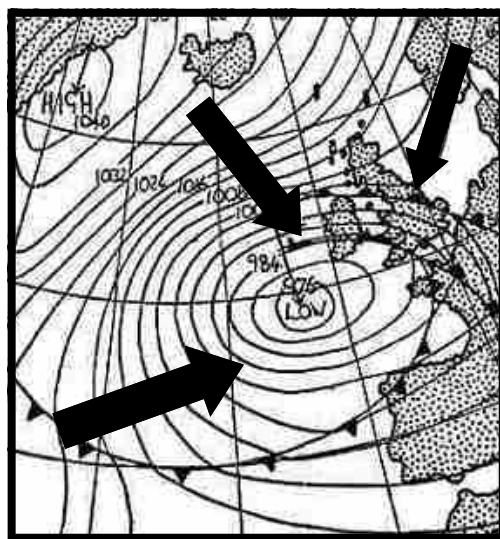




EXPOSED: TWELVE MYTHS ABOUT ASYLUM SEEKERS

INSIDE: We reveal the truth about asylum seekers in Scotland



EXTREME WEATHER
WARNING

**POISONOUS
HOT
AIR
ALERT**

Clouds of toxic hot air are expected to sweep across the country as politicians spread lies about immigrants, experts warned yesterday. Residents are urged to take precautions to avoid taking in the deadly gas

INSIDE:
**What they
really
don't want
you to
know**

What we think

Another day - another scare story

The papers say Britain is under siege from asylum seekers. Asylum seekers are blamed for higher taxes, crime, rising house prices, hospital waiting lists, cheap labour, terrorism and AIDS. Mainstream politicians either agree or refuse to challenge these stories.

There are two possible reasons for this press campaign.

Only one of them can be true.

The first is that fake refugees from Iraq, Afghanistan and Eastern Europe really are responsible for most of Britain's problems.

The second is that you are being lied to, deliberately, day in, day out, about asylum seekers.

Many people believe asylum seekers are one of our society's biggest problems. No wonder. The scare stories printed every day in the Sun, Express, Star and Mail are hardly ever challenged in the press or in parliament.

That's why we've set out some facts that might make you see things differently. We think they show that asylum seekers are not causing these problems, but that asylum seekers are being used as scapegoats.

It's the oldest trick in the book. Blame the other fella. Divide and rule.

We produced this leaflet because we're fed up too. Fed up with services that get worse instead of better. Fed up with council tax hikes and impossible house prices.

Fed up with schools and hospitals being run down and sold off piecemeal. Fed up with low pay and crime.

Above all, we're fed up being lied to about why this is happening.

Myth 1: Britain gets more asylum seekers than any other country!

WRONG! The UK ranks only fourth out of the industrialised countries of the world. The US, France and Canada all take more asylum seekers than Britain.

FACT: Per head of population, Britain is 13th in the list of industrialised countries taking asylum seekers. Cyprus, Sweden, Norway, Austria, Greece, Belgium and Luxembourg, all take larger numbers of asylum seekers per head of population than the UK. *UNHCR 23 March 2010 'Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries 2009'*

FACT: Globally poor countries in the south take the most refugees. Four-fifths of the world's refugee population live in developing countries. Pakistan has the largest number of refugees in the world followed by Syria and Iran. These three countries look after more than a quarter of the 15.2 million refugees that exist in the world today. Globally, South Africa has the largest number of people seeking asylum. *UNHCR 16 June 2009 '2008 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Returnees, Internally displaced and Stateless Persons'*

FACT: Scotland has fewer people living in it in 2010, than in 1974

Myth 2: More and more come here every day and no one stops them!

