

Insaf

Justice*yikwahlulela*adalat*rechtvaardigheid*gerechtigheit

Issue 90

September 2017

Leicester Civil Rights Movement consists of a spectrum of individuals who are concerned with the consequences of racial injustice in Britain. We welcome new members at our meetings which are held at The Racial Equality Centre 3rd floor -9 Upper Brown Street, Phoenix Yard, Leicester. The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 26th October 2017 at 6.15pm. Ring Priya 0116 2531053 or Chris 0116 2219459

STOP CRIMINALISING ASYLUM SEEKERS

Asylum seekers are being told that if they do not sign on at Loughborough Reporting Centre when told to do so we will be arrested and be made to pay a fine of up to £ 5000 or be sent to prison for 6 months or both. Asylum seekers get NASS support from the Home Office of £36.32 on a card to be spent in certain supermarkets on food. No cash. Some get no NASS support and expected to rely on a relative or friend. How can we possibly be expected to pay £5000 ? Reporters have to attend at a stated time and day. People do not know where they can access bus fares. We live all over Leicester and it is expensive. Additionally, buses are unreliable.

If someone is ill they can ring in and change the appointment. What if there is no money in the phone or we have not got one there is no help with phones from anybody? What is someone

is too ill to ring? What if a child has to be rushed to the doctor or hospital? Parents also have to make child care arrangements to attend. What if an appointment is forgotten? Asylum seekers lead busy lives doing extensive voluntary work and looking after relatives and friends.

People often suffer with mild mental health problems and may be taking medication. Others suffer more severe post-traumatic stress disorders. Some people are paralysed by fear and cannot attend without an escort. 47 people were detained at Loughborough Reporting Centre in the three months prior to a surprise check by HM Inspectors reported in Leicester Mercury on September 6th. The Loughborough Centre is run by TASCAR on behalf of the

Home Office. Private companies that run the detention centres that people are sent onto make vast profits. Tascar held contracts to work with PFI for the police. In 2012, it became part of Capita. It was awarded a £30 million contract to trace and contact "over stayers" in 2014 (Corporate Watch). Capita recorded an operating profit of £148.3 million in 2016.

A Bangladeshi woman was recently detained at the Centre where she was given a refusal notice with no time to operate her right of appeal. Many people are detained because they have not yet been able to satisfy the demanding requirements of the Home Office.

According to the Leicester Mercury report the Loughborough Centre consists of holding room with a bathroom with no toilet seat. The Inspection failed the centre on 5 ½ of 10 points. There are no telephone interpreting facilities and no access to the internet at all. Phone calls can be made.

People are being held up to nine hours. The inspector said this was too long. No children had been held in the three months prior to the inspection but men and women are held in the same room. There is no access to fresh air or to smoke and no nicotine replacement therapy is available.

Detainees are handcuffed from the centre to the van with no consideration of personal risk Asylum seekers have committed no crime except to seek safety from persecution, wars and death. Where are the Human Rights in this country?

CLOSE DOWN LOUGHBOROUGH DETENTION CENTRE
By LCRM members

LCRM is an entirely self-funding organisation.

Membership is waged £4, unwaged £1, asylum seekers 20p and groups £25. We urge all supporters to join. Tel Priya 0116 2531053 or Chris 0116 2219459 Please send diary dates, notices and articles to

chrisgoodwin29@yahoo.com

Please also use this address for more copies of Insaf

In 2012 Theresa May, then Home Secretary, announced a new approach to immigration : to make Britain a “hostile environment” for people who have “no right to be here”. The introduction of compulsory ID checks in hospitals, due to start this month, is just one element. The plan is to make it ever tougher for people without the right immigration papers to get a job, rent a flat, use a bank, drive a car, get medical treatment, send kids to school, or otherwise live a normal life.

