

MANJIT KAUR DEFENCE CAMPAIGN

Bulletin

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Manjit is one of many black people affected by the racist Immigration Laws.

She was born in a village in the Punjab in India and was married in 1974. Her husband came to Britain two years later. He wanted Manjit to join him, and by 1979 had managed to get papers for her to do so. She only found out later there was something wrong with them.

Palbinder was born in July, 1981. By that time there were problems in the marriage, and when Palbinder was three months old, Manjit was forced to leave home.

She moved into an Asian Women's Refuge and began to receive Supplementary Benefit. After a couple of months the DHSS asked for her passport and then suspended benefit. The aim was to starve her out of the country. She was forced to put Palbinder in nursery and start working as a clothing machinist.

She received no Child benefit until 1983.

Meanwhile Manjit had moved into her own house in Ardwick, Manchester and started to rebuild her life.

In March 1983 she was interviewed by the Home Office at M/cr Airport.

At the time Palbinder had measles and a high temperature, Manjit had to take her to the interview, and no postponement was allowed. The translator spoke only bad Punjabi and more than half the interview was conducted in Hindi, a common experience for black people faced with deportation. As a result a number of mistakes were present in the Home Office evidence used in Manjit's appeal. The interview lasted over five hours.

In December, the Home Office wrote to Manjit saying she must leave the country within a month.

They mentioned nothing of her right to appeal against this, though the law provides for it. The threat of deportation hangs over thousands of black people all the time.

Now after a three year struggle to win the right to stay, her appeal has been heard on the 15th, 17th and 24th of this month.

If she were forced to leave the country, she would lose everything.

There is no work for her in India, her father is dead and her mother physically handicapped. None of her relatives would support her because they think she has disgraced the family.

They blame her for the broken marriage, taking no account of her husband's actions.

She could not live in India. Manjit would be forced to leave Palbinder here to go into Care, because of the situation for her if she were to go to India.

The stress of the situation has badly affected Manjit's health, she has been suffering from skin disease, dizzy spells which led to her falling downstairs and a number of other stress-related complaints which have forced her to take time off from work. We do not yet know if her health will recover, but the time has come for Manjit to be allowed to live peacefully as she and her friends choose.

At her Appeal, 150 people from Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Sheffield, Bradford and other places, including representatives of the Sikh Community, her workmates, friends, local councillors, her MP and concerned people protested for Manjit's right to stay. A petition containing more than 3000 signatures was handed in, telegrams and letters were received, all calling for the Adjudicator to allow Manjit's appeal. In the following weeks the Home Office will announce their decision.

HERE TO STAY HERE TO FIGHT

During the coming weeks we wait for justice to be done for our sister, Manjit.

But from previous experience of Immigration Laws we know we cannot depend on the justice of the authorities, we must continue to build the campaign.

Manjit came to this country ignorant of the injustice done in the name of Immigration control. She has like many other Black people discovered the racism of the Laws and Practice of Immigration.

Throughout her experience she has made many friends, and through speaking to us has given us the anger and determination to fight for her right to stay in this country. A struggle which many campaigns around the country are fighting daily.

In recent months her health has got worse. Nothing can give back Manjit and Palbinder what has been taken from them, we do not know if her health will recover, and the scars of her experience will always remain.

In the coming weeks, the Adjudicator and the Home Office will make the decision on whether she can stay or not. People must still be told of Manjit, of what she has suffered from the hands of the Racist State, and how they can help her win her fight.

You can Help her. Get in touch with the campaign, sending your name, address and telephone no. We will contact you and let you know what we are doing.

Introduction.

In November 1982 Manjit sent a statement to the Home Office outlining what she knew of her entry to this country, asking them to exercise compassion and allow her to stay.

The Home Office interviewed her and decided to proceed with her deportation. In July this year, they sent details of their case against her.

This report is an account of Manjit's story which is essentially right, though it's tone casts doubt on Manjit's evidence and motives for wishing to stay. It also states that Manjit and Palbinder, a British citizen, would have no hardship living in India, despite Manjit's own statements about what she would face.

The Adjudicator

When people are faced with deportation, they are allowed an appeal to a Home Office appointed Adjudicator, who will go over the evidence of the case and reach a decision. In less than 5% of cases are appeals successful. Their sole purpose is to put an acceptable face on the continued harrassment of black people by the State.

Inside the Court

There was room for 22 people in the court to observe proceedings. Throughout the three days of the hearing these have been filled, with many of us changing around through the day.

The pickets outside the court on the 15th was expressing their support for Manjit when, the

Adjudicator adjourned the hearing and threatened to stop it if these protests were not silenced. He claimed that he had never known such pressure at an appeal in his ten years experience. There is no room in these procedures for our protests.

The picket was maintained outside throughout the day and a spontaneous march up to the Town Hall was held at lunch-time.

For most of Monday, Manjit was questioned by her lawyer about her case. The type of questioning she was forced to undergo was an interrogation, a vicious attack on her.

Manjit's doctor gave evidence about her health stating her present illnesses were based on the natural stress caused by the threat of deportation. She outlined the position Manjit would face in India, as a social outcast.

At this point, the Home Office were asked to withdraw their case in view of the strong medical evidence so far. This request was denied.

Bob Litherland, MP, was the next witness and he presented the petition and many letters supporting Manjit. He outlined the extent of her support and said it was exceptionally large.

Manjit's questioning continued. It was rigorous and conducted with the aid of a male interpreter, whose translations were at times nonsensical.

On the 17th October when we arrived, the police were present (as they were throughout the day) and we were informed only twenty people would be allowed

upstairs to the waiting room. The Protest on Monday had obviously worried someone.

