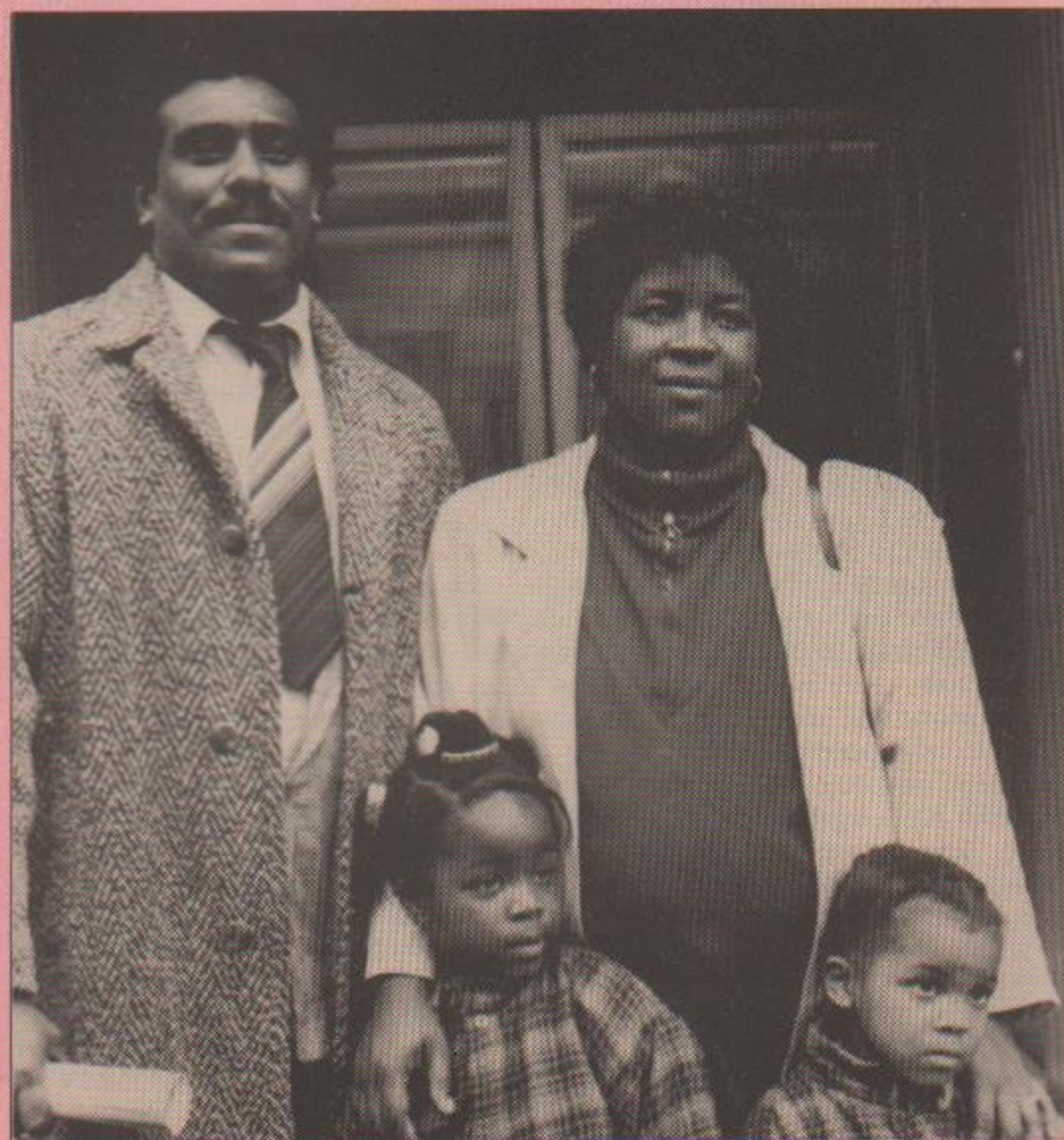




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**JOIN WORKERS
AGAINST RACISM**

Julius must stay—no more deportations!

Julius Alexander is one of the first people to be threatened with deportation since the government introduced new immigration appeal regulations in August 1988. WAR is campaigning to prevent his expulsion from the country and his separation from his fiancée and children—see pages 2-3

Julius must stay!

Maureen's story

Maureen Sam is 22 years old. She was born in Britain and has lived here for most of her life. On 10 May 1985 she was married on the Caribbean island of St Vincent, the birthplace of her parents. She had two children, Beverly who was two, and Joanna, who was newly born, before returning to Britain in 1986. Her husband planned to follow when his application for entry was processed. Because Maureen was a British citizen it all seemed a formality. The home office had other ideas. When her husband applied to join his wife and children they turned him down on the grounds that he could not prove that he had accommodation and maintenance awaiting him. Under the immigration rules entry is only permitted if a person can prove that they are not

going to be dependent on state benefit in any way, even when a person has a legal right to be here. For any working class family from London's East End this is an impossible guarantee to give.

With two children to look after, and a happy marriage under threat, Maureen was told she would have to fend for herself. She would have to do without her husband and her children would have to be

fatherless. As you would expect, this led to the breakdown of the marriage. Despite these setbacks Maureen has maintained a stable life for herself and her children, who are thriving in Britain. They recently moved to a new council house in Hackney.

Over 18 months ago Maureen and Julius met and settled down together. In December 1988 Maureen gave birth to Julius junior, their first child together. The home office is intent on splitting up the family by sending Julius out of the country. For the second time in three years Maureen is being threatened with the break-up of the stable life she has established for herself and her children.

Julius' story

Julius Alexander is 31. He had applied to enter the UK in 1975 but was rejected on the grounds that he had no job to come to. This was despite his holding a UK passport. When St Vincent was granted independence from the British Empire in 1979 his UK passport was taken away and replaced with a St Vincent passport. He came in October 1984. His mother had already lived here for over 25 years. She, and Julius' two brothers, were part of the mass immigration after the Second World War when Britain needed cheap labour; they are all British passport holders. He also has a sister who was born in Britain. The family had settled, and still lives, in Edmonton.

