

PRESS STATEMENT: FROM ANWAR DITTA DEFENCE COMMITTEE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 9 P.M. 16TH MARCH, 1981.

Anwar Ditta has not seen her three children born in Pakistan, Kamran, Imran, and Saima, since April, 1975. Her husband Shuja Uddin last saw them in 1973. Anwar and Shuja applied for the children to join them in England in September, 1976.

The Home Office Adjudicator ruled in July of 1980 that Anwar and Shuja had not proved that they were the parents of the children. He made no comment as to who he believed were the parents, though previously the Entry Clearance Officer had suggested that there might be two Anwar Dittas, one in Pakistan and one in Rochdale, or that the children belonged to Jamila and Ghulam, Shuja's sister and brother in law, who already had six children of their own.

All the new evidence that it was possible to obtain within the boundaries of the United Kingdom was then collected and submitted to the Home Office by Joel Barnett M.P. on the 17th December, 1980. This new evidence comprised a report of a medical examination of Anwar Sultana Ditta, evidence relating to the authenticity of fingerprints on identity cards obtained by Anwar whilst in Pakistan, an opinion from Counsel as to the validity of the marriage between the couple in 1968, evidence from Anwar and Shuja's previous solicitors as to their dealings on behalf of the family from early 1976, family letters, an album of family photographs, and additional remittance receipts dated prior to the application for entry clearance for the children.

On the 8th January, 1981 the Home Office wrote back to say that this was not enough.

The Defence Committee then raised enough funds to send a solicitor to Pakistan who returned after 12 days with further evidence including the following:

Fourteen Affidavits from midwives, relatives, and unrelated acquaintances of the family who were able to testify to Anwar and Shuja's presence in Pakistan in 1963 to 1973/75 and as to the birth of the three children there.

Reports of interviews with staff at the schools attended by the children, and the Imam who conducted the marriage ceremony in 1968.

Certified copies of the marriage and birth certificates from Central Records.

Certified copies of the application made by Anwar in Pakistan for an identity card in December, 1973.

The original of a telegram sent in 1975 from Barking, Essex when Anwar reached England on the 17th April that year.

With the help of Granada television, Anwar and Shuja and their children have all had blood/tissue tests in a final effort to prove beyond all doubt that they are related as parent to child.

What more can the Home Office want?

Why should this family fight for six years to be re-united unless the relationship is genuine?

To what lengths must this family go?

BRING ANWAR'S CHILDREN HOME

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