



LONDON ANTI-DEPORTATION COMMITTEE

c/o UTW,
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NO MORE

DEPORTATIONS

L.A.D.C.



INTRODUCTION

The Anti-Deportation Committee is publishing this brochure in response to the need we felt to report on the Committee's activities since its foundation in August 1985. The aim of the brochure is to inform its membership of its activities and investigations and to share experiences with other organisations working on the same field.

A newsletter which we plan to publish every three months will be an important step forward in realising the aims set out in the brochure.

On behalf of the London Anti-Deportation Committee we would like to thank all our friends and colleagues who have helped in bringing this brochure together.

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SOUTHWARK TRADES COUNCIL
TURKISH COMMUNITY LIBRARY
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MIGRANT ACTION GROUP
LCA and EP BRANCH SOGAT' 82
TURKISH YOUTH CENTRE
TUC SOUTH EAST REGIONAL COUNCIL NALGO

WHY THE LONDON ANTI-DEPORTATION COMMITTEE (SEK-BIR) WAS FORMED?

The L.A.D.C. was formed to play an active role in helping to solve problems in the following spheres:

- to be able to live freely and decently
- against racist and discriminatory policies
- the right to work
- to end the arrest of workers who have no work permits
- to defend the rights of hundreds of people at Ashford Remand Centre waiting to be deported
- to defend the rights of workers from Turkey and Cyprus who have come here to work
- to halt the increasing police threats and raids
- to fight against the reactionary laws that separate families and leave children without their mothers
- to achieve decent living standards for people.

The London Anti-Deportation Committee was established in the knowledge that the struggle against oppressive policies could only advance through organisation. In setting up the Committee we benefitted from the example of other community organisations, in particular the Union of Turkish Workers.

An anti-deportation campaign was initiated by the Union of Turkish Workers and that organisation became deeply involved in the present work in 1982.

The following are quotations from the Annual Report of the U.T.W.: "The 'Stop the Deportations' march, organised as a part of the solidarity campaign with 'illegal workers' by the U.T.W. commenced at 1 pm on the 10th November 1984 in front of the Hackney Town Hall.

"A huge crowd, including small children and women of various nationalities including British and Latin American, gathered to be greeted by the Mayor of London Borough of Hackney. Slogans were shouted about the problems of the immigrant workers.

"The marchers put forward their demands by shouting slogans. All the worker participants were the ones who constantly face immigration problems. They were marching in the knowledge that no worker is illegal.

"Several groups joined the march as it passed through streets in the Dalston area where there is a dense population of Turkish and Cypriot workers. Democratic-minded British people acquainted with the concrete problems of immigrant workers, as well as progressives from other countries showed their interest and greeted the contingent.



“When the marchers reached the Newington Green Area, the slogans were shouted with more enthusiasm and excitement. Green Lanes echoed with slogans such as ‘Voting and election rights for everybody’, ‘Stop the deportations’.

“When the marchers arrived in the Borough of Islington, the Mayoress of Islington greeted them. In her speech the Mayoress stressed the importance of the Borough’s help and support in the campaign and promised that the Borough will pay close attention to solving the problems of Turkish and Cypriot workers within the Borough.

The slogan “ ‘No More Deportations’ were shouted for some minutes by the participants. It seemed that the meaning and aim of the march had been very well understood. Everybody knew why they were marching.

“Messages were sent from approximately 70 democratic organisations which either participated in the march or supported it with messages to be read at the evening gathering that followed. A lot of people participating in such an activity for the first time received information on the campaign from representatives of the Union of Turkish Workers. Several local newspapers, democratic organisations and media, including TV, widely publicized the march.

“It was successful because hundreds of people participated and because this type of march with such an aim was held for the first time. The activity opened new horizons and strengthened our unity. It also confirmed the power of organisational unity to both friends and opponents.



“Following the ‘Anti-Deportation March’, a meeting and a cultural night were held in the Town Hall.

“Several democratic organisations and representatives from the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) joined in the night which reflected the success of the march.