Originally here for two months, Julius got an extension of his visa to six months. In that time he fell in love and decided to stay. His partner became pregnant and in 1985 they had a daughter, Jannicka. Although the relationship has now ended Julius still sees Jannicka every week and remains on good terms with her mother.

By April 1985 Julius was officially an 'overstayer,' and therefore considered to be an illegal immigrant. It was of no concern to the home office that his entire family was legally settled here, that he had a daughter, or that he has now established a settled relationship with his fiancée Maureen, a British citizen, and mother of their son. They are determined to throw him out of the country.

For over three years the secret immigration police have been on Julius' trail and finally, on Friday 23 September 1988, they tracked him down to his place of work at the North Middlesex Hospital where he was employed as a cook in the catering department.

At 10.30am the catering manager called him into his office and confronted him with three police officers. He was told he was under arrest as an illegal immigrant and taken to Edmonton police station. Julius was held in a cell for almost six hours without food. When he asked for water one officer told him that illegal immigrants didn't get that kind of service and told him to drink the water in the toilet bowl.

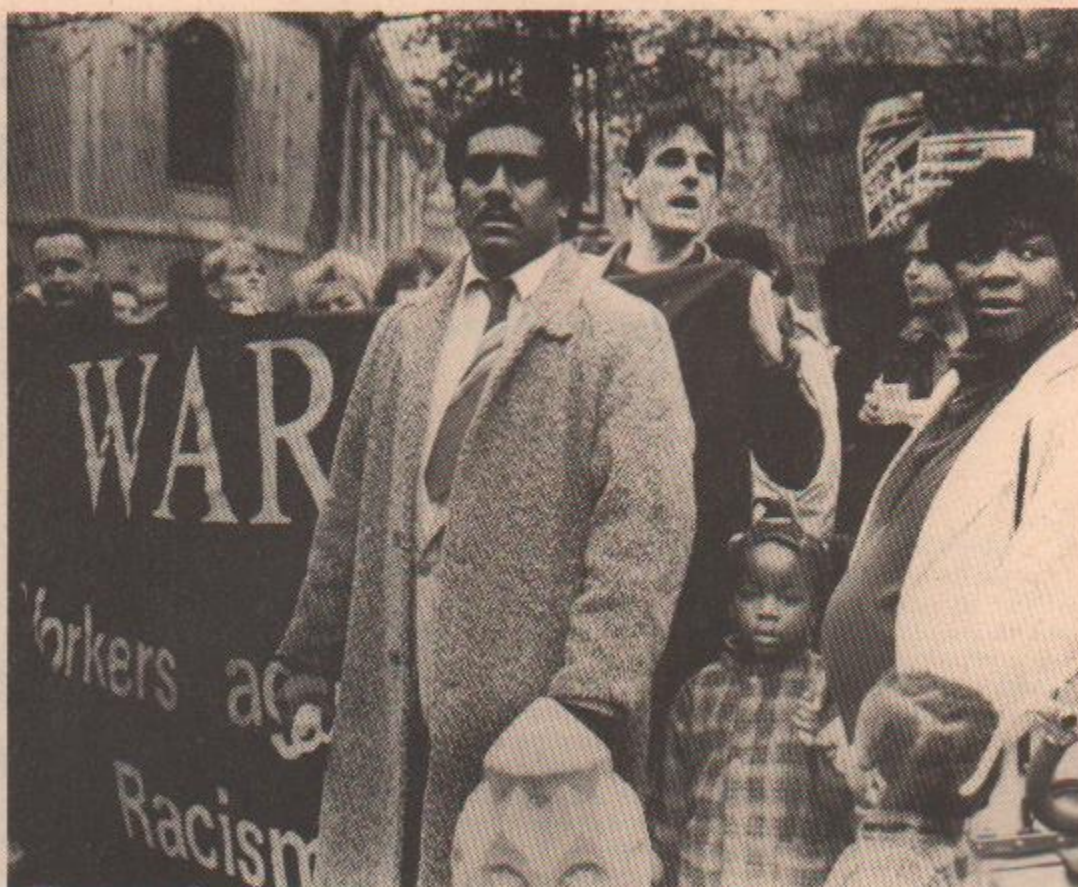
When Maureen found out that Julius was being held she telephoned the police station to ask if she could get a solicitor. The police lied and said that Julius already had one. He was interviewed by officers without legal representation and made to sign a statement of guilt. Eventually, at around 6pm, Julius was issued with a deportation order by an immigration official. He was freed into the custody of his fiancée and told he would be given a date to leave the country.

'Why do they want to destroy my life-again?'

(Maureen Sam speaking about the home office's attempt to deport her fiancé Julius Alexander)

Appeal victory

On 17 November 1988 Julius had his first appeal hearing at the immigration appeals tribunal in the Strand. It materialised that his deportation order had not been signed by a home office official but by an immigration officer. This is a procedure not allowed for in the immigration laws. As a result the appeal was deferred for legal enquiries. It was rescheduled for 21 December. Julius had 250 supporters outside his hearing in November. Had we not been there he would surely have been deported on the nod. Immigration officers increasingly take it upon themselves to instigate deportation proceedings against people. The only reason Julius is still here is because of his campaign



Campaign launched

The case of Julius Alexander and Maureen Sam is a tragic one. They are victims of Britain's racist immigration laws, in Maureen's case, for the second time, and since 1 August 1988 there is no right to appeal on compassionate grounds unless seven years' permanent residence has preceded the deportation order. It is obvious that the impact of this deportation order on Maureen, her two daughters and her new son, on her plans to marry Julius, on Julius' daughter Jannicka and not least on Julius himself, will be devastating.

A campaign is being launched to protest against this deportation and the racist laws which enable the government to proceed with it. Julius was president of the St Vincent NUS between 1976-77 and so the campaign will be particularly aimed at students.

Soon after the campaign was launched Julius got a job at the Polytechnic of North London. However he was sacked on 19 October 1988. The students at PNL are campaigning for him to be given a full-time permanent job.

