being tortured and imprisoned for his opposition politics. His asylum interview was conducted by an immigration officer who spoke Kenyan Swahili, whereas Bakkari speaks Tanzanian Swahili. His asylum claim was refused as a result of this interview.

■ Bakkari Adoui Campaign,
c/o Wester Hailes Representative Council,
22 Hailesland Place, Edinburgh EH14 2SL
www.bakkari-adoui.fsnet.co.uk

Mariana Botezatu

In November, campaigners prevented the deportation of a Romanian lesbian asylum seeker who had been assaulted and threatened by police. Mariana was being held in Harmondsworth detention centre and faced deportation back to Romania. She managed to reach the UK by clinging to the bottom of a Eurostar train and was then detained for seven months. Her asylum claim was refused and her legal team have now applied for exceptional leave to remain. She now waits to see whether her claims of assault and torture in Romania are believed and accepted by the courts.

■ Wages Due Lesbians
c/o Crossroads Women Centre
14 Wolsey Mews, London NW5
Tel: 020 7482 2496 / 07946 541 469
Email: kay@crossroadswomen.net

Asylum and deportation campaigns

Daoud Family

The Daoud family, Jamil, Sara and their four children – Majid, Huda, Mostafa, and Mirwa were granted bail at an adjudicator's hearing after being detained at Harmondsworth detention centre. The family, who come from Iraq, are to be deported to Spain as Sara stopped over there initially.

The family are awaiting a decision on their application for judicial review.

■ Friends of the Daoud Family,
c/o Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
Refugee Forum (NNRF),
118 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3HL
Tel: 0115 985 9546



Garzova family

The Garzova family, Agata, Dusan, and their three children Nikola, Adrian and Vanesa, arrived in the UK from Slovakia after suffering anti-Roma racism. Agata, a Slovak, married Dusan, a Roma, and, as a result, they have suffered serious threats and attacks. In May, the Home Office agreed to consider asylum applications from Agata and Vanesa on condition that the family drop an application for a judicial review.

Then, on 20 October, at 6am immigration officers raided their home in Gateshead. The family were taken to Tinsley House near Gatwick and deported the next day.

■ Garzova Family Campaign
c/o Joan Moon
joan.moon@blueyonder.co.uk
www.ncadc.org.uk

Hamza Karenga

Hamza fled Burundi in 1999 after his father and two brothers were killed by rebel soldiers and his wife was raped. Hamza has settled in Liverpool but now faces deportation back to Burundi, where his life will be at risk.

■ Hamza to Stay,
c/o Liverpool 8 Law Centre,
34-36 Princes Road, Liverpool L8 1TH
Email: support@hamzatostay.com
www.hamzatostay.com

Mende Nazer

Mende lost her claim for political asylum earlier this year because Home Office information on Sudan was not up to date. In November, immigration minister Beverley Hughes announced that the decision to refuse Mende asylum would be withdrawn and her asylum application would be considered again when it had been resubmitted.

■ www.ncadc.org.uk



Abdullah Rahmatullah

Friends and colleagues of 25-year-old Afghani Abdullah Rahmatullah are campaigning for him to be returned to Manchester after he was forcibly removed to Austria in March. He now faces deportation to Afghanistan after being told he will not be granted asylum.

■ Cath Maffia 0161 212 4451 / 07775 557 792
or Rhetta Moran 0161 295 5277
Email: r.moran@salford.ac.uk

Tham Sarki

Tham faces deportation to Nepal after fleeing the country in 2001. Tham was a member of the resistance movement and campaigned against the government. If he is returned he faces immediate imprisonment. Tham's application for asylum has been refused and he is appealing against the decision.