The appeal continued with the Home Office cross-examining Manjit about her evidence. The Adjudicator helped when the Home Office official seemed to get into difficulties. The translation at times was so bad at times, it was necessary for Manjit's lawyer to re-examine her on a number of points.

These actions of the Adjudicator highlight his role as a servant of the Home Office, and the status of the court as a part of the Racist apparatus of Immigration Control.

Manjit completed her evidence just after 3 o'clock in the afternoon, a total of eleven hours interrogation.

Witnesses then verified aspects of Manjit's story.

Her neighbour told of how Manjit had moved in and what a good neighbour and mother she was.

The Welfare Secretary of the local Sikh temple outlined how he had met Manjit, and how strongly the Sikh community, locally and nationally felt about her struggle.

He also explained that Manjit is very highly regarded as she is qualified to teach the Sikh religion.

The hearing was adjourned until the 24th October, when the Home Office and Manjit's lawyer will sum up their cases.

Mr Hawthorn, Adjudicator

When we arrived at the court on the 24th, the staff in the building had been instructed by Mr Hawthorn that they were to issue only 19 tickets to enter the building. Everyone else must wait outside. Protests were made about this, particularly relating to people who came with children. Children are not allowed in the court, and would therefore have to wait outside.

Mr Hawthorn then summoned members of the campaign to tell us to

do as he had instructed or he would call the police. The case eventually started about 50 minutes late with a full court and many waiting outside.

Summing up

The Home Office summed up their case as:

There is a need to maintain Immigration control, therefore Manjit should be deported, no account seemed to be taken of the evidence in her favour.

Manjit's representative outlined the two areas under which the Adjudicator should consider the Appeal as:

1 Manjit would have a right to stay in this country if her husband had a right to be here. The Home Office had to prove that he was an illegal immigrant in order to be able to deport her.

2 Manjit's case should be considered on compassionate grounds. The definition of compassion from previous cases includes - the feelings of her supporters, the effect on her daughter and the evidence about her health.
THE DECISION WILL BE MADE SOON

HOW MANJIT IS FEELING

I feel very worried about what will happen to Palbinder and myself. I have been fighting to stay in this country for three years now. If I had known it would be like this I would never have left India.

There is nothing for me to go to in India, I could not work. I could not make Palbinder go through that. I would be forced to leave her here. Many friends here have supported my struggle to stay, and this is one of the things that has kept me going.

My health has been very bad. I go to the hospital and the doctor often, and I have not been able to go to work much. In the last two weeks I could not sleep without taking drugs. I can think of nothing else but what will happen to me.

Over the last three years I have met many people threatened with deportation and their supporters and this has given me strength to go on with my own struggle.

Please help me to win my campaign

Immigration Laws Racist Laws

Every week more than fifty black people are deported from this country. Thousands of black families have been separated for many years. For black people **Pass Laws** operate within the Welfare State.

Immigration laws affect black people, they are Racist. Their effect is to provide respectability for the ideas of groups like the National Front, with their rhetoric of 'culture swamping' and their creed of racial hatred. They do this by defining black people as a problem to be reduced and eventually eliminated.

These laws affect Black people

by police raids on black peoples homes and workplaces

by passport checks in Health, Education, Housing and the DHSS

by the actions of an openly racist judiciary who operates these laws.

Since the late 1950's the racism of the British State has been increasingly built into the laws and practises of the state.

These laws have become more and more repressive until now it is impossible for any black people, regardless of where they were born, to escape the

realities of the racist attack on our right to live in this country.

Baba Baktura, a well known musician is fighting for his right to stay here.

Kamal Kumar, from Manchester, is threatened with deportation because his marriage broke down.

Esther Ankeli has recently won her right to live here with her children.

Anwar Ditta spent six long years struggling to be re-united with her children.

Viraj Mendis has had his passport taken.

Toufiq Ahmed is threatened with deportation because his marriage broke down.

Miebaka Brown recently won the right to complete her studies in Manchester.

Muhammad Idrish has been fighting to stay here since his marriage broke down.

Vinod Chauhan was recently deported to India after a five year struggle to stay here was lost.

Karamjit Verraich, is under threat because he attacked a Whites Only club in Birmingham.

Successive governments, both Labour and Tory, have used Black people as a scapegoat for their failed economic policies, through increasing immigration control, through the criminilisation of Black youth, through Racism woven into the fabric of the British State.

We have proved in previous campaigns that we can win, in the struggle to unite Anwar Ditta with her children, in the struggle to win the right to stay for Nasira Begum, Parveen Khan, Esther Ankeli and many more.

We must go on fighting to prove our basic human right, to live free from attacks.

There are many campaigns going on all round the country. It is up to us to support them in whatever ways we can.

Injustice of the sort defined by the racist immigration laws is a threat to all of us. By allowing such injustice to continue without raising our voices in protest, we agree with these laws. By accepting such injustice, we become guilty of these injustices.

We all must support the struggle of Black people to smash the racist immigration laws and practises of this country.

SMASH RACIST IMMIGRATION LAWS

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Send a letter or telemessage to Leon Brittan, Home Office, Queen Anne's Gate, London quoting Reference: K303336, outlining why you think Manjit should stay. Sending a telemessage (cost £3 for fifty words) has more effect as Leon Brittan will have to see it.

Get any organisation you are in to do the same

Send donations, support our events and write to us so we can keep you in touch.

Manjit Kaur Defence Campaign, c/o Sikh Family History, North Hulme Centre, M/cr 15