WRONG AGAIN! Over the last decade there has been a massive reduction in the number of asylum seekers arriving in the UK. Since the year 2000 the number of asylum seekers coming into the UK has dropped by two thirds. **FACT:** In the year 2000 there were eighty thousand asylum applications in the UK, in 2008 there were fewer than twenty six thousand. *Home Office Statistical Bulletin August 2009 'Control of Immigration Statistics UK 2008' H.O. Research Development and Statistics Directorate 25 September 2001 'Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 2000'*

Myth 3: They don't need to come here and we don't have any responsibility for them

WRONG! The two largest groups of refugees in the world are from Iraq and Afghanistan. Both these countries are suffering problems that stem from the wars being waged there that Britain has direct responsibility for.

FACT: In 2009 the largest groups of asylum seekers in the UK came from Afghanistan, in that year 3,500 Afghans made asylum claims in the UK. *UNHCR 23 March 2010 'Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries 2009'*

FACT: Britain only takes a tiny, tiny number of refugees out of the 15.2 million refugees in the world. In 2008 there were only 640 officially registered refugees allowed into the UK under the Gateway Protection Programme by which refugees registered by the United Nations are allowed to live in Britain. In 2007 only 465 refugees were allowed in, 355 in 2006, 70 in 2005 and 150 in 2004. The Gateway Protection Programme is the only way people registered as refugees can come into the UK. *Home Office Statistical Bulletin August 2009 'Control of Immigration Statistics UK 2008'*

Myth 4: The country's full – we can't take any more!

THAT'S NOT TRUE! Some parts of the UK have seen an increase in asylum seekers and other migrants but other parts such as most of Scotland have no asylum seekers living there.

FACT: The population of Scotland is lower now than it was 36 years ago. In 1974 Scotland had a record population of 5.24 million people. In 2008 there were only 5.17 million people living in Scotland. *General Register Office for Scotland 21 October 2009 'Projected Population of Scotland (2008-based)'*

FACT: Since 2001, Glasgow is the only city in Scotland where asylum seekers have been housed in any large numbers. At the end of December 2008 only 2,850 asylum seekers were living in Glasgow out of a population of 577,000 in the city. This is compared to 6,160 asylum seekers living in North West England and 4,405 living in Yorkshire and Humberside. In 2008, there were only 1,635 asylum seekers in Wales. *Home Office Statistical Bulletin August 2009 'Control of Immigration Statistics UK 2008'*

FACT: Asylum seekers are not allowed to work to support themselves

Myth 5: They should go to their nearest country rather than come here

NOT SO EASY: Many asylum seekers don't have a choice where they are going because they pay agents to help them get out of their country and don't know where they will end their journey.

FACT: A recent study found that two thirds of asylum seekers did not choose to come to the UK. Most discovered they were coming to Britain only after they had left their own country. The decision to come to the UK was made by an agent. *Refugee Council, Heaven Crawley January 2010 'Chance or choice? Understanding why asylum seekers come to the UK'*

FACT: Many asylum seekers come from countries that are former British colonies or had been under British administration. Those asylum seekers who chose to come to Britain did so due to this historic colonial link and because they thought their human rights would be protected and they would get fair treatment. *Refugee Council, Heaven Crawley January 2010 'Chance or choice? Understanding why asylum seekers come to the UK'*

Myth 6: But I've seen pictures of hundreds of asylum seekers living rough in Calais trying to sneak into Britain in the back of lorries

THIS IS AN EXAGGERATION! Very few asylum seekers arrive in the UK by lorry – most come by plane directly from their country of origin.

FACT: When hundreds of French police raided the illegal camps in Calais in September 2009 in an effort to close them down they found only 278 people living in the camps. Half of them were under the age of 18 years old. Most of the young men were from Afghanistan and were trying to re-unite with relatives in the UK.

The Guardian Tuesday 22 September 2009

Myth 7: They only come here because of our generous benefits system

NOT SO! A recent study showed that three quarters of asylum seekers had no knowledge of welfare benefits and support before coming to the UK and did not expect to get any support at all.