What you can do

1. Send a letter to the home office at Queen Anne's Gate, WC1, demanding that Julius be allowed to remain in Britain, quoting his reference number A369127.
2. Set up a meeting in your college or workplace where Julius can come and speak. Ask us for leaflets and petitions.
3. Make a donation to Julius' campaign. Make all cheques or postal orders out to the Maureen and Julius Campaign (Workers Against Racism).
4. Get involved in the campaign's activities. Telephone 01-729-0414 for information.
5. Write to the National Union of Students at Holloway Road demanding that the National Executive Committee give Julius their official backing.

Esther McCurbin speaks out

Clinton was murdered

In November 1988 an inquest jury in Wolverhampton brought in a verdict of 'death by misadventure' in the case of Clinton McCurbin. McCurbin, a 22-year old black man, was strangled to death by two police officers in Wolverhampton town centre last year. A succession of witnesses had told the inquest that they saw PC Hobday hold his arms round McCurbin's neck while his partner PC Thomas sat on his back. They didn't release McCurbin until he was unconscious. Then, together with three other officers, they handcuffed the lifeless body and dragged it into the changing room area. According to the police, they did not attempt to save McCurbin's life because they thought he was 'faking' it.

Clinton's mother, Esther, spoke to *WAR* the day before the inquest was due to give its verdict. 'From all the evidence they should have found Hobday responsible for murder. They should have brought in a verdict of "unlawful killing". But the coroner has been making clear that he thinks like a policeman. The jury knows that he wants a verdict of "death by misadventure". Both the coroner and the police want Clinton's killing to appear as if it was an accident.'

Esther had no doubt that Clinton was murdered. 'How can a 17-stone police officer say he had to use that kind of force to hold down a 9-stone youth? One of the witnesses heard him say to Clinton that he would "break his neck". All the witnesses testified that Clinton was being strangled around the neck. Only PCs Hobday and Thomas said differently. They claimed not to have been strangling Clinton. Its ridiculous!'

Police claimed that McCurbin was trying to use a stolen credit card in the Next clothing shop. 'You can bet your life that if it was true the police would have presented the card by now and made an issue out of it', says Esther, 'but they haven't—because the whole story was a lie. Just think about it. Clinton was in the shop and the menswear supervisor told him he would have to make a call about the card. Clinton remained in the shop while the call was made. There was no way he would have done this if it was a stolen card.'



Esther McCurbin on the march following her son's murder

He would have run away'.

After Clinton's death there was widespread anger within the black community. Two days of street violence followed the murder and there were protests and demonstrations. Esther feels angry about the people who jumped on the bandwagon at the time but have refused to support the family since. 'At first, when Clinton was murdered, we had a lot of support. But that has disappeared. There have been several disappointments. Paul Boateng, our solicitor, dropped the case. He said he had "other commitments". It seems like he has used us and now he's got where he wants to be, he has turned his back on us. And there was talk of £10 000 from the council but we haven't had even one penny.'

Esther McCurbin now lives in the United States. She now feels that anti-racists in Britain could learn from the militancy of campaigns in America. 'Take the

Howard Beach killing of a black youth last year. The black people have really rallied around. During the court case there have been people from the community in court every day. Whole localities made particular days their day, so there is a "Queen's day," a "Brooklyn day," and so on. People are standing up to be counted.

'There is no justice in the British courts. Clinton was murdered but his killer will never be prosecuted. If you want justice you must fight to change the whole system and you can only do that together. It's no good promoting famous individuals like Jesse Jackson in the States or Paul Boateng here. White society only allows them to go so far and anyway, putting a few people in positions of power doesn't change the system. People have got to pull together and organise themselves. Individuals can't achieve anything alone. If you stand together you can be strong.'

Having got away with the murder of Clinton McCurbin, Wolverhampton police feel free to terrorise black people. Kryisia Rozanska reports

'I felt like a Jew in Hitler's Germany'

Gurdip Singh is a 30-year old physics teacher from Wolverhampton. Six weeks ago he made the mistake of inadvertently driving through a No-Entry sign. He was stopped by a police officer, PC Branwell, and breathalysed. When the test proved negative, Branwell told Singh 'that's not bloody good enough'. Forced to take a second test, which was also negative, Singh was arrested for 'failing to produce a breathalyser test'. When Singh's passenger Mr Baines protested, he was grabbed by one of the officers and warned, 'Mind your own fucking business unless you want to be arrested as well'.

Agony

Branwell grabbed Singh around the neck in a stranglehold. 'He was squeezing and twisting my neck so violently that I couldn't breathe. I heard Mr Baines shout "You're choking him". But the officer wouldn't listen. Mr Baines shouted again, "Can't you see he's gone all red in the face. You're choking him". All this time PC Branwell was tightening his grip around my neck. I managed to loosen his grip just enough to say "I can't breathe. He's strangling me". But the grip tightened even more and I was jumped on by several other officers. Both myself and Mr Baines were bundled into the panda car.'

The panda car was driven at high speed to Birmingham New Road police station. 'PC Branwell kept squeezing and twisting my neck. I was so terrified that he was going to break my neck and kill me.' At the station the two men were dragged out of the car. Singh was pinned against the wall. 'The driver of the panda car came back, held me under the chin and said "Shut up you fucking wimp we've had enough of you tonight. We don't want any more bother from you, understand?"'.

'Simultaneously he struck my head against the brick wall.

'Inside the duty sergeant shouted "What is your name?" I replied

"Gurdip Singh". Then he said "Don't fucking mess about tell us your other name as well". I replied "There's no other name". Then he said "Tell us your fucking surname. Come on. Come on. Tell us your fucking surname". Singh asked to make a phone call. 'The sergeant replied "Shut your fucking mouth you wimp, you're not entitled to anything. Just do what we fucking say". At that moment the driver of the car began to tug at my partially unzipped jacket and repeatedly punched me in the abdomen. PC Branwell and PC Yeoman hit me about the head and face. As I raised my arms to protect my face, I was punched on my right arm and felt a tight grip on my testicles. I screamed in agony and felt the pain right up to my navel.