■ Tham Sarki Campaign
c/o 26c Breakspears Road, London SE4 1UW
Email: Tham_Sarki_Campaign@hotmail.com
Tel: 07759 220 157

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

■ Barbed Wire Britain Network Against
Refugee and Migrant Detention
60 Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX1 2JJ
Email: info@barbedwirebritain.org.uk
www.barbedwirebritain.org.uk

■ Cambridgeshire Against Refugee
Detention (CARD)
c/o CUSU, 11-12 Trumpington Street
Cambridge CB2 1QA
Email: card@closeoakington.org
www.closeoakington.org

■ Campaign to Close Campsfield
c/o 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4
Email: bmackeith@aol.com
www.closecampsfield.org.uk

■ Close Harmondsworth Campaign
10 Endsleigh Road, Southall
Middlesex UB2 5QL
Tel: 020 8571 5019

FUNDING NEWS

National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns

Funding from the Community Fund was finally confirmed in October, despite Blunkett's attack on the group and campaigning by the *Daily Mail* to get its funding axed. The group still needs an extra £52,000 to cover its running costs. Please try to help.

■ National Coalition Of
Anti-Deportation Campaigns (NCADC),
110 Hamstead Road, Birmingham B20 2QS
Tel: 0121 554 6947
Fax: 0870 055 4570
Email: ncadc@ncadc.org.uk
www.ncadc.org.uk

Blunkett in bid to block £340,000 for deportees' campaign

By David Williams
and Jo Butler 19

DAVID Blunkett's officials will today tell lottery fund bosses to cancel a £340,000 grant to a controversial anti-deportation group. The Home Secretary is said to believe the decision to allocate funds to the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns was a 'mistake' and officials will spell out the reasons why. Richard Burton, chief execu-

**Is this the
barmiest
lottery
handout of
them all?**

From Saturday's Mail
stance, his references to

Women Against Rape

Women Against Rape, which has 26 years experience of helping the victims of rape including many asylum seeking women, has had its funding axed by the Grants Committee of the Association of London Government. Liberal and Conservative councillors on the Grants Committee raised concerns about the termination of funding and asked for it to be reconsidered. The Labour Chair – Councillor Raj Chandarana – refused and, for the first time in its three-year history, resort was had to a political vote on funding.

■ Women Against Rape (WAR)
c/o Crossroads Womens Centre,
14 Wolsey Mews, London NW5
Tel: 020 7482 2496
Email: war@womenagainstrape



Cynical man in the war against



By Liz Fekete

IT'S pay-back time. Countries dragooned into the International Coalition Against Terrorism expected to be rewarded. Turning a blind eye to human rights abuses is one such reward. But there are others...

Arming tyrants

The first reward European governments are prepared to offer coalition partners is arms. Whatever one thought of Robin Cook's 'ethical foreign policy', in its first term of office New Labour did show some initiative in attempting to forge an EU approach to arms export licences. But all that is forgotten now, as Jack Straw bends over backwards to arm both India and Pakistan, and the Department of Trade and Industry sets out its arms stall in Africa (see *CAATnews*, issue 174). A report by the Institute of Public Policy Research, co-authored by David Mepham (a former adviser to International Development Secretary Clare Short) concludes that 'Post-September 11, there is greater willingness to supply arms to countries seen as "on side" in the War on Terror, even when they have poor human rights records.'

Exporting counter-terrorism

Malaysia is now treated as a full partner in the democratic war against terror, despite the fact that reform activists are locked up under national security laws (laws which began as British colonial ordinances, then used to lock up anti-colonial militants) and even the deputy prime minister languishes in prison after a travesty of a trial. After the Bali bombing, Tony Blair had no qualms about working with Malaysia (as well as Indonesia and the Philippines) on 'counter-terrorism capacity building', and Britain will play a key role in facilitating Malaysia's new counter-terrorism centre, which will be set up in 2003, and which will be run jointly by Malaysia and the US.

Scuppering peace

Another South-east Asian government, that of the Philippines, is being rewarded for its staunch support for the US War Against Terror. The Philippines is an important base for the rapid deployment of US forces from the Pacific Ocean as far as the Middle East. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroya has now received western support for her decision to suspend peace

negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, a coalition which includes the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). After September 11, the CPP was listed by the US State Department as a terrorist organisation and its founding chair, Professor Jose Maria Sison, was singled out as a terrorist and his assets frozen. The EU soon followed the lead of the US and listed Sison on its list of terrorist suspects, after Macapagal-Arroya despatched her foreign affairs secretary to inform the EU's foreign affairs minister that the NDF was a Communist front and the West was inadvertently funding terrorism.