FACT: Less than one third of asylum seekers want to come to the UK. Of these the main reason they want to come here is because they have friends or relatives living here already. *Refugee Council Heaven Crawley January 2010 'Chance or Choice? Understanding why asylum seekers come to the UK'*

FACT: Most asylum seekers made the decision to leave their homes due to the problems they faced there, fleeing to escape persecution or war. The attraction of any particular destination was not a major factor in deciding whether to flee. Over 80 per cent asylum seekers had only days or weeks at most to decide that their safety was at risk if they did not leave their country. *Refugee Council Heaven Crawley January 2010 'Chance or Choice? Understanding why asylum seekers come to the UK'*

Myth 8: Asylum seekers get more money than Scottish pensioners!

NOT TRUE! Most adult asylum seekers receive only £5 a day to live on. This is only 70 per cent of what an adult UK job seeker can receive and much less than average state pensions..

FACT: There are about 6,700 asylum seeker families and 10,385 single adult asylum seekers receiving financial support from the British state. They are not allowed to work. Adult asylum seekers receive about £35 a week which is less than three quarters what an unemployed British worker receives in benefits. *Home Office Statistical Bulletin August 2009 'Control of Immigration Statistics United Kingdom 2008'*

FACT: In 2008 nine thousand asylum seekers in the UK did not receive any cash support but instead had to live on vouchers issued to provide only food and other basic essential items under the so called 'Section 4 support' system. These vouchers can only be used to buy food and other basic items in certain supermarkets chains.

Home Office Statistical Bulletin August 2009 'Control of Immigration Statistics United Kingdom 2008'

FACT: A significant number of asylum seekers are not allowed to receive Section 4 support and live in complete destitution not allowed to work or claim any benefits and totally dependent on hand-outs from friends or charities.

Myth 9: Asylum seekers bring more crime to our streets

FALSE! There is no evidence that crime rates increase when asylum seekers are housed in an area. In fact asylum seekers are more likely to be victims of crime than commit them.

FACT: As well as being more likely to become victims of race-hate crime when they arrive in an area, asylum seekers are more vulnerable to organised crime as often they turn to criminal gangs for help to make travel arrangements to the UK. Coming from states that often have corrupt and ineffective police forces, asylum seekers in the UK are often too scared to report crimes because they fear they will not be believed and may be detained and deported. *Refugee Action 2007 'The Destitution Trap—Research into destitution among refused asylum seekers'*

FACT: Asylum seekers are NOT illegal immigrants. Under the 1951 Convention on Refugees which the UK signed, anyone has the right to apply for asylum in the UK. Despite this, asylum seekers are often treated worse than criminals convicted of serious crimes. Civil servants working in the UK Border Agency detain thousands of asylum seekers every year in specially built immigration prisons even though most people detained in this way have not been convicted of any crime. Babies and children are detained as well and some asylum seekers have been in detention for more than two years without knowing if and when they will be released.

FACT: Per head of population Britain has fewer asylum seekers than 12 other industrialised countries

Myth 10: Asylum seekers take jobs British workers could be doing

WRONG! Asylum seekers are not allowed to work and are forced to receive state support. Asylum seekers have been banned from working and paying taxes since 2001 as a result they cannot work and pay taxes to support themselves while they are in the UK. They can get the jail if they are caught working.

FACT: Asylum seekers are only allowed to do paid work if they have been waiting for the Home Office to make a decision about their asylum case for over 12 months. Only a very small number have been given permission to work.

Myth 11: Asylum Seekers get housing before local people

WRONG! Asylum seekers are not put on housing waiting lists but get housed under a separate system called the National Asylum Support Service run by the Home Office. In Glasgow NASS pays three organisations, Glasgow City Council, the YMCA charity and a profit making company called the Angel Group to house asylum seekers in the city.

FACT: The YMCA and Glasgow City Council house asylum seekers in flats rented from Glasgow Housing Association in tower blocks that the GHA are moving Scottish families out of as the tower blocks are scheduled for demolition. Many asylum seekers are therefore housed in flats that would otherwise be empty.

