

Campaign against Racism & Fascism wrote the letter below to Swedish Ambassador in London against the forcible deportation policy



Dear Sir,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism in protest against the Swedish government's decision to remove a number of Iraqi nationals to Baghdad. I have been informed that there are 250 Iraqi asylum seekers held at Fleen, Stockholm and Kolaret detention centres. It appears that some of them are to be flown to Baghdad today. I understand further that, in the last two years, Sweden has returned more than 200 people by charter flight to Baghdad. Baghdad is one of the most insecure cities in the world and cannot be considered a suitable location to receive asylum seekers from Europe. Some of those who have been removed to Iraq have been kidnapped or killed and others have been forced into hiding. Yet the Swedish government's current policy has led to a disabled man being returned to Baghdad in October 2008.

The lengths that Iraqi go to in order to avoid removal also illustrates the dangers of the policy. In December, the Swedish authorities imprisoned and detained a pregnant woman, Mewan Omer, who committed suicide in Gottenburg rather than be deported back to Iraq. Another Iraqi asylum seeker, Soran Omer, died of exposure because he did not have a place to live in Sweden but refused to be voluntarily removed.

Given the violent situation in Iraq since the US-UK-led occupation of 2003, many of its people have often had little choice but to leave the country. They flee because of the daily violence caused by the occupation and the ruling parties of Iraq. Asylum seekers are not criminals; they are just looking for safety, security and a better life. It is a shame that, after six years of war, the UK and other European governments are saying Iraq is a safe place to return refugees to.

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MP John McDonnell bids to halt Iraq deportation



Oct 19 2009 By Charlene Mitchell

MP John McDonnell

HAYES and Harlington MP, John McDonnell, has laid down an early day motion calling for flights taking deportees back to Iraq to be halted.

BBC News have reported that around 30 failed asylum seekers remain in UK detention after being refused re-entry to Iraq when their deportation flight landed in Baghdad on Thursday October 15.

The UK Border Agency says it will send another flight but has not revealed when.

Campaigners opposed to deportation to Iraq on safety grounds have demonstrated in Parliament Square. Twelve MPs have signed the early day motion laid down Mr McDonnell, calling for the flights to be halted.

The motion, which will not be debated but is used to draw attention to an issue, criticises "the deportation of innocent people to face violence, hardship and even death in a war zone like Iraq".

Do not forget the 20th of November 2009 is the fourth Anniversary of the first forcible deportation of 15 Kurdish Iraqi Refugees back to Northern Iraqi by a military Aircraft from Brize Norton Military Airbase in the UK.

Stop Deportation Flight to Iraqi

Refugees are part of the working class in this country!



Unite invited Karen Johnson from Coalition to stop Deportation to Iraq and Dashty Jamal from the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees on the 11 October 2009 to speak about the plight of Iraqi asylum seekers and the UK Governments policy of forcible deportation to Iraq.

Dashty Jamal's speech in TGWU general branch meeting
11th November 2009

On behalf of the International Federation of Iraqi refugees and csdiraq I would like to thank the organizers for inviting us to speak to you tonight. I don't want to repeat what Karen said regarding the history of IFIR and CSDIRAQ.

Refugees are a part of the working class in this country. It is very important for trade unions to collectively put pressure on the Government to stop inhuman policies against refugees and migrant workers. State persecution of Refugees is a phenomenon of modern state capitalism. Many of the problems which have forced refugees to leave their homes have been caused by the brutal; nationalistic and ethnocentric; political and religious wars which have lead to the suffering of millions. Poverty and war have been created by the policies of modern capitalism which have lead directly to homelessness and hunger. Conditions are worsening for people all over the world. Refugees are being forced to leave their homes and countries and claim asylum in other countries. All Human Rights campaigners and trade unions should be calling for an end to the criminalising and persecution of refugees. People who believe in human rights and have a desire for establishing a free and equal society should challenge this barbarism to stop human suffering. All human beings are members of a human society however capitalist states and political systems have labelled

people with identities which only serve to create barriers amongst people.