Refugee today, terrorist tomorrow

The only trouble with the US/European/Filipino action was that Sison is an officially-recognised refugee who has lived in the Netherlands since 1998. But one man's refugee status should not be allowed to get in the way of dismantling peace negotiations, and the Dutch government duly issued the 'Sanctions ruling on terrorism 2002' listing Sison as a 'terrorist' and freezing his Post office account through which he receives social welfare payments. On 10 September, a directive from the social welfare agency of Utrecht's municipal government deprived him of all state subsidies for food, housing, health insurance and other basic necessities. The hypocrisy of the EU and Dutch actions is revealed by the fact that both that the Dutch government and the European parliament have previously supported the peace process in the Philippines in which Sison has been an active participant.

An international campaign has been formed to support Sison. The Archbishop of Utrecht and 22 European MEPs are among those lending their names to the campaign, which has written to the Dutch prime minister demanding that the name of the CPP be removed from the list of terrorist organisations. At a packed public meeting Sison, destitute but not cowed, accused the US of wanting 'to scuttle the peace negotiations, throw fuel into the flames of the civil war in the Philippines, escalate US military intervention and tighten the all-round US stranglehold over the Philippines.'

Liz Fekete is a founder member of the UK campaign to abolish the Internal Security Act in Malaysia (AIM-UK).

■ AIM-UK, BM AIM-UK, London WC1N 3XX.

oeuvres terror

Supporting state terror

It is not only the Philippines and Malaysian governments which have been given a free hand for repression in exchange for supporting the US's war plans. In exchange for supporting UN resolution 1441, which paves the way for war in Iraq, Russia's President Putin is rewarded by the West with a new strategic alliance with NATO and a free hand to prosecute his murderous war in Chechnya. And in the first sign that a European country is prepared to go along with state terror against a negotiated peace, the Danish government, acting on an extradition request from Russia, has arrested Akhmed Zakayev, a minister in the last elected Chechen government.



Jose Maria Sison



Akhmed Zakayev

From negotiator to terrorist

Zakayev – once Chechnya's most celebrated actor – is now the European ambassador for the Chechen resistance. The Russian government is refusing official negotiations, calling instead for the Chechnyans to surrender unconditionally. Zakayev accepts that the war in Chechnya cannot be won militarily by either side, and has spent months talking to European governments, attempting to persuade Europeans to take a mediating role by initiating peace negotiations between the Russian and Chechen governments. He had a meeting with the UK Foreign Office in January.

The Danish government, citing freedom of expression and assembly, had refused to bow to Russian demands to ban the World Chechen Congress, due to be held in Copenhagen in October. In the light of this principled stand, Zakayev did not expect to be bundled away as soon as the Congress had ended. As we go to press, Zakayev is still languishing in prison, awaiting Denmark's verdict on Russia's extradition request. Zakayev's lawyers say that he may apply for political asylum rather than risk being sent back to a country that practices the death penalty.

Abandoning human rights

Russian parliamentarians are delighted at Zakayev's arrest, and have called on European governments to arrest all who attended the 'criminal assemblage', as they describe the World Chechnyan Congress. Delegates there expressed dismay that Europe's response to the cruel war Russia is waging in Chechnya is to abandon concrete steps to defend human rights in favour of political deals which can only prolong the conflict. ■

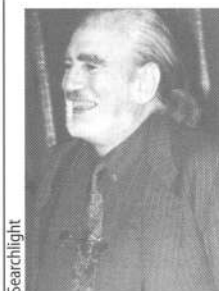
■ More information on the case of Professor Sison at www.defendsison.be

■ Danish Support Committee for Chechnya 2002 at www.tjetjenien.dk

■ Campaign Against Arms Trade www.caat.org.uk

OBITUARY

Mike Cohen 1935–2002



It is with great sadness that we report the sudden death on 2 October of the stalwart photographer of the anti-fascist movement, Mike Cohen.

He was on every demonstration and picket but you probably did not notice him; he never put himself forward. You will know his photographs but not know they were his; he was without ego. Mike was of the

old, left school which grew up on the values of community and comradeship, unity and solidarity, selflessness and generosity. He started his political career when most of us were not yet born and he ended it when many of us had defected to the comfort of our New Labour armchairs.