“Alongside African, British and Caribbean groups which contributed to the cultural night, the UTW’s choir and its folk dance groups performed.

“The meeting was opened with a short speech made by a representative of the U.T.W. In his speech, the representative spoke about the importance of the campaign. Later, MP’s present at the meeting also made speeches.

“Ernie Roberts, Jeremy Corbyn and Chris Smith, MPs made speeches in which they emphasised the successful work carried out by Turkish and Cypriot workers in the struggle against deportations. They promised every assistance and support for the campaign.

“The representative of the NUM gave information in his speech on the miners strike and said that aggressive campaigns were carried out against immigrant workers and that they could not be considered separately from offences carried out against the entire working class movement. In her speech, Councillor Valerie Veness said that she was very pleased to see the struggle for the rights of Turkish and Cypriot workers and she saluted the U.T.W. for its contributions to this struggle.



“Later a Pakistani worker who was faced with deportation, Chrs Zissimos from the Cypriot Organisation, and representatives from the Latin American Workers’ Union made speeches”.

In assessing the results of the both activities, the U.T.W. emphasized the urgency of forming a separate organisation which would specifically deal with the problems of the migrant workers, since the necessary work could not be successfully carried out within the confines of any campaigning. This was put forward at the U.T.W’s 6th Annual General Meeting. The resolution on the issue unanimously adopted at the meeting reads as follows:

“The importance of our campaign is confirmed with each passing day.

“The ‘No More Deportations Campaign’ which we raised step by step during the past year, made a considerable impact.

“The campaign drew support and sympathy from a considerable number of local and foreign democratic establishments including the Greater London Council (GLC) and various local authorities. In addition, a lot of similar campaigns were organised.

“Although the campaign constituted a strong force against deportation orders, the deportation of illegal workers are still kept under observation and are still being deported. Although this attitude seems to be directed against illegal workers alone, it is essence directed against all workers. Keeping this concrete situation in mind, our AGM resolves:

“a. Immigration laws upholding deportations and condemning workers as criminals should change,

“b. legalisation of the right to work, working permits for all workers who have been living and working in Britain for a certain period of time.



“c. All foreign workers should be eligible to elect and be elected.

“The AGM also resolves that work will be conducted to organise democratic institutions, MPs and councillors around these issues on the publication of a newsletter dealing with the problems of illegal workers”.

In implementing this resolution the Union of Turkish Workers continued its practice, supporting and helping any organisation newly establishing itself and thus the The London Anti-Deportation Committee was founded.

As a result of the U.T.W's experiences on this subject, we realized that the most urgent question before us was to intensify our work in the struggle against unjust and reactionary immigration laws, and that this could only be done properly by getting support from workers, organisations and progressive people; by uniting all the ethnic groups around this issue, and by extending as much as possible similar campaigns organised at local levels.

The first General Meeting of the Committee was held on the 3rd June 1985. The meeting attracted a large number of people, both Turkish

and Cypriot. Nine people were elected to the executive committee. Jeremy Corbyn and Valerie Veness were both unanimously elected as the chair and the vice-chair. As is well known, Jeremy Corbyn and Valerie Veness are prominent members of the community who have both been working very hard in the anti-deportation campaigns.

The committee's aims and objectives were discussed thoroughly and all were unanimously accepted.

The following are the objectives agreed upon:

- To organise practical help for people who are under threat of deportation.

- To organise a campaign against racist and sexist immigration laws which are contrary to the interests of the working class.

- To organise campaigns to lift immigration workers.

- To try to get support from other establishments and people and unite them against immigration controls and deportations.

The following aims were also agreed upon:

- To stop deportations

- Not deportations but jobs

- No worker is illegal

- Continues working rights for workers without work permits

- Independent migration status for women

- To take a stand on the side of working class against passport controls

- To campaigning to change the 1971 Immigration and 1981 Nationality Acts.

As soon as it was formed the committee accelerated the work of providing practical help against deportation orders and the intensity of its workload increased day by day. The committee thus organised practical help for 107 cases.