What has shocked the Federation more than anything is the barbaric treatment of Refugees. The long drawn out process that asylum seekers have to go through to claim asylum is scandalous. Refugees are not allowed to work and those lucky enough to be eligible to claim support literally only get their housing covered and a nominal amount to live on. Unfortunately the vast bulk of asylum seekers are not entitled to this support. Large numbers of Refugees are forced to rely on friends within the community to help them or they end up homeless sleeping on park benches. The Red Cross daily visit UK parks in city centre's to feed destitute asylum seekers.

Many European countries have a policy of detaining refugees in detention centres where conditions are little better than prisons. On the mass charter flights Refugees have been woken up by guards with guns demanding they leave the detention centre immediately. We have received reports of Refugees being beaten by the guards removing them because they have not boarded the planes quickly enough.

It's a shame following 6 years of war that the UK and other European governments are saying Iraq is a safe place to return refugees to. The Federation believes that no part of Iraq is safe and these flights should be stopped. In Central and the Southern region of Iraq the argument is a lot clearer. The country is clearly suffering the instability caused by war. The two bombs going off in the heart of the Green zone illustrate this. Whilst the Kurdish region of Iraq is more secure. The state is ruled by two militia parties who have a history of persecuting political campaigners who do not agree with their view. Many of the clients we represent have been forced to leave Kurdistan because of threats from Islamic groups and for campaigning against the authorities within Kurdistan. Kurdistan for instance does not have a free press. Journalists have been and are targeted by both Islamic groups and the authorities. Often returned asylum seekers are forced to go immediately into hiding on their return to Northern Iraq. We also have examples of clients that have been kidnapped on their return.

It's a shame following 6 years of war that the UK and other European governments are saying Iraq is a safe place to return refugees to. The Federation believes that no part of Iraq is safe and these flights should be stopped. In Central and the Southern region of Iraq the argument is a lot clearer. The country is clearly suffering the instability caused by war. . The two bombs going off in the heart of the Green zone illustrate this. Whilst the Kurdish region of Iraq is more secure. The state is ruled by two militia parties who have a history of persecuting political campaigners *Continued on page 3>>*

Bill MacKeith, secretary Oxford & District Trades Union Council, UK support Iraqi Refugees in Sweden

Bill MacKeith wrote a letter asking the Swedish government once again to look into this policy.

"I call on the Moderate Party to honour the following demands which are supported by many progressive human and refugees' rights organisations in Sweden:

Stop deportations to Iraq.

Grant protection to all Iraqi and Kurdish refugees and recognise them as victims of war.

Allow Iraqi refugees the right to work or to receive a decent level of benefit/ Provide support for disabled Iraqis

Immediately release the remaining Iraqi refugees held in detention

>>>From page 2 Dashty Jamal's speech in TGWU general branch who do not agree with their view. Many of the clients we represent have been forced to leave Kurdistan because of threats from Islamic groups and for campaigning against the authorities within Kurdistan. Kurdistan for instance does not have a free press. Journalists have been and are targeted by both Islamic groups and the authorities. Often returned asylum seekers are forced to go immediately into hiding on their return to Northern Iraq. We also have examples of clients that have been kidnapped on their return.

We believe, first and foremost, in the unconditional freedom of travel and movement and freedom to choose one's place of residence. Furthermore, we believe that eliminating the calamities of today's world is linked to the abolition of capitalism, a system that reproduces poverty, hunger, war and flight on a daily basis for billions of people and owes its survival to these very social inequalities. However whilst the refugee question remains we are duty-bound to continue our struggle to secure and guarantee extensive refugee rights.

We consider that human rights are universal and they can not be limited by factors of gender, culture, race, age or place of birth.

We ask that you raise refugee rights and migrant worker issues at your national conference calling for the TUC to support refugee and migrant workers rights. Finally We ask you to actively support the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees and the Coalition to Stop Deportations to Iraq in their struggle to stop deportation.

Together we are stronger, we will keep campaigning until we can put an end to all these anti- Refugees policies.

We are now calling on you once again to help us by:

Supporting the progressive movement and workers class with in Iraq and Kurdistan.

