

HOW CAN WE BEAT PATEL'S BORDER BILL

We need a united front to stop criminalisation of refugees

The Tories' new nationality and borders bill represents "the biggest legal assault on international refugee law ever seen in the UK", according to a legal report compiled by human rights group Freedom From Torture.

The purpose of the bill is to intensify the hostile environment for migrants and asylum seekers, making it harder to claim asylum, criminalising those who arrive by 'illegal' routes, and strengthening the power of police and courts to deport those whose claims are rejected.

Asylum seekers who survive the channel crossing in a small boat can have their application automatically rejected, face four years in prison, be barred from receiving public funds, and have their family members banned from joining them.

These are just some of the draconian new measures, including collective punishment of relatives who have committed no offence, that makes criminalisation and deportation the principle of government immigration policy.

More than a decade of Tory governments has intensified state violence against migrants

arriving in Britain. Theresa May's 'Go Home' vans were only the tip of a sophisticated and pervasive border regime that has expanded from ports and airports to public services and working class communities.

Dawn raids, detention without trial, and deportation charter flights largely operated by private security companies are the frontline of Priti Patel's war on migrants. But under cover of this war, a surveillance state is being created which turns NHS hospitals into ID checkpoints, landlords into border guards, teachers into counter-extremism agents, and working-class communities into targets raided by UKBA thugs.

The Tories are pushing this anti-refugee law and order agenda both from ideological conviction and a need to demonstrate a Brexit dividend. But the new laws build on the detention and 'no recourse to public funds' policies instituted by consecutive Labour governments.

RACISM

All immigration laws are racist. They are designed to stop people of colour coming here and to terrorise those who do. All such controls are aimed at

blaming racism on black people by perpetuating the idea that there are "too many" here, others must be kept out, and those who are here are really "foreigners".

The UK's policy of stigmatising asylum seekers as "bogus" has been consistent since the 1930s, when it barred Jews fleeing Nazi Germany from entry because they were "bogus" applicants for refugee status.

The rich, and their money, move freely all around the world, while workers are separated from our families and subjected to humiliating, intrusive, and violent restrictions. Revolutionary socialists stand for open borders and the scrapping of all immigration laws and the disbanding of civil and police immigration units.

RESISTANCE

Despite the government's rhetoric and exponential spending on deterrence, refugees and migrants driven to seek safety will always beat their border regime. People resist immigration raids; others fight deportation. There are detainee support groups across the country. Migrant workers

have organised against the bosses – and won. More than ever, a mass movement against the border regime seems possible.

Since the Yarl's Wood uprising of 2002, which saw half of the centre permanently destroyed only months after it opened, detention centres have been sites of struggle against the barbaric conditions and denial of basic human rights. The pandemic has not stopped the tide of struggle. In January, migrants housed in 'temporary accommodation' went on hunger strike against the degrading and unsafe conditions at Kent barracks.

Parallel to this is the struggle on the streets. In May this year, hundreds of Glaswegians prevented a UKBA immigration raid on a tenement. Elsewhere, groups like the Stop Deportation Network have blockaded detention centres to prevent the forced removal of refugees. In London, the Anti-Raids Network continues to raise the alarm on raids. Direct action grabs the headlines, but behind the scenes there is a host of migrant solidarity organisations, supporting detainees or preventing deportation in the courts.

And this combination of direct, legal and community action gets results. Recent examples include Osime Brown, a 22-year-old man with autism who was due to be deported to Jamaica – a country he left aged four. After a concerted campaign in the courts and streets, the Home Office was forced to cancel his deportation.

Whether in Glasgow or

London, victories against the border regime are always the result of united action. But sadly, these victories are rare and localised. Beating the border regime, not only in individual cases, but at its root in anti-migrant politics, means organising on a class-wide basis to deny and disrupt the operation of the hostile environment, and to repeal all immigration laws.

The immediate priority is to kill Patel's borders bill. We need a united front of anti-racist, migrant solidarity and detainee support groups, alongside trade unions and allied Labour organisations, to organise meetings, demonstrations and action against the bill.

To do this we need to campaign within the mass organisations of the working class – the trade unions and Labour Party – for a programme of refugee and migrant solidarity based on class struggle and internationalism.

This means

- Direct action, including strikes and occupations, to stop raids and deportations and close down the detention centres.
- No cooperation with Immigration Enforcement, UKBA and Prevent in the workplace.
- No two-tier asylum system: automatic asylum and citizenship rights for all claimants.
- Trade union action and boycotts to stop racist media harassment of minority groups.
- Community self-defence against racist police harassment and immigration raids.

WHO WE ARE

We are a revolutionary communist organisation fighting to replace capitalism with workers' power and international socialism.

- Our goal is communism: a society liberated from exploitation, oppression and war through the abolition of the class system.
- We organise a **revolutionary tendency inside the Labour Party** in order to oppose its reformist leadership and promote an anticapitalist programme.
- We campaign to **democratise the trade unions through a rank and file movement** which dissolves the unelected bureaucracy, and fights for workers' control of production.
- **We oppose all forms of discrimination** based on race, age, disability, sex or sexual orientation. We oppose all immigration controls and support black self-defence against racist and state attacks.
- We **unconditionally support** all those fighting against imperialism or national oppression, while fighting for socialist, not nationalist, leadership of those struggles. We are for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all British troops from Ireland and overseas bases. Britain out of Nato. Replace the standing army with a workers' militia.
- Against the dictatorship of capital **we stand for a society based on common ownership and democratic planning.** The bosses will never allow their wealth and privilege to be voted away. **That's why we fight for revolution and workers' power.**
- At the core of our strategy is the building of fighting organisations of the working class - factory committees, industrial unions, councils of action, and workers' defence organisations.
- We are internationalists and members of the **British section of the League for the Fifth International**, an organisation fighting to build a new world party of socialist revolution.

If you agree with what we stand for - join us!

workers power