The work being done can be summarized as follows:

Visits to Ashford Remand Centre, interpretation and translation in court, finding lawyers and solicitors, free soliciting help, bailing out of those who are detained, helping the newly arrived students in obtaining visas to stay, advising illegal workers on their legal rights.

The resolutions adopted at the general meetings also included the objective of extending the campaign. But the intense practical work prevented us from achieving this objective to the extent we wanted.

In the coming period this aspect of our work will be given more consideration. To this end we are planning to hold a march and a press conference.

The following is some information about the work we have carried out in the recent period:

POLICE RAIDS



In general, police raid factories, restaurants and homes early in the morning. Most effected by these raids are workers residing in East and North London and working in the factories and restaurants in these areas.

The police are informed before the raids. The Department of Counter Intelligence within the Home Office transfers all the information gathered and the police are issued search warrants beforehand. But it does not make much difference whether the police have search warrants or not, since the police detain whomever they find as illegal migrants whenever they are unable to find the person they are searching for.

We would like to give you an example:

In one early morning raid on a house in N16, four families residing in that house, including the children were all arrested. In the face of continuous insistence the police allowed them to make one phone call, a right for any person in a similar situation. Thus we were about the case. A volunteer immediately got in touch with the solicitor and went to the police station. After some legal arrangements the four families were released.



INTERROGATIONS AND ARRESTS

Detained 'illegal' workers are interrogated by interpreters specifically chosen by the Home Office for this purpose. Most of the translations are either different or incomplete when compared with what has originally been said. Alongside this, detainees are not informed about their legal rights and interrogations start immediately at the arrival at the station. These are later used as evidence in the courts.

"After I left the factory, a friend of mine was giving me a lift to my home. A policeman stopped the car and asked for the driving licence. After this he turned to me and asked for my identity and passport. I was afraid and hesitant. The police was suspicious, took me into their car and we drove to the Hackney Police Station. I was first put in a dark cell. I was fear of darkness on the one hand and afraid of loosing my job and being deported on the other. They also took my lighter, leaving my cigarettes with me. I got really nervous and was about to start crying. But at that moment I came to my sense, what was I doing? If I let myself go, this would not be in my favour. It was obviuos that the police wanted to see me psychologically broken down. I remembered the The London Anti-Deportation Committee and this comforted me a bit, I felt more confident. After a while they came and took me out. An interpreter whom I had met before and a solicitor were waiting for me. Now I was sure I was going to be released.

"Now I am free. My trial still continues but I have been working for 7 months. There is no legal obstacle to my working here. I had planned to stay for two years in Britain in any case. Soon I will leave of my own free will. To be able to come and go as your own free choice is a wonderful thing. I thank you all for the help you have provided".



COURTS

In the completion of cases, the police act sometimes very slowly and at other times very quickly. If the evidence is strong and no organisation is aware of the case, a detainee finds himself immediately, perhaps after two hours of having been arrested, in the court and without being told about any legal rights he has, and without being told or having been given the impression that there is almost no possibility of seeing a solicitor. Having been left defenceless, shocked and unaware of his rights, a detainee is arrested and sent to a prison.

The following is the account of a friend:

"News came to us towards lunch hour on Saturday that was detained. Immediately after we heard the news, we telephoned the district police station. We were told that there was no person with that name there. Other neighbourhood police stations told us the same. There was only one possibility left. That was to go to the regional court. When we arrived there, the trial was about to come to an end. The detainee was in his chair. Police were giving evidence and making accusations, the judge was asking whether he was guilty or not. Most interesting was the fact that the interpreter whose Turkish was as poor as his English, was pressuring the detainee, telling him 'if you are guilty, say it'. I had to interfere, although I did not have any legal right to do so. I stood up and told the court that the detainee had been brought to the court without being allowed to consult a solicitor, and that this trial should be postponed until the detainee was able to establish contact with a solicitor. The police reacted by trying to take me out of the court room and silencing me. But in the face of the truth the judge postponed the trial and stated that there was a possibility of release on bail. On the same day the detainee was released.