Born into a working-class Jewish family in London's East End, Mike began by following traditions: he was apprenticed as a tailor, his politics were forged in Poale Zion and labouring in Israel, including work on a Kibbutz. But soon his political concerns grew – to embrace everything from nuclear disarmament to the homeless. In 1963 he joined the radical Jewish anti-fascist organisation, the 62 Group, and went on to help found *Searchlight* magazine. With Maurice Ludmer and Gerry Gable of *Searchlight*, he managed Britain's only anti-fascist publishing company. It was at this time that Mike learned photography so as to aid intelligence-gathering on the far Right. For years he then worked professionally as a photographer, most notably for the *Morning Star*.

As 'our' street photographer, Mike was not just recording our activities in campaigns, pickets and demonstrations to right a multitude of injustices – racism, fascism, exploitation, police brutality, Palestine, war with Iraq ... He was, just as importantly, and certainly more dangerously, acting as our sleuth on the fascist enemy – marking on film who was with whom, who was where and who was infiltrating our ranks. He was our watchdog.

It goes without saying, too, that the pages of left magazines will now be that much blander without Mike's input. (He was ever generous with his photos and completely un-sectarian about their use. 'Just give me a bell if you want anything,' was always his refrain.) But, personally, as someone who has appreciated the comfort of his crinkle smile and tobacco-infused bear-hugs on many a desolate, cold, sparse demo for 30-odd years, I will miss most a very warm and genuine human being. He was a constant reminder of how to keep the faith – and that there was a faith. ■

Jenny Bourne



Mike Cohen on far right, watching the fascists



Prejudice and contempt: terror trial by media

ON 17 November, the *Sunday Times* claimed on its front page that MI5 had foiled a poison-gas attack on London's underground. Six men had several days earlier been arrested under the Terrorism Act (2000). The report alleged that the men were part of an Al-Qaeda network operating in Europe and had been planning to build a 'gas bomb' which was to be released on a crowded Tube train. The plot, said the paper, would have 'caused chaos across the capital'. The story came at the end of a week of confusing and conflicting statements by the government about the risk of a terrorist attack on London.

The next day, the media were full of scare stories about 'gas attacks' on the Tube. Newspapers alleged that one of the defendants was 'a key aide of terror chief Bin Laden'. Reporters claimed to know which underground stations had been targeted, what chemicals would have been used and what time the attack would have occurred, all based on 'unnamed intelligence sources'. Television news programmes showed maps of London with waves of gas spreading through the underground lines out to the suburbs. It was claimed that 'the plan may have been to release cyanide gas at the height of the rush hour in the walkways and escalators'. But, based on the actual facts known, the plan may have been anything, or nothing, at all.

Prejudicial publicity

The speculation, presumably aimed at giving the poor reader or viewer a livelier picture of what the impact of any attack would have been, gave the mistaken im-

pression that MI5 had foiled an attack at the eleventh hour. But even the government was eager to point out that the arrests were part of an attempt to 'disrupt' suspected terrorists 'at an early stage'.

Home secretary David Blunkett later distanced himself from the *Sunday Times* report, claiming that officers in the SO13 anti-terror squad at Scotland Yard had fed the 'gas attack' story to the press. But Blunkett himself had to be reminded, during an interview on the *Today* programme, that his description of the defendants, as being part of a 'terrorist cell', was in contempt of court. The 1981 Contempt of Court Act forbids publication of anything that might disturb the natural course of justice as a case proceeds through the criminal justice system – this includes interviews with witnesses, speculation about motives or

suggestions of evidence not brought before the court. The Act applies from the moment of arrest, even before suspects have been charged. If the case against the men collapsed due to prejudicial publicity, would

Blunkett, along with the *Sunday Times* and other papers, face prosecution for contempt?

The day after the *Sunday Times* article appeared, three of the arrested men were charged with possession of articles for the preparation, instigation and commission of terrorism acts; the other arrested men were released. The charges related to alleged false passports and credit cards, but no allegations were made in court about explosives or chemicals and there was no claim that the suspects had any materials for the manufacture of bombs. John Prescott even stated publicly that there was no evidence of any plans for a gas attack or use of bombs.