Horried

'I was placed in a cell without being able to make a phone call and kept there for several hours.' Eventually, Singh was allowed to phone his wife. 'Even while I was making the phone call the sergeant was taunting me, saying "Jaldi,

jaldi, hurry up!". He said this repeatedly while I was talking to my wife. I was taken to the interview room and questioned. All the time PC Branwell was laughing in my face and saying "This is great, carry on I love it". I refused to sign what was written down by PC Yeoman—he was with PC Branwell—because it was incomplete and large gaps had been left between words and lines.

'It was quarter to five when we finally came out of the police station. I was hurting all over my upper body. But my neck, abdomen and right arm hurt the most. I was frightened, trembling, totally disgusted and horrified by the whole experience.

'I felt like a Jew would have felt in Hitler's Germany during the Second World War.

'My friend Mr Baines was also hit several times and both my brother and Mr Baines were intimidated into signing false and incomplete interview sheets. After they heard me screaming after the beating they just wanted to get out of there and they signed anything they were asked to sign.'

Hooligans

Singh was released in the early hours of the morning, but not before being told by an inspector that if his officers had been serious about beating him up 'they would have used their truncheons and there would have been blood on the floor'. He has been charged with going through a No-Entry sign, resisting arrest and failing to provide a breathalyser sample. 'I can't believe that such savage hooligans are allowed to wear the uniform of officers of the law and get away with such brutality. I'm still taking painkillers and some medicine to calm me down. I can't sleep at night.'

In January 1989 Gurdip Singh was found guilty on all charges. His case confirms that the police in Wolverhampton now feel they have a free hand to terrorise the black community.

'I was placed in a cell without being able to make a phone call and kept there for several hours'

Immigration, nationality and racism in Britain



In August 1988 the Conservative government introduced new immigration rules which have, in effect, taken away the right to appeal against deportation. Other alterations further tightened the restrictions placed on the right of immigrants to claim income support, unemployment benefit, housing benefit, or indeed any state-funded support. Many anti-racists, while opposing such attacks, fail to comprehend the importance of immigration legislation in enforcing racial prejudice, and so underestimate the importance of opposing all immigration controls if an anti-racist movement is to be built. In this extract from *Under Siege* Keith Thompson illustrates how the issue of immigration was skilfully used to create a racist consensus in Britain during the fifties and sixties

Party-political unanimity on the need for immigration control is the central, if unnoticed, backdrop to racial violence in Britain today.

Some of the current Conservative government's very first moves following its election on 11 June 1987, were to disclose that a new immigration act would soon make bringing a second wife to Britain illegal, to prevent new immigrants from claiming social security, and to deny them unemployment benefit or access to public housing. Thus were polygamy and scrounging explicitly associated with black people and deemed problems of national concern. Other black sins had previously been outlined. In the last year of her second term, Mrs Thatcher made it a legal requirement of visitors to Britain from Nigeria, Ghana, Bangladesh, Pakistan and India, that they have a visa before setting off. Why? Because without visa restrictions, hordes of blacks had apparently scurried into Britain 'on false pretenses'. To a long list of intrinsic character defects afflicting black people, mendacity was added. No charge was too outrageous to be laid at their door. The race scares of the late 1980s are the culmination of a quarter-century of state clampdowns on blacks. Before 1962 any Commonwealth citizen could settle in the UK. After that date not only settlement, but entry itself was made more and more difficult. By 1971 legislation was so restrictive that only a trickle of blacks from overseas could come and live in the UK.

Since then, successive governments have turned from keeping blacks out to controlling those already here. In the 1970s under both Conservative and Labour governments, deportations became a regular occurrence. The immigration police, dispassionately dubbed the 'Illegal Immigration Intelligence Unit' routinely demanded of black people that they produce their passports. The Intelligence Unit conducted notorious 'fishing raids' on those workplaces harbouring illegals, and encouraged housing offices, hospitals, unemployment benefit offices and academic institutions to deny services to those unable to prove their legal status as upright Britons.

In the 1980s these measures have been intensified. They have also been accompanied by a ruthless legislative and police offensive against inner-city black ghettos. It is nevertheless important to realise that longstanding bipartisan support for the basic principle of immigration control is what gives racism its current ferocity.

Today's 'neutral' official guidelines to immigration officers indicate quite clearly that their job is to repel external threats:

The function of immigration control is broadly to ensure that people who wish to come to the United Kingdom from abroad are admitted only in such numbers and for such purposes as are consistent with the national interest. In detail the objectives of the control are to prevent the entry of people who are personally unacceptable, for example because of a criminal record, to protect the resident labour force and to keep the rate of immigration within limits at which it will not give rise to serious social problems.'

The ground-rules by which British politicians operate have for years differed little from those applied at Dover or Heathrow. In the 1987 general election campaign, all three main parties called for immigration control to be continued. Labour's manifesto wanted it 'firm but fair'; so did the Conservative manifesto. It is true that certain Labour MPs had, before the election, opposed some deportations and objected to certain legislative clauses on immigration control. But to the principle of control there was no objection.

In an otherwise divided Britain, there was complete consensus about the need to keep black people out. Everybody agreed that bringing more blacks in would be to invite more lawlessness, unemployment and inner-city aggravation. How, though, did such an unwholesome but monolithic state of opinion come about? Here we need a little history.

'Pros' and 'antis', 1946-62

As early as 1946, when there were only 25 000 black people in Britain, Labour home secretary Chuter Ede told a cabinet committee that he would be much happier if foreign immigration 'could be limited to entrants from the Western countries, whose traditions and social background were more nearly equal to our own'. Two years later, when a boat-load of West Indians landed on the *Empire Windrush*, a Labour MP told the commons: 'I hope no encouragement is given to others to follow their example.' In 1950 the Labour government concluded that 'serious difficulties would arise if this immigration of coloured people from British colonial possessions were to continue or to increase'. It duly set up a cabinet committee to stop the rot. When the committee reported, it made the following point about blacks overseas:

'The social services in the UK, particularly the right of which (sic) any destitute person can avail himself under the National Assistance Act, must inevitably act as a considerable attraction. We recognise that a very large increase in such migration in the future might produce a situation in the UK rendering legislation for its control essential.'