PRISONS

Detainees are held at HM Ashford Remand Centre 12 miles from London. The Remand Centre is a real prison. Detainees who are to be deported are to be put in a separate section. This section accommodates 140 people. It has separate staff and a separate dining hall. It is more neglected than the other sections.

Visits are allowed every day between 1.30 and 3.30 from Monday till Friday. On Saturdays the visiting hours are between 9.30-11.30. One has to spend whole day when visiting the Centre. This means that you lose one working day if you are employed. On Saturdays visitors cannot bring anything in.

Inside there is breakfast at 9 am, lunch at 11 am, dinner sometimes at 3.30pm, sometimes at 4.00. There is a video show once every 4 nights.

Nothing is said to those for whom deportation orders are issued when they are going to be deported. What does happen is that sometimes after dinner, the person's room mates are taken out of the cell, a guardian and a health officer go in and give an injection to ease the tension of those who are to be deported the next day. (Sometimes this is done by force. There was a case like this on the 7th January 1984). Later the clothes of the deportee is gathered up and the deportee is taken to the 'Guest Room' at Heathrow Airport under police supervision. Another injection is given just before the time of departure and the deportee is sent to Yesilkoy Airport, Istanbul, also under police supervision.



DEPORTATION ORDERS

When the Intelligence section in the Home Office gathers information on the 'illegality' of a worker, a deportation order is being issued immediately. In this kind of situation a detainee is deported without anybody's knowledge. But if a detainee is able to establish contact with a relative or a friend, the Committee is informed and deportation orders are stopped by MP's letters or telephone calls. We appeal to the court against the Home Office decision. Although the court decision does not generally come out in favour, during the time that is gained, a detainee is able to make arrangements before he leaves the country.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH RELATIVES

We would like to give an example to show the work carried out in this field:

The family concerned arrived in Britain to work in 1971. They have two daughters and a son. After some time the family got a permanent staying permit and subsequently a British passport. In the summer of 1984 the family went to Turkey for a holiday. Their eldest daughter got married and the newly married couple decided to live in Britain. Due to the fact that the husband's passport procedure would take a longer time, they will not be able to come back and live together. Arriving later, the husband received a temporary visa to stay and was sent back to Turkey when his visa expired. The Committee appealed to the Home Office and secured a reentry into Britain at a shorter period of time than it normally takes. As it happened in this case, there was no need to send the husband back to Turkey. But the racist immigration laws put obstacles before us whenever there is possibility to do so.



CUSTOMS PROCEDURES

People who come to Britain as visitors or students have various problems at the borders if they are not citizens of the member EEC countries. They are not in general given entry and students are sent back on the same day in some cases even if they provide a letter of acceptance from a school.

Meanwhile before being deported, people are first interrogated. The questions are so detailed that the answers can later be used to convict someone as being an illegal entrant without any difficulty.

Here are some examples:

Q. Why did you come?

A. To learn the language.

Q. How long will you stay?

A. Two months.

As shown in the example, if a person later changes his mind and wants to stay longer than two months, permission is usually not given. For a further stay and referring to the answer given perviously, it is said that the entrant had asked to stay only for two months. But it is very well known by border officials that no language can be learned in such a short period of time.

On the other hand, if a visitor changes his mind and wants to go to a language school, permission for education is usually not given on the grounds that the entrant did not say anything about his intention to go to school at the first entry. They thus assume that an entrant had planned, everything beforehand and had hidden his intentions. Refusing entry, some officials may even say 'You say you come here for education but my belief is that your intention is not to be a student in this country. That is why we refuse you entry'.

As a result of this sort of calculations and speculations an entrant is turned back from the border, having lost time and money and, more importantly, as a person whose dignity has been tempered with.





FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Our future activities will be directed more seriously towards gaining support from progressive MP's, trade union leaders and organisations who understand and follow more closely the problems of ethnic communities in Britain, and whom we see as the best exponents of our problems before the British public opinion. One other aim which we adopted in principle, but we will not be able to put into practice just yet, is to secure unity both in objectives and in action of all campaigns working around the same issue in order to overcome the difficulties as a single united body. If we succeed in this there is no doubt that our voice will be heard more and we will have much more strength. To secure this aim, the LADC is ready to make every effort.