Solicitors for the defendants revealed that, although the suspects had been detained for a week, they had not been questioned once about a 'cyanide plot' or a 'poison-gas attack' or any of the other widely reported allegations. Nor was there an armed police presence, as would be normal in serious anti-terrorist cases, when the defendants appeared to hear the charges against them.

Ironically, the attention paid to the 'gas attack' story on 18 November meant that the story of the High Court's decision to order a fresh inquest into the death of Ronald Maddison was marginalised. Maddison died during nerve gas tests at Porton Down military research centre in the 1950s. The British military had been testing the nerve gas sarin on thousands of young servicemen. Sarin is the nerve agent that was later used in the terrorist attack on the Tokyo underground in 1995.

Fair trial at risk

But the greatest damage that the frenzied reporting of the 'cyanide plot' will cause will be to justice itself. As solicitor Gareth Peirce, who is representing one of the defendants, noted, the 'tidal wave of completely contemptuous and prejudicial coverage of this case' has put at risk any chance of a fair trial.

And, if the men are still acquitted of charges under the Terrorism Act (2000), the prejudicial reporting and the climate of fear created by the press will be useful for another reason. As the original *Sunday Times* report explained, if the prosecution fails, the defendants would still be likely to face detention under the 2001 Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act, which, as CARF readers will know, has the advantage for the government that no actual case needs to be made in a court in order to imprison foreigners. Were this to happen, we would then be locking up people who not only have never been successfully prosecuted, but who have actually been acquitted of charges which the state has done its best to convict them of, under an Act – the Terrorism Act (2000) – which is already weighted against the defendant. But then we already know they're guilty anyway, so why worry? ■



Sales of gas masks have reportedly soared since the underground 'gas attack' scare. But was the media coverage just hot air?

MURDERS

Jay Abatan: PCA inquiry

In November 2002, the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) called in Avon and Somerset police to begin a disciplinary inquiry into how the Sussex force investigated the murder of 42-year-old Jay Abatan in 1999. Jay's family had made a complaint to the PCA about the way the original investigation was conducted.

In January 1999, Jay and his brother Michael and a friend were on a night out in Brighton. While waiting for a taxi outside the Ocean Rooms night-club they were attacked and beaten. Jay died five days later as a result of his injuries (see *CARF* 60). Two men, Graham Curtis and Peter Bell, were charged with manslaughter but these charges were later withdrawn. The same men were then charged with affray and ABH on Michael. The jury at the trial was not told that Jay had died as a result of the attack. The men were found not guilty.

In February 2001, Sussex police were severely criticised in a review of the case carried out by Essex

police. They made fifty-seven criticisms about the police investigation and eighteen subsequent recommendations. For example, officers failed to take names and addresses of witnesses, paperwork was sloppy, senior officers failed to take control and a racial motive was never considered. The investigation concluded that the Macpherson Report's recommendations on the investigation and prosecution of racially motivated crimes were 'not taken on board'. As a result of the inquiry, the original investigation team was replaced and a new chief appointed. Detective Superintendent Ken Probert, who took over the second investigation (named Operation Hurling), said the murder was to be treated as racist. However, by July this year the investigation was scaled down after the CPS announced there was insufficient evidence to bring charges. Jay's family have vowed to bring the attackers to justice and are considering a private prosecution if further witnesses fail to come forward. ■

Web: www.justiceforjay.co.uk
Email: justiceforjay@hotmail.com



Jay Abatan

Justice for Abdi Dorre?

Since the night in August 1999 when Somalian Abdi Dorre died after sustaining fatal head injuries falling down a flight of stairs in a Northampton night-club, his family have been ceaselessly campaigning to find out how it happened and pressuring the police to make a full investigation and to find those responsible.

At the inquest in May last year, the coroner returned an open verdict. It was revealed at the inquest that the police had never carried out any forensic tests at the scene and that there was an unexplained fourteen-minute gap in CCTV coverage of the events. A number of CCTV cameras recorded his argument with the doormen at the club, but none recorded the moment he is said to have fallen down the stairs (see *CARF* 65, 68).

