

# MOVEMENT

No Borders Newsletter ★ [noborders.org.uk](http://noborders.org.uk)



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## Hunger Strike At Yarls Wood

Over 50 women have been on hunger strike at Yarls Wood Immigration Prison near Bedford since Friday 5th February, calling for their immediate release.

Guards at the Serco run centre have tried to suppress the hunger strike from the start. On Monday 8th February the women were locked in a corridor for 8 hours without access to water and toilet facilities. There are reports that 20 women who climbed out of a window were beaten and held in isolation. One of the hunger strikers said, "Many guards behave like we are in prison. They should go to the army, this place is not for them."

After the hunger strikers were removed to their wings, the Home Office tried to falsely claim the strike had ended. As calls from the strikers flooded in contradicting the claim, four of the women were taken to Bedfordshire police station before being removed to Holloway Prison.

Yarl's Wood is run as a business for profit by private firm Serco. Serco staff are acting as front-line immigration staff and have clearly overstepped their capacities and need to be held accountable for their actions.

There have been a number of solidarity demos in support of the hunger strikers, including at the Serco offices in London on Wednesday 10th and Friday 12th. Further demos are planned on Wednesday 17th at Holloway Prison, in support of 4 of the so-called "ringleaders" of the hunger strike who have been incarcerated there, and back at Serco on Friday 19th.

The hunger strike is the latest in a long line of resistance within detention centres in the UK and beyond. For example, there have been disturbances at Harmondsworth centre near Heathrow in November 2006, and more recently at Brook House near Gatwick. 10 people are currently on trial in France, accused of arson at Vincennes CRA (detention centre) near Paris in June 2008.



## New Migrant Solidarity Centre in Calais attacked by Police

At the beginning of February a new space for activists and migrants in Calais was opened, occupied and forcibly shut down within 24 hours. No Borders and SoS sans papiers legally rented an empty hangar in Calais for the purpose of creating an activist and migrant space. The Mayor of Calais was said to be fuming at this intervention. In their PR obsessed immigration politics, the French authorities ordered the immediate closure of the space through an illegal eviction.

Up until Saturday migrants had not been informed of the space and the police had kept a closely guarded watch on the hangar, saying that no migrants would be allowed into the space and would be arrested if they did so. On Saturday evening migrants were told about the new space and invited to come if they wished to do so.

Following food distribution about 100 migrants from Afghanistan, Iran, Kurdistan, Eritrea, and Ethiopia went to the hangar. The police sealed off all the roads leading to the hangar with cars and men. Shouting "Freedom! Freedom! Freedom!" migrants and activists confronted the police blockade and managed to push through lines on both sides of the hangar allowing all the migrants to run inside the hangar.

The elite CRS police reinforcements immediately arrived and surrounded the hangar. The sous-prefecture also arrived and ordered all migrants to leave immediately. They said no. Although it looked likely, no immediate forced raid came although the blockade remained throughout the night. Tea, blankets, sleeping bags and basic mattresses were provided and a safe, secure, although chilly night was had by all. In the morning the police played it cool with a strategy to starve the migrants out. Throughout the morning a slow trickle of migrants left the hangar, crossed the police lines to go and collect food donations from 'Salam'. They were then blocked from returning to the hangar.

As the numbers began to dwindle, more and more police arrived. The remaining migrants were told to leave or be arrested. All left. Following sporadic scuffles with migrants and activists the police smashed down the doors of the hangar to formerly evict and shut down the centre. All the property inside was either stolen or destroyed. Computers and phones were seized and 12 activists were taken to the local police station, to be later released. One man has received stitches in hospital. Many of the migrants received bruises from batons, including a child. Most migrants went into hiding as things calmed down, although activists witnessed more arrests later that day on their way to the food distribution.

The centre has since been reopened but the future remains unclear; active solidarity is still very much needed. [calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com](http://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com)

**FOR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT & EQUALITY FOR ALL! ★ PHOTOCOPY & DISTRIBUTE**

## Victory!

On Monday 25th January, Arora's planning application to turn their four star hotel at Gatwick into a detention centre was defeated by fourteen votes to one at



Crawley Council's Planning Meeting. No Border activists held a demo outside Crawley Town Hall and a number went into the meeting.