Here is a logic quite seminal in its significance. Blacks in the third world are poor and so want to take advantage of Britain's more plentiful resources; these resources are finite; therefore legislative controls against immigration are essential.

It is this 'finite resources' logic that forms the kernel of the racist worldview. First promulgated by Labour figures, it was even taken up throughout the years in which manpower shortages made the recruitment of black immigrants to British jobs a vital necessity. In 1954, when secret discussions on this issue took place inside the Conservative cabinet, secretary of state for the colonies Alan Lennox Boyd sent a memo emphasising that 'it is virtually certain that this government, or its successor, will be driven by events to enact legislation controlling the immigration of British subjects from overseas'. To clarify that it was black people in the firing-line, the cabinet actively considered formal discrimination against black people in employment. Home secretary Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe concluded, however, that this would be impossible. Instead, control at the point of entry was considered more realistic. Although Conservative leaders were reluctant to make race an issue, the secretary of state for Commonwealth relations, Lord Swinton, accepted that

the basis for any future legislation could only be racist:

'I appreciate the force of the contention that, if we are to legislate for restrictions on the entry of British subjects and their employment here, the legislation should be non-discriminatory in form. This will not, however, conceal the fact that the problem with which we are in fact concerned is that of coloured immigrants from colonial territories.'

To emphasise the racism underpinning the discussion, a paper on the recruitment of blacks to the civil service, written by chancellor of the exchequer Rab Butler, admitted the existence of informal colour bars in that sector. Butler noted that blacks only worked in the lowest grades of the service, and that among an overall total of 46 000 applications for posts in 1952, only six blacks were successful. Butler concluded, therefore, that there was no need for a formal bar: it would involve 'difficulties' that were 'out of all proportion to any practical advantage'. Anyway, that a ban was operating would become public knowledge—or so he argued.

Although not in government, Labour was in accord with the Conservatives' subtle approach. Its contribution was to make a case for racism on behalf of the white working class. In 1955, south London's Labour-controlled Lambeth council argued that it was because of this constituency that West Indians would, in effect, just have to wait before they got decent housing:

'If we put the immigrants into council property, then it must be to the detriment of the people of Lambeth who have been waiting for houses for many years.'

In 1957 five London Labour MPs followed up by forcing a parliamentary debate on housing and immigration. While spokesmen for the Conservative government of the day, being conscious of the employers' continued need for extra hands, called for no change to Britain's long tradition of letting Commonwealth citizens 'come and go as they please', the debate Labour initiated reinforced the view that immigrants were to blame for London's post-war housing shortage.

It only took the succeeding year's anti-black riots in Notting Hill for doubts about Britain's capacity to take more immigrants to spread further. The Conservative Party conference of 1958 swung round in favour of immigration control. In addition, Notting Hill's local Labour MP used the riots to mount a public denunciation of blacks: 'Some West Indians' he said, 'make no effort to adapt themselves to the way of life here.... Naturally there is resentment that West Indians can buy homes here'.

Racism was out in the open air, but the need for more black labour made immigration controls a non-starter. In the 1959 general election, immigration did not become an issue: in Notting Hill, for example, Oswald Mosley lost his deposit. It was not until 1961 that laws banning immigrants were drawn up, and not till 1962 that they came into effect.

Two factors gave rise to this policy shift. First, in the brief economic crisis of 1957, unemployment increased and unskilled workers were no longer in scarce supply. As black unemployment shot up, importing foreign labour became less urgent.

Second, politicians now saw an asset in the groundswell of nationalist hostility to blacks. The Conservatives recognised that tightening up on immigration was a gambit that could distract popular attention from their poor performance in government. Here Enoch Powell's transition was symptomatic. Between the 1950s and the 1960s, Powell moved from quiet ministerial duties recruiting Caribbean workers to dramatic speeches predicting 'rivers of blood' if immigration was not checked.

At this juncture, however, there was still no real consensus about the urgency of halting immigration. Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell could still oppose controls out of nostalgia for Empire: the Conservatives, he argued, were 'betraying the Commonwealth'. The *Daily Express*, not renowned for its liberal attitudes, concurred. Its headline: 'Labour spoke for the Empire.'

Yet, underneath their differences, both 'pros' and 'antis' on immigration control saw black people as second class citizens. The 'pros' wanted to keep blacks out; the 'antis' wanted them to stay, but as part of a cheap labour force. The dispute on the issue of immigration disguised the unanimous verdict that black and white were not, could not, and should not be equal. This was to have profound consequences over the next 10 years.

The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act made the state directly responsible for enforcing racial oppression. Race now took its place at the centre of national political life. The act made Britain's race relations atmosphere restrictive, but arranged for ministry of labour entry vouchers to be issued to those blacks whose skills were needed.

The act for the first time gave immigration officers the right to refuse admission. Ownership of a UK passport no longer guaranteed right of entry into the UK. Citizens of the New Commonwealth (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and the West Indies) could no longer enter Britain without a voucher. Thus, at a stroke were more than 300m British citizens in the third world shut out. In degrading style, the 1962 Act instigated three types of voucher: 'A' for skilled workers, 'B' for the semi-skilled and 'C' for the unskilled.

From this point on, black people inside Britain found their lives going from bad to worse.

The 1960s: Labour governments reinforce the consensus on the need for controls

It was not until 1964 that Labour came to accept the need for immigration control. Like all immigration controls, the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act endowed racism with respectability. It brought to the fore concerns about the threat posed by immigration, and encouraged hard-line racists to take things further. Those who in 1962 opposed immigration control were soon isolated: for the great majority of the British population, the need for control was no longer at issue.