REQUIREMENTS

The intensity of the work carried out is pushing us every passing day towards working more professionally. The LADC needs an office building and more professional workers. To this we need contributions from progressive local authorities and believe wholeheartedly that they will do their best to meet the requirements of ethnic communities, as they have done in the past.

ONE ISLINGTON

*WITH LONDON
AGAINST RACISM*

Funded by Islington Council

CONSTITUTION OF THE LONDON ANTI-DEPORTATION COMMITTEE

1. Name

To be known as the London Anti-Deportation Committee.

2. Objects

The objects of the committee are a) to organise practical help and support for local people threatened with deportation;

b) to campaign against racist, sexist and anti-working class immigration laws;

c) to campaign against internal immigration controls and against passport raids and checks by the police and immigration officials;

d) to generate the widest possible support amongst local communities for the fight against deportations and against immigration controls.

The specific demands of the committee are

a) No more deportations. Jobs, not deportations.

b) Opposition to racist and sexist immigration laws and controls.

c) No workers are illegal. For the regularisation of all unauthorised workers.

d) For an independent immigration status for women.

e) Opposition to internal immigration controls and to passport raids and checks.

f) Repeal of the 1971 Immigration Act and the 1981 Nationality Act.

3. Employees

The Committee may employ and pay any person or persons to supervise and carry on the work of the Committee.

4. Property

The Committee may —

a) Purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and any rights and privileges necessary for the promotion of the said objects and construct, maintain and alter any buildings or erections necessary for the work of the Committee.

b) Make regulations for any property which may be so acquired.

c) Subject to such consents as may be required by law, sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or assets of the Committee.

5. Membership

The Committee is based at 129 Newington Green Road, London N1 for the time being. Membership shall be open to all individuals and organisations who support the objects of the Committee. The membership fee is £1 per annum for individuals and £5 per annum for organisations.

6. Executive Committee

The day to day affairs of the London Anti-Deportation Committee shall be run by an executive committee elected annually by the membership at the Annual General Meeting. For the purposes of these elections each individual member shall be entitled to one vote and organisations may send no more than two voting delegates to a General Meeting. Both individual members and representatives of organisations may stand for election to the executive committee.

7. Executive Committee officers and Meetings: The executive committee shall elect its own chairperson, treasurer and secretary and shall meet at least once per month. Meetings will be open to all members and minutes of the executive shall be circulated to all members.

8. Powers of the Executive Committee

To deal with all matters pertaining to the policy administration, finance and day to day running of the London Anti-Deportation Committee.

9. Finance

a) All money paid, raised or donated to the Committee to be devoted to the objects of the Committee. The treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Committee and open a bank account in the name of the Committee. All cheques shall require two signatures from at least three executive members nominated by the executive committee. The accounts shall be audited at least once a year by an independent auditor.

b) The Committee may raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscriptions or otherwise provided that the Committee shall not undertake permanent trading.

c) The Committee shall have the power to sell alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks at socials, meetings and festivals.

10. Annual General Meeting

The executive shall arrange an Annual General Meeting of the Committee not less than 15 months after the previous Annual General Meeting. Two weeks' notice of the AGM will be given to members. The AGM shall receive audited accounts for the previous financial year and a report from the executive on the past year's activities.

11. Special General Meetings

Special general meetings may be called at the request of four members of the executive committee or two thirds of the membership of the London Anti-Deportation Committee. For this purpose organisations shall have one vote only.

12. Amendments to the Constitution

The constitution can be amended by a resolution included in the notice for the Annual General Meeting or a special meeting. Such a resolution shall

require a two thirds majority of members present and voting. Organisations may appoint no more than two voting delegates for such a vote.

13. Dissolution

This will require the same procedure as in clause 12. After debts and liabilities have been met, any remaining assets must be used to further the objects of the constitution.