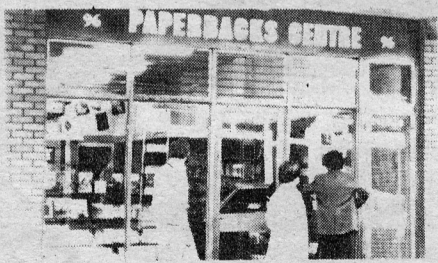




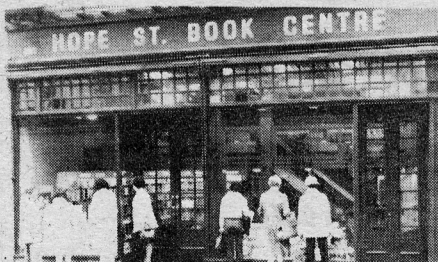
Nasira Begum standing left behind Anwar Ditta and her children after their arrival at Manchester airport. Jaswinder Kaur stands to the right. All three women are victims of Tory immigration policy

NASIRA BEGUM

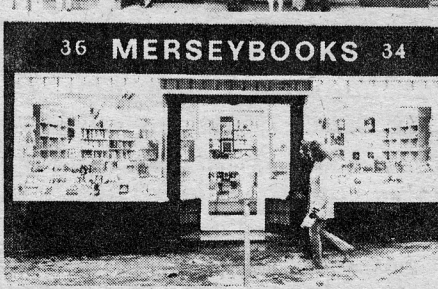
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A DECISION is expected today in an appeal which affects hundreds of women facing deportation because they are no longer dependent on their husbands.

The Home Office appeal against a July 1980 decision by a Manchester tribunal to let Nasira Begum stay in this country concludes today.

In continuing attempts to deport Nasira, the Home Office put their case at the first part of the hearing last week.

The Home Office prosecutor cast doubt upon the whole of the previous adjudicator's judgement of witnesses, instead of concentrating on points of law, which is usually the limit of an appeal to a higher tribunal like this one.

The Home Office are now claiming that Nasira knew her husband was already married when she married him in 1976.

Nasira's defence is that her husband Afzal was in fact free to marry her, and she believed him when he said he was a bachelor.

BY A NEWS LINE REPORTER

At no time until this tribunal has anyone ever suggested that Nasira was somehow conspiring with Afzal in bigamy.

When the marriage broke down, Nasira came under investigation from the Home Office because her status here was dependent on Afzal. By implying she knew Afzal was already married, the Home Office are trying to brand Nasira a criminal who deserves deportation.

The hearing adjourned last Monday as Nasira's lawyer, Steve Cohen from the Manchester Law Centre, was dealing with the legal grounds the Home Office put forward for appeal to this tribunal.

Decision

The Home Office will reply today and the three members of the tribunal will probably reach a decision shortly afterwards.

Nasira has been fighting a Home Office attempt to deport her for nearly two years and, despite the previous adjudication, they are not satisfied.

Nasira first came to this country in 1976 to

visit her eldest brother who, while she was here, arranged her marriage to a British citizen, Mohammed Afzal.

After the marriage on 3 December 1976, Afzal applied for Nasira to stay as his wife, as was her right.

Afzal deserted Nasira after three months of the marriage, but this did not affect her right to stay here.

Since then Nasira has made her own independent life and friends in this country and now lives in her own council flat in Longsight, Manchester, and works in a local Asian Women's Refuge.

The Home Office took three years to decide that they wanted to deport Nasira. Knowing that she had a right to stay here, she decided to fight the deportation threat.

She has been supported in that fight by a public defence campaign, involving thousands of people throughout the country, MPs — including her own, Gerald Kaufman — as well as trade union, religious and political organisations.

Three demonstrations have taken place to support Nasira in Manches-

ter. The most recent, at the beginning of June, drew 600 people.

Nasira's supporters have been outraged by the continued Home Office hounding. Gerald Kaufman has asked the Home Office to withdraw their appeal or to state publicly that they will allow Nasira to stay, whatever the outcome.

This they have refused to do, saying they are going ahead with the appeal to 'clarify points of law' but will 'fully review the case when the appeal decision is known'.

Refused

In December 1979 the Home Office refused Nasira leave to remain on the grounds that they were not satisfied her marriage would be regarded as valid in English law and that further they believed it was a marriage of convenience.

As Nasira disputed this statement, she remained in this country, and the Home Office subsequently sent her a 'decision to make a deportation order' in January 1980.

She appealed against this decision. At the appeal the Home Office