One of the key moments in Labour's transformation was the 1964 by-election at Smethwick, in which the sitting Labour MP, Patrick Gordon-Walker, lost to a Conservative and the catchy slogan: 'If you want a nigger for a neighbour, vote Labour.' Gordon-Walker was an odd target: he was certainly not famous for upholding the rights of his black constituents. In 1954 he had joined with other Labour MPs in calling for immigration controls. Once, he was asked about the 1962 Act. He replied:

'This is a British country with British standards of behaviour. The British must come first.'

Gordon-Walker's defeat sent an electric shock through the Labour leadership. Roy Hattersley, defender of free immigration until 1964, won applause from Conservative backbenchers when he admitted his errors in 1965:

'Looking back on the original act which limited the entry of Commonwealth citizens into this country I feel that the Labour Party of that time should have supported it....I make this point with no great joy because I was a passionate opponent of the act.'

Shortly after the Smethwick debacle, Labour was returned to office. One of the opening gambits of the new government was to renew the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. Harold Wilson was unambiguous about the matter. He went so far as to suggest that Labour had never been in favour of free immigration: 'We accept, and have always accepted...that we must have an effective control whatever we have.'

By 1964 Labour was irrevocably committed to immigration controls. The diaries of Richard Crossman, a senior member of Wilson's cabinet, confirm this point. In 1961, Crossman was proud that Labour had led the fight against the government's Immigration Bill. By 1964, however, he had changed his thinking. In that year he noted, with characteristic candour, that immigration could be 'the greatest potential vote loser' if the Labour Party were 'seen to be permitting a flood of immigrants to come in and blight the central areas of our cities'.

In 1965 the Labour government set about proving that it was strongly concerned about black immigration and that it would act firmly to stop it. The 1965 white paper *Immigration from the Commonwealth* cut the number of entry vouchers issued each year from the Conservatives' 30 000 to Labour's preferred figure: 7500, plus 1000 for Maltese. This was done by abolishing 'C' vouchers for the unskilled. Once again, Crossman's comments about the underlying motives for Labour's actions are revealing. In the 1966 general election Labour won back some of the votes in the West Midlands it had, in 1964, lost to racist Conservative candidates. Writing in the wake of his party's success at the

polls, Crossman had this to say about preventing more than 20 000 Commonwealth citizens from enjoying their rights, and continuing with Conservative obstacles to the entry of millions of others:

'This has been one of the most difficult and unpleasant jobs the government has had to do. We have become illiberal and lowered quotas at a time when we have an acute shortage of labour....Nevertheless I am convinced that if we hadn't done this we would have been faced with certain electoral defeat in the West Midlands and the South East. Politically, fear of immigration is the most powerful under-tow today.'

The only principle driving Labour on the race issue was opportunism. In 1968, it had yet another chance to show its colours. That year the Kenyan-Asian 'crisis' erupted. The arrival of several thousand British Asians from Kenya led Conservative backbenchers to mount a vitriolic anti-immigrant campaign. Desperate to prevent blacks coming into Britain, civil servants made a series of anxious but unsuccessful visits to Kenya. When it became clear that their efforts had failed, the Labour Party panicked, drew up the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, and rushed it through parliament in just three days. In a landmark decision, Labour enforced a tight quota on the entry of British Asians from Kenya—because they were Asians. The *Times* commented:

'The Labour Party now has a new ideology. It does not any longer profess to believe in the equality of man. It does not even believe in the equality of British citizens. It believes in the equality of white British citizens.'

The significance of the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act was that it implicitly introduced the concept of patriality. Kenyan Asians were excluded, formally because their parents or grandparents had not been born in the UK, but in practice because they were black. A citizen of the UK and Colonial Territories, as defined by the 1948 Nationality Act, became subject to immigration control unless he could show that he, or at least one parent or grandparent had been born in the United Kingdom. Even then a voucher for entry was a necessity for most.

For the first time, the place of birth of the immigrant, his parents and his grandparents became a legal matter. Unless 'British blood' could be proved, the immigrant could not be assured of getting into the United Kingdom. The whole legal apparatus clearly favoured white Commonwealth citizens (Australians, Canadians, etc), and just as clearly excluded black ones from the third world.

Labour had earlier joined the Conservative-led racist consensus on immigration legislation. Now it became an architect of that consensus in its own right. By the time of the 1970 general election, race no longer divided the two major parties. It was not debated at the polls.

What we stand for

- ☐ Opposition to all forms of racial discrimination
- ☐ An end to all immigration controls
- ☐ Direct action against racist attacks
- ☐ An independent anti-racist movement with no links to the police, local or central government

Please send donations to:
WAR, BM WAR,
London WC1N 3XX

**Police arrest
race attack
victim**

'Where is the justice in Britain?'



The Kandials—victims of police racism

When Edwin asked the police why they were not arresting the louts who had attacked his wife and knocked him out, they told him to 'piss off'

Lily and Edwin Kandial, their son David, his girlfriend Sandra, and three friends went out to enjoy one of London's famous Thames boat trips. They hoped to spend a few hours on the river, have a quiet drink and a dance. Unfortunately for them four racists made the same journey. They followed the Kandials everywhere, abusing them. 'Pakis get everywhere', they told the other revellers. 'You get a better class of company in McDonald's.'

Edwin chose to ignore the remarks and made every effort to enjoy his family's night out. The racists had other ideas. They followed Edwin to the dance floor and began to make a nuisance of themselves, bumping into the girls among the group and pretending it was all an accident. This was how the evening went throughout.

It was some relief to the family when the boat finally docked. But the Kandials' problems had just begun. When they went to get a taxi, the racists followed, taunting them, shouting 'Fucking Pakis, fucking poofs'. 'Why are you doing this?' asked Mrs Kandial. One of the racists smacked her across the face. He then took a swing at Edwin and knocked him unconscious.