The CPS decided earlier this year

to re-examine the case after Abdi's family campaigned to get the case reopened. The family at last hoped that justice would be done when two men were charged in connection with Abdi's death, but in November, their trial at Leicester Crown Court was delayed when they tried to get the case against them dismissed. However, the men's attempt to get the charges dropped failed, and Abdi's family have now been told that the case will be heard within the next six months. Qorshe Maxamed, Abdi's sister, said 'We have been fighting for justice for over two years. It took the CPS and police over two years to bring charges. Is this British justice?' ■

Abdi Dorre Family Campaign, c/o Po Box 7147, Kiln Farm, Milton Keynes, MK14 5WS Tel: 07751 252 157
National Civil Rights Movement (NCRM), 14 Featherstone Road, Southall, Middlesex UB2 5AA Tel: 020 8843 2333 Web: www.ncrm.org.uk



Abdi Dorre

campaigns & reports

Racist murder?



Shah Wahab died two days after suffering serious head injuries after an unprovoked attack while he waited for a bus in Southampton in the early hours of 1 September. 37-year-old Shah was waiting for a bus outside Brannigans bar when he was felled by a single punch to the head from a stranger. Police have appealed for witnesses as there were about fifty people outside the bar at the time of the attack. Three men were arrested in connection with the attack, and two were later released on bail. ■

Asylum seeker murdered

On 6 October, Ally Mustafa Abdillahi, a 31-year-old Tanzanian refugee who had lived in the UK since 1994, was found with serious injuries in a hostel for the homeless in Luton. He died as a result of head injuries. 36-year-old Neal Bond, who lived in a room in the same building as Ally, was charged with his murder. ■

IRR news
Independent race and refugee news network

For up-to-date news on racial violence, black deaths in custody, asylum cases and deportations, go to the new website of the Institute of Race Relations and sign up to the free online race and refugee news service, where you can customise the news you receive by email. ■

Institute of Race Relations, 2-6 Leeke Street, London WC1X 9HS Tel: 020 7837 0041 Web: www.irr.org.uk

diary of race and resistance

SEPT - NOV 2002

RACISM & FASCISM

2 SEP Nine people are hospitalised after fire at central London refugee hostel

9 SEP 14-year-old thief who targeted Asians given three-year supervision order, curfew and banned from the Armfield estate, Mitcham

12 SEP Football Association orders the Tipton Boilers to remove the name BNP (their sponsor) from their shirts

21 SEP Five Kurdish asylum seeker families on Ford estate, Sunderland attacked in their homes by gang of racists

24 SEP Home Secretary bans planned NF march in Leicester

26 SEP Asylum seekers' hostel in Fishponds area of Bristol surrounded by gang of youths who shout racist abuse and smash windows

27 SEP 15-year-old black schoolboy survives stabbing through the heart in racist attack by two white boys on bus in Brockley Rise, south east London

2 OCT A man of Arab origin racially attacked by two white men wielding screwdrivers after answering his door to them in Norwich

9 OCT 29-year-old Lee Hawkins jailed for 21 months for racially aggravated assault causing ABH, after using a blowpipe to fire a dart into face of restaurant owner Akasuk Choudhury in Rhondda, Wales

11 OCT Police begin investigations into hate mail sent to Community Fund after the *Mail* advised readers to complain about lottery money being given to non-worthwhile causes

18 OCT BNP candidate, Steve Batkin, polls 18.6% of vote in Stoke on Trent mayoral elections

19 OCT Government announces plans to make the new chief of the 'independent' CRE take a loyalty pledge to the home secretary

25 OCT Alistair Scott spared jail and ordered to pay £100 compensation to victims, after being found guilty of three offences of religiously aggravated behaviour

28 OCT 22-year old Roma man beaten unconscious and then dumped outside Woodside Caravan park, Hertfordshire, where traveller families are fighting eviction ■ 13-year-old black boy robbed and beaten unconscious by two skinheads in Sydenham, south east London

2 NOV 24-year-old West Lothian man arrested on charges of racially aggravated breach of the peace after shouting insults at black football players at Tynecastle stadium

3 NOV 27-year-old black man beaten by 30-strong gang of white men shouting racist abuse in Bexleyheath, Kent

5 NOV Turkish man suffers a broken jaw after racist attack by a white man in Norwich

7 NOV BNP stands council candidate in by-election in Downham, Lewisham ■ Research by Medical Practitioners' Union finds that white consultants are three times more likely to be rewarded with extra bonuses than black counterparts

