

# Woman wins fight to reunite her family

By Peter Evans

Home Affairs Correspondent

Privately arranged blood tests which confirmed that a Pakistani couple were related to their children have persuaded the Home Office to let them be reunited in Britain. The case has raised serious doubts about the fairness of procedures being used to screen would-be entrants to Britain.

It coincides with an outcry about Filipinos being expelled from Britain because they failed to mention they had children at home when they applied for work permits. Mr Roy Hattersley, Labour spokesman on home affairs, is to head a deputation of trade union leaders to ask Mr William Whitelaw, Home Secretary, to stop the expulsions.

The blood test was given to Mrs Anwar Ditta and her husband, who live in Rochdale, and her three children in Pakistan. She has been trying since 1973 to bring them to Britain.

Mr Timothy Raison, Minister of State at the Home Office, ended the ban after new evidence produced in the Granada television programme, *World in Action*. A doctor was taken to Pakistan to obtain blood samples from the children. Other documentary evidence was obtained and witnesses interviewed to substantiate Mrs Ditta's story.

Mrs Ditta was born in Britain and at the age of nine was sent back to Pakistan by her parents, where she married and had three children, Kamran, now aged 11, Imran, nine, and Saima, eight. She followed her husband back to Britain expecting that her children would be able to join her, but the Home Office refused to believe they were hers.

Last year the appeal tribunal rejected her plea.

Yesterday at her home, where she lives with her husband and daughter aged four, she said

she was very happy and she hoped to make arrangements for her children's arrival in the next few days.

Miss Sue Shutter, of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, said: "Anwar Ditta is one of many hundreds who are separated from their children. The Home Office should be trying to reunite families."

Two Filipino hotel workers, Mr and Mrs Arcadio Albesa, are being treated as illegal entrants because they failed to say they had a son when seeking to work in Britain eight years ago. Now aged 17, he lives in the Philippines and his parents applied for him to join them in Britain.

That led to a Home Office decision to expel them on Monday. Mr Philip Pearson, of the Transport and General Workers' Union, who is responsible for its members in the hotel industry in central London, said attempts were being made to delay the Albesas' expulsion until the delegation had seen Mr Whitelaw on March 30.

The Home Office said last night that in 80 of 198 cases of domestic and hospital workers, mainly from the Philippines, people had been removed from Britain.

The decisions were based on individual circumstances, including the person's work record and whether he or she knew of the deception practised.

The deputation is expected to argue that because of the activities of agencies in the Philippines—the Albesas paid £400 to one—the entrants were deceived rather than being deceivers. Mr Pearson said last night that almost another 100 people were awaiting Home Office decisions. Case fails: Mrs Laura Fernandes, aged 52, a Kenyan Asian facing deportation to India, where she says she has no family or friends, failed



Mrs Anwar Ditta, jubilant yesterday at the Home Office ruling that her children in Pakistan (from left), Kamran, Saima and Imran, can join her in Britain.

yesterday in the House of Lords to have her expulsion delayed pending consideration of her case by the European Commission of Human Rights (the Press Association reports).

Lord Scarman said it was extremely worrying that a woman of Mrs Fernandes's age should be going somewhere where she had no relatives or roots, but that was not some-

thing that the Law Lords could take into account.

"But I sincerely hope the Home Secretary will", he added.