By the time Edwin came around some minutes later, no less than 30 police had arrived. But someone had forgotten to tell them that the Met is now an 'anti-racist' organisation. They pounced on David and arrested him for causing actual bodily harm to one of the white youths. The supposedly injured racist was sitting on a nearby wall, smoking a cigarette with a smirk on his face. After taking David to Cannon Row police station, the

police raised the charge to the more serious one of causing grievous bodily harm.

When Edwin asked the police why they were not arresting the louts who had attacked his wife and knocked him out, they told him to 'piss off'.

After going to hospital, Edwin went to bail his son out and to make a statement about the incident. The police told him they weren't interested in his statement, refused to let him see David, and manhandled him out of the station. David was detained for more than 14 hours.

'My son is being charged with an offence which I consider to be totally unjust' says Edwin. 'He was just trying to save me from being beaten to death by this gang. Yet, when the police arrived on the scene, out of all the crowd they arrested him and him alone. Tell me where is the justice, is this not racial prejudice?'

The message from the police seems to be 'if you're black, it's a crime not to allow yourself to be beaten by racists'. Workers Against Racism is demanding that all charges be dropped, and will be fighting to ensure that the police don't get away with this frame-up.

'Nigger-hunting' in Liverpool 8

'What the police are doing', says Margaret Pinnington, 'is using the law as a form of internment'. Pinnington is coordinator of the Liverpool 8 Law Centre. The law she refers to is the 1986 Public Order Act. And the internees are the people of Granby, the heart of Liverpool's black community.

For a year, police have used Granby in a controlled experiment to test out the Public Order Act. More than 20 people now face trial on charges of 'violent disorder' under Section 3 of the act. In every case the scenario is the same: police raid the area and harass young blacks on the street (provocative high-speed car chases through Granby, with police vehicles mounting the pavement and scattering passers-by, are favoured), and then slap charges of 'violent disorder' on anybody who protests, or simply happens to be around.

In December 1987, Leroy Thomas watched a police chase through Granby. He complained to a senior officer and was invited to report to the police station the next day to make an official complaint. When he turned up, the police charged him with 'violent disorder'. An all-white jury took 10 minutes to find him guilty. He was sent down for two years. Delroy Burris is a local community leader who faces two 'violent disorder' charges. The first arose from a complaint about a car chase in Granby Street. The second time he merely noted the registration number of a police van involved in a raid. 'Open your mouth', says Burris, 'and it's violent disorder'.

The police make little attempt to hide the fact that they are creating South African 'township' style policing in Liverpool 8. 'If the people in Granby Street want apartheid', inspector Dunne from Admiral Street police station warns, 'they can have it'. As the Public Order Act is used to pick up young blacks at whim, so the Operational Support Division (OSD) is deployed to put the fear of God into the whole community. The OSD is a paramilitary unit, specialising in what it politely calls 'nigger-hunting'.

Tommy Mende was driving home with two friends through Granby late one night in November when riot vans drew up on either side. An officer pulled

open the car door and announced 'We are the OSD and we're nigger-hunting tonight'. The police pulled Mende out of the car and beat him. 'They were stamping on me, throttling me and one put his gloved finger in my eyes. There was racial abuse all the time: "You're niggers, we're the OSD."'

By the time he arrived at Admiral Street police station, Mende had passed out. He was then taken to casualty at the Royal Liverpool Hospital. The police waited for him to regain consciousness. 'I saw three officers at the end of the trolley. They rushed me, pushed me on my belly, handcuffed, with my legs on the floor and jammed my legs in the metal sides of the bed. They drew the curtain and started punching me. I was on the floor for an hour and a half.' Mende has been charged with 'abusive and threatening behaviour' under Section 4 of the Public Order Act.

The OSD travel in numbers and sweep through Granby like a marauding army. They wear special uniforms, with no numbers on their jackets or on their vans. 'Scared?' asks a black youth who last month was acquitted at Liverpool Crown Court of a 'violent disorder' charge: 'Of course we're scared.'

The Granby 'experiment' shows the growing sophistication of inner-city policing since the street disturbances of 1981. The authorities have tailored the law to suit their needs and have evolved an operational structure to take advantage of it. The Public Order Act was the product of a six-year home office review of lessons learnt from the street disturbances of 1979, 1981 and 1985, and industrial disputes including the miners' strike. The main feature of the act is its flexibility. 'Violent disorder' is defined as anything that would 'cause a person of reasonable firmness' to 'fear for his safety'. The police don't have to show that anybody was put in fear, merely that had a suitably panicky person been there they would have been scared. Nor is it necessary for those accused to have done anything; the threat to do something which would cause somebody (not necessarily present) to fear for their safety is sufficient.

The police have reorganised to make full use of this open-ended

law and to minimise opposition. Merseyside police chief Kenneth Oxford set up the OSD shortly after the 1981 disturbances. Oxford is an advocate of 'positive policing'. During the riots he ordered police vans to charge crowds and officers to fire CS rounds at point-blank range. A young disabled man, David Moore, was crushed to death by a police landrover. Many were injured by the tear-gas canisters. 'It is the only way I can protect them from themselves', Oxford explained. The OSD carry on this fine altruistic tradition today.

To complement 'positive policing', Oxford also set up the 'Toxteth Section' based at Granby's Hope Street police station, to implement 'community policing'. Hope Street officers are selected and trained 'to be aware of the need for a carefully controlled and graded response to incidents'. They have established links with local groups, particularly the Toxteth Activities group and the Community Forums and have been invaluable in gathering intelligence on the local community. Lawyers and race relations professionals complain that the activities of OSD destroy the painstaking work of the Toxteth Section in building good links with the community. In fact there is very good cooperation between the two police sections. The canteen at Hope Street station contains a gallery of black faces who've been 'clocked' on the street. Beat officers and the OSD rendezvous at the corner of Princes Park before any operation. Almost all officers giving evidence at the current public order trials come from Hope Street.

The police have become more sophisticated in their use of propaganda to legitimise their activities. Despite the fact that F Division (which includes Liverpool 8) is third from bottom in the local league for 'theft against the person', the 'black mugger' remains a powerful image. Even more important is the way the police have exploited the drugs panic. Until a year ago, the only drug in Granby was ganja. Now a small group of hard-drug dealers operate there. Locals say the police tolerate, and even encourage their presence to win public backing for raids.