During the meeting, apart from the council planning officers, only two people spoke in favour of the application: the applicant himself, Tim Jurdon, Head of Planning Arora Management Services Ltd., and Surinder Arora, sole owner of the Arora hotels chain.

Members of the planning committee itself spoke out almost universally against their own planning officers recommendations, placing special focus on their interpretation and claimed misrepresentation of the wording of GAT4 in the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2000. This states, "planning permission will not be granted within the airport boundary which is not clearly required for operational, functional, safety or security reasons."

## No Deportation To Nigeria

Another joint mass deportation flight to Nigeria went ahead on 3rd February, carrying dozens of refugees from a number of EU



countries, including the UK. The flight was operated by the EU external borders agency, Frontex, and funded by the EU directly, as opposed to individual member states, under a new 'Joint EU Charter' scheme agreed at the EU summit in Brussels last year.

Many of the deportees are victims of cult and gang violence, torture, rape, female genital mutilation, armed conflict and state oppression. Yet as one of the 'white list' countries in the Nationality, Immigration & Asylum Act, asylum claims from Nigeria are usually automatically considered unfounded. Last year alone there were 17 joint flights to Nigeria operated by Frontex, deporting a total of 849 people.

Campaigners worked hard to keep as many people as possible off the flight and protests took place outside the Nigerian Embassy and UKBA office in Cardiff. [noborder2ng@riseup.net](mailto:noborder2ng@riseup.net)

## Out of Control

While the migration regime is fortifying itself and setting up rings of defence around European wealth, inner control is tightening to keep public order. London is one of the most watched and controlled cities in the world, with an underground CCTV bunker beneath the shiny ads at Piccadilly Circus. No Borders called for a day out of control on 23rd January, starting at the international border within Central London, St Pancras International.



After a few speeches have been given, over 150 people, many covering their faces with bandanas specially made for the demo and carrying banners that read: "Life's too short to be controlled" and "Freedom to move, freedom to stay" marched towards Piccadilly. For about 2 hours the demonstration managed to maintain control of the roads marching unhindered all the way. There were no police on sight throughout, so the only problems the crowd faced were a few over excited drivers that attempted to move into the demo.

## Too Many Of Whom..?

There is a conventional view in Britain that racism has been driven onto the defensive or even banished completely from most areas of daily life. The political Right, indeed, constantly portrays itself as the victim of "liberal oppression" and "political correctness gone mad". Yet somehow, racism has won some huge victories in recent years, in all the liberal democracies, with very little opposition, to such an extent that the terms "fortress Britain", "fortress Europe" and "fortress USA" are now quite normal usage – and, without even needing to be told, everybody understands what these fortifications are for: to stop the poorer, darker-skinned peoples of the world "flooding" into its richer, paler parts.



No One Is Illegal have produced a new discussion paper "Too Many Of Whom And Too Much Of What?" Looking at what the new population hysteria tells us about the global economic and environmental crisis, and its causes. Available from [noii.org.uk](http://noii.org.uk)

## Whistleblower

Louise Perrett worked as a case owner at the UK Border Agency office in Cardiff last summer. Due to her experiences in the agency she has risked breaching the Official Secrets Act to go public with evidence of anti-immigration views and abuse of power by UKBA staff. Her revelations reveal a culture of bigotry and prejudice in the Cardiff office, where members of staff took pride in refusing applications.



- Her manager said of people claiming asylum: "If it was up to me I'd take them all outside and shoot them."
- If a case was difficult, she was advised to refuse and "let a tribunal sort it out".
- Officers who approved an asylum application had a toy "grant monkey" placed on their desk by other staff as a badge of shame.
- Boys who said they had been conscripted as child soldiers were made to lie down and 'show how they shot people in the bush.'
- Interviews were conducted without lawyers, independent witnesses or tape recorders.

## Network Gathering

The No Borders Network Winter Gathering will take place in Nottingham at the Sumac Social Centre (245 Gladstone Street, Forest Fields) on the 26th - 28th February.