Sending a message of support from your trade union

Sending donation to support IFIR work please (cheques payable to csdiraq)

Passing policy to support our campaign

Making your members aware of the situation of Iraqi refugees and of our campaign

Thank you very much

The Unite committee thanked Dashty and Karen for attending their meeting and donated a 50 pound cheque to the coalition to stop deportations to Iraq.

>>>from page 1 Campaign against Racism & Fascism wrote I know that Sweden has given asylum to many Iraqi refugees and I ask you to reconsider the current plan to remove asylum seekers back to Iraq. Many Iraqi refugees living in Sweden have built a new life and have integrated into Swedish society. Many of those who face removal have children who have gone to school in Sweden and are very upset at the prospect of being ripped away from the only friends they have known.

I hope that you will convey my concerns to the appropriate ministers and that the Swedish government will end its policy of removals to Iraq.

Yours faithfully,



Arun Kundnani



"At the time of writing this edition of Echoes one of our supporters Karen Johnson PCS Branch Secretary of the Communities and Local Government (Headquarters) branch. Confirmed she had written a letter condemning the Swedish Government regarding their policy of forcibly deporting Iraqi refugees on behalf of the CLG (HQ) branch. PCS is the union that organises civil servants. The PCS has several thousand members working across all Government Departments".

Write your support to IFIR Campaign asking Mr Fredrik Reinfeldt Swedish prime minister to stop all Deportation to Iraq

Postal address: Swedish Government Offices,
Rosenbad 4, SE-103 33 Stockholm, Sweden
Switchboard +46 8 405 10 00

Email: registrator@primeminister.ministry.se

Phone: 0046 8 405 10 00

I want to ask the Swedish government once again to look into this policy. I call on the Moderate Party to honour the following demands which are supported by many progressive human and refugees' rights organisations in Sweden:

Stop deportations to Iraq.

Grant protection to all Iraqi and Kurdish refugees and recognise them as victims of war.

Allow Iraqi refugees the right to work or to receive a decent level of benefit/ Provide support for disabled Iraqis

Immediately release the remaining Iraqi refugees held in detention

Yours Sincerely,

Name:

Address:

Organisation :

Email:

Phone:

Alliance for worker liberty sent the protest letter below to the Swedish Embassy

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you on behalf of Workers Liberty to protest at the Swedish government's decision to forcibly deport a number of Iraqi nationals to Baghdad. I have been informed that there are 250 Iraqi asylum seekers held at Fleen, Stockholm and Kolaret detention centres who are under threat of removal. I understand that, in the last two years, Sweden has returned more than 200 people by charter flight to Baghdad. Baghdad is one of the most insecure cities in the world and cannot be considered a suitable location to receive asylum seekers from Europe. On the 25th October 2009 two car bombs killed at least 150 people with more than 600 injured. Yet still the Moderate Government returns people back not only to Iraq to the very same city where these bombs exploded. This policy adds Sweden to the list of Countries who have forcibly deported Iraqi refugees back to the war torn country they have escaped. The Swedish Government claims that Iraq is a safe country to return asylum seekers to. We know this is not true Iraqi refugees have fled from a country of war, occupation and insecurity. They flee because of daily terrorism inflicted by the occupation and the ruling parties of Iraq. Some of those who have been forcibly returned to Iraq have been kidnapped or killed and others have been forced into hiding.

The lengths that Iraqi asylum seekers in Sweden go to in order to avoid removal also illustrates the dangers of the policy. I refer you to the case of Mewan Omer, who committed suicide in Gottenburg rather than be deported back to Iraq. Another Iraqi asylum seeker, Soran Omer, died of exposure because he did not have a place to live in Sweden but refused to be voluntarily removed. The Swedish government's current policy has led to a disabled man being returned to Baghdad in October 2008.

I know that Sweden has given asylum to many Iraqi refugees and I ask you to reconsider the current plan to remove asylum seekers back to Iraq. Many Iraqi refugees living in Sweden have built a new life and have integrated into Swedish society. Many of those who face removal have children who have gone to school in Sweden and are very upset at the prospect of being ripped away from the only friends they have known.

I hope that you will convey my concerns to the appropriate ministers and that the Swedish government will end its policy of removals to Iraq.

Yours faithfully

Martin Thomas

ECHOES

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