The local media only accept as fact events that have been authenticated by the police; if Oxford doesn't give the nod, the incident hasn't happened. This allows the police to throw a blanket of silence over Granby and to isolate the black community within the city. The police have not only contained opposition in Granby, but rendered their own activities largely invisible.

Under Siege: Racial violence in Britain today

Jeff Page, editor of the Polytechnic of North London's students' magazine, *Fuse*, critically reviews WAR organiser Keith Tompson's Penguin Special. In the next issue we want to know what you think. Write in and let us know

In a concise and accessible book Keith Tompson examines and describes the symptoms of racism in British society and offers his prescription for opposing it. The book works because it is both an empirical and detailed account of day to day harassment and an ideological polemic which argues for methods of effectively countering racism rather than despairing at its prevalence.

The harrowing case studies the author recounts at the beginning of the book are certainly enough to tempt despair. We are told of the experiences of the Saddique family, living in a state of siege in the East End of London. For the past six years the Saddiques have been forced to barricade themselves in their home, receiving no constructive help of any kind from the police, two successive Labour MPs—Arthur Lewis and Tony Banks, or from the council.

Extracts from Nasreen Saddique's diary read like a modern-day equivalent of Anne Frank's, a catalogue of violence and intimidation directed against her family. An extract from 4 November 1985 reads, 'they kick our van and start swearing at us and threaten us saying, "We are going to put petrol down your letterbox"'. Nasreen's correspondence with Lewis and Banks are a stream of pleas for help from her which are palmed off by referring her to the police, rather in the manner of throwing a shipwreck victim a lead weight.

Nasreen and her family turned to East London Workers Against Racism (ELWAR), when all official avenues had been exhausted. They offered the type of aid the Saddiques needed—deeds rather than misplaced words. ELWAR lent their physical presence to the Saddiques by camping on their floor. John Pilger in his introduction to the book believes that this timely intervention may have saved the lives of the Saddique family.

The case of the Saddiques is merely one of those that Tompson relates in *Under Siege*. One of the more important points to glean from his descriptions is that most racist attacks are not carried out by Britain's tiny organised fascist groups but by ordinary racists.

Our attention is drawn to the racism endemic in the police force and the legal system. There is a full analysis of the events of October 1985 on north London's Broadwater Farm estate. The death of Mrs Cynthia Jarrett at the hands of the police, the subsequent disturbances and the death of PC Keith Blakelock are all recounted. The framings of Winston Silcott, Engin Raghup and Mark Braithwaite are dissected—the police and courts are tried and found guilty. Further accounts of the deaths of Clinton McCurbin in Wolverhampton's Next shop whilst being 'arrested,' and of Colin Roach in Stoke Newington police station, make for grim reading.

These symptoms of the racist epidemic are starkly portrayed, what then is their motivation? The author argues that racism does not occur in a vacuum but that violence against non-whites in Britain is sanctioned largely by immigration controls that scapegoat black people as being a 'problem'. The consensus that Labour and Conservative governments have reached on immigration controls is blamed, as are the post-war trade union leaders with their mouthings about immigration creating increased competition for jobs. The white working class has thus been led to believe that non-whites are in some way a threat.

Tompson attacks the 'common-sense' notion that racism is in some way 'natural' and points to the rise of the nation state and the need of Britain to become a colonial power. Using black people as cheap labour and denying them basic rights in modern Britain is a direct implementation of the colonial situation within Britain itself.

The conventional wisdom of 'natural' racism is placed under the microscope. Specific reference is made to a book investigating attitudes towards black GIs based in Britain during World War Two.

'One West Country farmer was reported as saying: "I love the Americans but I don't like those white ones they've brought with them". Pubs were said to display signs reading "For British and coloured Americans only".'

People are not therefore innately racist, it is the climate created by the needs of British capital and its political wing in Westminster that propagates a racist atmosphere. Parliamentary legislation sees its logical conclusion in the racist arson attack.

The attempts made by the municipal socialists to deal with racism come under fierce attack in *Under Siege*. By attempting to bring black militants into town hall quangos and making them part of the system the municipal socialists have taken the edge off the radicalism of the black community. The proliferation of poster campaigns and paper policies has done nothing to stem the rising tide of racist violence.

However, on one issue, that of multi-cultural education, Tompson should be taken to task. Although it is true that the school is not an island and that children, upon leaving the classroom, are immediately open to other influences, the genuine attempts by school teachers to inculcate anti-racism do not deserve our derision. As long as we remain aware of the limitations of anti-racism in the school, it must afford our full support.

The book concludes with the chapter 'A new anti-racist movement', which should be a source of optimism for all anti-racists in Britain today. Here we have positive steps that can be taken to fight racism. This is where the book raises itself head and shoulders above the usual intellectual left discourse. The strategy is a clear one, the building of a mass anti-racist movement, committed to the defence of black people in the community and at work by confronting the issues in an uncompromising way. The argument to have with working class whites is that racism is not in their interests—a government attack on black people's civil liberties inevitably leads to an encroachment on the rights of working class whites. Desperately needed is a campaign against ALL immigration controls, a major source of racism in Britain. *Under Siege* not only needs to be read—it needs to be acted upon.

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WARnews

Let us know your views
on the bulletin, or an
aspect of WAR's work

Join the fight against racism

Build Workers Against Racism

Workers Against Racism has never been more active. This much is clear from the cases covered in the bulletin in your hand. There has never been a better time to take the plunge and join up.

WAR was founded in east London in 1979. The motivation was the rise in the number of racist attacks and the failure of the anti-racist movement to effectively organise against them. From this small beginning as a campaign sponsored by the Revolutionary Communist Party, WAR is now a nationwide campaign. We have branches in the following towns and cities:

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KEITH TOMPSON

UNDER SIEGE

RACIAL VIOLENCE IN BRITAIN

With an introduction by John Pilger



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