This Corporate Watch report outlines 13 of the main hostile environment policies introduced so far, including: NHS England will start compulsory ID checks in hospitals this month. “Overseas visitors” will be made to pay for non-emergency treatment; later in the year, the government wants to extend charging to A&E and GP surgeries too. Meanwhile, patient details collected when people register with GPs are systematically passed on to Immigration Enforcement who use them to track down “illegals”.

Around 6,000 people were traced this way in 2016. Similarly, the Department of Education has agreed to hand over names and addresses of 1500 school pupils and their families each month, collected in the “School Census”. At the moment, such information sharing requires specific legal agreements. This has changed when the Digital Economy Bill was passed in April this year, allowing government departments and corporate contractors to automatically share people's confidential data.

Other measures ban unwanted migrants from renting homes, opening bank accounts or getting driving licenses. Migrants are being criminalised with new offences of “working illegally”, “driving in the UK”, and employing or renting to “illegals”.

Migrants forced onto the streets are being targeted by immigration raids against rough sleepers, coordinated with local councils and homelessness charities. Police and Immigration Enforcement are increasingly integrated, led by Operation Nexus in London which embeds immigration officers in police stations and standardises ID checks. Met Police are also handing over details of victims and witnesses of crimes. Local councils are being encouraged to launch immigration enforcement operations with money from a new “Controlling Migration Fund”. Nottingham City Council is making a bid that includes ESOL classes and support for voluntary organisations, but also “a variety of engagement, cohesion & enforcement activities in communities”

The introduction highlights three basic themes across all these measures: mass information sharing, criminalisation of migrants, and widespread citizen collaboration. The hostile environment relies on collaboration from bosses and workers in the public sector and in private companies, and also from many more of us as “members of the public”. The conclusion looks in more depth at how the government is trying to foster a culture of collaboration – And some

possibilities for resistance.

The Hostile Environment needs the collaboration of millions of people.

So it breaks when people start to refuse, and that refusal spreads. Refusal often just means small everyday things, like refusing to sign a form, hand over an address, or look away when a raid happens. Resistance can identify effective acts of refusal, and help them spread. Government encourages collaboration through a range of means including: spreading hatred and fear; putting in place legal, financial, and other rewards and penalties; trying to get us to “buy in” to values of cost-saving, informing, or unquestioning compliance with authority

The hostile environment succeeds to the extent it becomes “the new normal”. When it is engrained in our habits, everyday ways of living and working, so we don't even see or question it any more.

See the full report on [www.Corporate Watch](http://www.CorporateWatch.org.uk) website

LCRM members raised issues and supported the following: Unite EM/LE100c Leicester Community Branch

Motion passed by **Unite Trade Union** a) deplores of the Immigration Act 2016, which in the Government's own words, seeks to create “a hostile environment” for migrants, including asylum seekers. The Government has refused to allow the right to work for those asylum seekers waiting more than six months for a decision to stay. Asylum seekers will have to prove their identity and legal status to landlords, and to obtain hospital treatment. The Act also takes away support for asylum seekers who have been unsuccessful in their application for asylum. They and their families will be given 90 days to leave the country after which they will lose any financial support or accommodation, leaving them homeless and destitute.

Unite members working in hospitals, local authorities, universities, colleges, road haulage, and airlines will be conscripted into immigration control by this Act, with penalties if they don't comply b) notes the policy of Unite in supporting the right of people from any country to /flee persecution and seek a safe haven, and not to be treated as criminals. Unite policy opposes the harassment of asylum claimants by the Border Agency, and calls for those who want to work to be allowed to, and those who cannot to be given decent support whilst waiting for their claim to be heard. Therefore this Local Area Activists

Committee calls on the Executive Council to:

i) work with migrant rights groups and charities to monitor the implementation of this shameful Act i) actively encourage asylum seekers to become Unite Community members by providing Branches with the necessary legal and technical support; iii) support any Unite member who refuses to implement this Act as a condition of their employment in violation of EU and international human rights law.”

We want other Trade Unions and relevant bodies to pass similar motions and take action.