There will be workshops including: Connecting No Borders issues with Environment, Capitalism, Gender and Class; Media Training; Introduction to No Borders and Pragmatism within No Borders position, as well as the usual feedback and networking between local groups and other collectives.

These main sessions will take the form of network wide discussions and smaller working groups that will run throughout the weekend and will include slots for: Radical left engagement with migrant communities; Racism, Fascism and the State; Practical Solidarity with migrants; the situation in Calais, Detention Centres, No Border camp in Brussels and charter flight deportations. The weekend will be drawn to a close by a plenary session with proposals taken from previous days.

**No Borders Network** is made up of autonomous groups, to get involved contact your nearest group. Contact the South Wales group for the newsletter editorial collective.

### → Local Groups

**Brighton:** [nobordersbrighton.blogspot.com](http://nobordersbrighton.blogspot.com)  
**Bristol:** [bristolnoborders.wordpress.com](http://bristolnoborders.wordpress.com)  
**Calais:** [calaisnoborder.eu.org](http://calaisnoborder.eu.org)  
**Leeds:** [leedsnoborders@riseup.net](mailto:leedsnoborders@riseup.net)  
**London:** [london.noborders.org.uk](http://london.noborders.org.uk)  
**Manchester:** [manchesternoborders.org.uk](http://manchesternoborders.org.uk)

**North East:** [nobordersnortheast.org](http://nobordersnortheast.org)  
**Nottingham:** [nobordersnottingham.org.uk](http://nobordersnottingham.org.uk)  
**Oxford:** [oxfordnoborders@lists.riseup.net](mailto:oxfordnoborders@lists.riseup.net)  
**Scotland:** [nobordersscotland.org.uk](http://nobordersscotland.org.uk)  
**Sheffield:** [sheffieldnoborders.wordpress.com](http://sheffieldnoborders.wordpress.com)  
**South Wales:** [noborderswales.org.uk](http://noborderswales.org.uk)

### → Friends & Relations

**Barbed Wire Britain:** [barbedwirebritain.org](http://barbedwirebritain.org)  
**Calais Migrant Solidarity:** [calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com](http://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com)  
**Campaign Against Immigration Controls:** [caic.org.uk](http://caic.org.uk)  
**Close Campsfield:** [closecampsfield.org.uk](http://closecampsfield.org.uk)  
**Indymedia UK - Migration:** [indymedia.org.uk/en/topics/migration](http://indymedia.org.uk/en/topics/migration)  
**National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns:** [ncadc.org.uk](http://ncadc.org.uk)  
**No One is Illegal:** [noii.org.uk](http://noii.org.uk)  
**Stop Deportation Network:** [stopdeportation.net](http://stopdeportation.net)  
**Unity Centre Glasgow:** [unitycentreglasgow.org](http://unitycentreglasgow.org)

### → Other Print

**Corporate Watch:** [corporatewatch.org.uk](http://corporatewatch.org.uk)  
**SchNEWS:** [schnews.org.uk](http://schnews.org.uk)  
**Shift Magazine:** [shiftmag.co.uk](http://shiftmag.co.uk)

## Upcoming Events

### February

- 17th - Free the Yarls Wood hunger strikers**  
Holloway Prison, Parkhurst Road, London. 6.30pm
- 19th - Free the Yarls Wood hunger strikers**  
Serco's Offices, 18-22 Hand Court, Holborn. 2.30pm
- 23rd - Talk by UKBA whistleblower.** Malcolm X Centre, Ashley Road, St. Paul's, Bristol BS2 8YH
- 26th - Protest racism of the UKBA** Wales & West UKBA office, 31-33 Newport Road, Cardiff. 1pm
- 26th - Benefit Gig** 195 Mare Street, Hackney.
- 27/28th - Network gathering.** Sumac Centre, 245 Gladstone Street, Forest Fields, Nottingham.
- March**
- 5th - Benefit Gig.** The Promised Land, Cardiff

**No Borders** is a transnational network of autonomous groups and individuals advocating freedom of movement and equality for all. The network operates on a non-hierarchical, anti-authoritarian basis and uses consensus decision making. We struggle in solidarity with migrants to work towards a world without borders, capitalism or the state. [noborders.org.uk](http://noborders.org.uk)