FACT: Angel Group rents flats mainly from private landlords all over the city to house asylum seekers. As a profit making company Angel Group houses asylum seekers in the cheapest properties it can rent.

FACT: Glasgow City Council, the YMCA and the Angel Group are paid by Central Government for every person they house for the Home Office. No money from the Council Tax is spent on housing asylum seekers.

Myth 12: They get all their furniture, white goods, push-chairs, satellite TV and even phones for free

NOT TRUE! There are very strict rules on what has to be provided to make asylum seeker accommodation fit for habitation. Asylum seekers are not eligible for loans to pay for their own furniture as other people can. The council and the other accommodation providers have to make sure that the flats have the minimum needed for them to live such as a cooker and these requirements are laid down by law. Some flats that are being used by families are fitted with washing machines as well but this is not a legal requirement.

FACT: Asylum seekers do not get satellite TV or phone lines or computers and broadband or any other luxuries such as these bought for them by Glasgow City Council or any other accommodation provider. Some families rent satellite TV so they can access news and TV programmes from their countries of origin but they have to pay for these themselves just like everyone else has to. They also have to pay their TV licence themselves as well.

Why are these myths being told?

The people that benefit from the anti-refugee and anti-migrant campaign are the same people that benefit from the real causes of bad housing, long hospital waiting lists and declining education. They are the big bosses, the millionaire and billionaire, financiers and industrialists, who want to pay less and less income tax and less corporation tax. They support running down services and selling them off to private businesses. They want to restrict public spending on affordable homes.

The millionaire tax scroungers know that after years of New Labour, millions of people are getting fed up and want to see real change - so they blame the asylum seekers and migrants. They did the same thing in the 1900s when they blamed the Chinese, in the twenties and thirties when they blamed the Jews, in the 1970s when they blamed black and Asian people, and today, when they blame Arabs, Asians and Albanians.

Who's behind the stories?

Richard Desmond is the owner of the 'Express', 'Sunday Express' and 'Daily Star': He bought the Express for £125 million in 2000 with money he made in the porn industry. New Labour waved the deal through and then Desmond 'donated' £100,000 to the party. He also owns 'Asian Babes', 'Readers' Wives' and the 'Fantasy Channel'. His personal wealth is estimated as over £550 million. He's always campaigning for lower taxes... and lying about asylum seekers.

Lord Northcliffe is the owner of 'The Mail', 'Mail on Sunday' and the 'Evening Standard': The Northcliffe / Rothermere family's publishing empire goes back to the 1890s. They've been peddling lies about refugees for decades. The Mail campaigned against the Jews fleeing Nazi Germany and central Europe, using many of the same stories its now makes against asylum seekers today. In 1934, the Mail, which acted as a cheerleader for the likes of Hitler and Mussolini before the Second World War, ran a front-page headline in praise of Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists. So great was the late Lord Rothermere's love of Britain that he died in Paris to evade UK taxes.

Rupert Murdoch is owner of the 'Sun', 'News of the World' and 'The Times': One of the richest men in the world, Murdoch avoids tax whenever he can by shifting his money and profits around the world. Between 1986 and 1996 he paid no British taxes at all, despite recorded profits of almost £1 billion.

A report in the Economist newspaper in March 1999 said that between 1994 and 1998, Murdoch's News Corporation and its subsidiaries paid only £128 million in corporate taxes worldwide. That's just 6% of his profits for the same period. At the time the corporate tax rates for the three main countries in which Murdoch operates - Australia, the United States and the UK - were 36%, 35% and 30%. How many hospitals, homes and schools could have been built if Murdoch had paid his taxes like everyone else? Instead he avoids tax... and blames defenceless destitute asylum seekers for Britain's ills.

What can we do?

Don't believe the lies. Challenge them! Show this leaflet to your friends, family and workmates. Get involved helping asylum seekers and refugees in your own community. Don't live in ignorance. Asylum seekers are not the problem - go and meet some. Find out the truth for yourself.