8 NOV NF organiser Simon Northfield and seven others sentenced to total of 25 years after pleading guilty to conspiracy to commit racially aggravated assault after being caught in a van in Tooting, south London armed with an imitation gun, CS spray, knuckle dusters, an axe and handcuffs ■ 30 men armed with baseball bats and knives attack an Indian restaurant in Lincoln; one man is taken to hospital with serious head injuries

12 NOV Two people charged with attempted murder of 21 foreign fish workers after fire at a hotel where Portuguese and Brazilian workers were living in Buckie, Moray, Scotland

13 NOV Met police arrest 100 people in crackdown on hate crime on two east London estates

15 NOV Former BNP member David Wilson jailed for four months after being convicted of distributing threatening, insulting and abusive literature and inciting racial hatred after distributing 4,000 BNP leaflets across Pollockshields, Glasgow

21 NOV BNP candidate, 38-year-old Robert Evans, in Mill Hill ward, Burnley, Lancashire wins council seat by 16 votes after two recounts

23 NOV Robert Murray sentenced to one year and Paul Ryan to nine months after fire-bombing a mosque in Motherwell, Scotland

■ 37-year-old David Tovey jailed for 11 years after pleading guilty to nine explosives and weapons charges and being found guilty on two counts of racially aggravated criminal damage; a cache of weapons and explosives were found at his home in Oxfordshire

29 NOV 32-year-old Iranian refugee, Masood Gomroki, stabbed twice in the stomach by racist gang in Sighthill

ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION

9 SEP Home secretary establishes an advisory group, including Sir Bernard Crick, to advise on compulsory Britishness tests

18 SEP Eleven men detained by MI5 on suspicion of links with Al-Qaeda

20 SEP 48 people, including 21 children, from Czech Republic filmed by TV crews being removed from the UK to discourage others from travelling to the UK

4 OCT Government plans to house asylum seekers in 'hotel ship' to be permanently docked at Tilbury, Essex

10 OCT High Court rules that government policy of stationing immigration officers in Prague airport is not unlawful

21 OCT Plans revealed for Mobile Detection Units of teams to patrol five vulnerable European borders and Dover with high-tech equipment including heat sensors to stop asylum seekers

23 OCT British Medical Association (BMA) research reveals that asylum seekers' health gets worse after entering the UK

5 NOV French government closes doors of Sangatte Red Cross camp to new refugees

7 NOV Government imposes visa restrictions on Zimbabweans entering the UK after increase in asylum applications ■ Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act passed by parliament

10 NOV 100 Afghan and Kurdish refugees take sanctuary at St Pierre and St Paul church in Sangatte after the Red Cross camp is closed

14 NOV French police forcibly evict refugees from St Pierre and St Paul church, Sangatte

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

9 SEP Noor Miah and Mohammed Islam, both 21, jailed for four-and-a-half and three years respectively for involvement in Oldham riots

14 SEP 23-year-old Lee Duvall found hanged in Lewisham police station cell the day after being arrested on suspicion of going equipped to steal

16 SEP CRE calls off investigation into racism in the CPS because they are satisfied with progress made by the CPS

3 OCT Shazad Ali, convicted of rioting in the Bradford disturbances, becomes 38th person refused leave to appeal sentence at Court of Appeal

10 OCT Ian Blair, deputy head of Scotland Yard, claims 63% of muggings are carried out by blacks

20 OCT Audit Commission report blames weak management at Oldham council for failing to promote race relations in the area

24 OCT Lincoln prison officers regain control of prison with help of 200 others from 17 prisons after riot

25 OCT Court of Appeal rules that anti-terrorist legislation used to detain suspected foreign terrorists is legal

28 OCT PCA report into deaths in custody finds that in nine-tenths of drug related deaths officers failed to notice that prisoners were critically ill

7 NOV Home Office research reveals that police officers are eight times more likely to stop and search blacks and three times more likely to stop and search Asians than whites

RESISTANCE

28 SEP 400,000 march in London against War in Iraq and for Palestine

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