Strange sanctuary: state, belief, and emotions in late twentieth-century Britain.

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Abstract

This PhD discusses the sanctuary "movement" of the 1980s and early 1990s in Britain and explores places of worship as sites of community organisation and unification working across nationalities, faiths, and political agendas. Synthesizing oral testimonies and archival remnants, I draw upon a corpus of theological debates and political theory to investigate how campaign networks attempted to create a moral catalyst for legal change. By analysing how grassroots campaigns wrestled for public legitimacy with the government, I aim to reveal the social and political processes that constitute negotiated interactions between 'top down' and 'bottom up' exercises of power. I explore how these campaigns saw priests and parishioners, students, communists, LGBTQ+ and anti-racist activists come together to provide sustained sanctuary for people under direct threat of deportation. In doing so my work contributes directly to historiographies of immigration, the multiple levels of the state, multiculturalism, and activism in the 'long 1980s' and questions the wider existing narratives surrounding radicalism and race within the Anglican Church. In particular, it adds to an emerging field of research illuminating the international networks of people and ideas steering the Church's ongoing process of internal decolonisation.

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This work is dedicated to Grandad, Buster, and Roy.

Contents

List of Acronyms

ACUPA	Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission of Urban Priority Areas.
AIURC	Ahmed Iqbal Ullah RACE Centre.
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation.
BCC	British Council of Churches.
BL	British Library.
CBAC	Committee for Black Anglican Concern.
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.
CRRU	Community and Race Relation Unit.
CUF	Church Urban Fund.
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights.
GLC	Greater London Council.
HC	House of Commons.
HL	House of Lords.
HOSB	Home Office Statical Bulletins.
HTA	Hackney Teachers Association.
IRA	Irish Republican Army.
JCWI	Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants.
LA	Lambeth Archives.
LPA	Labour Party Archives.
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library.

LMA	London Metropolitan Archives.
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation.
P.C.C	Parochial Church Council.
RCG	Revolutionary Communist Party.
SCC	Steve Cohen Collection.
SCM	Student Christian Movement.
TNA	The National Archive.
TLSA	Tameside Local Studies Archives.
MMU	Manchester Metropolitan University.
UP	University Press.
VMDC	Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign.
VCDC	Vinod Chauhan Defence Campaign.
WCC	World Council of Churches.

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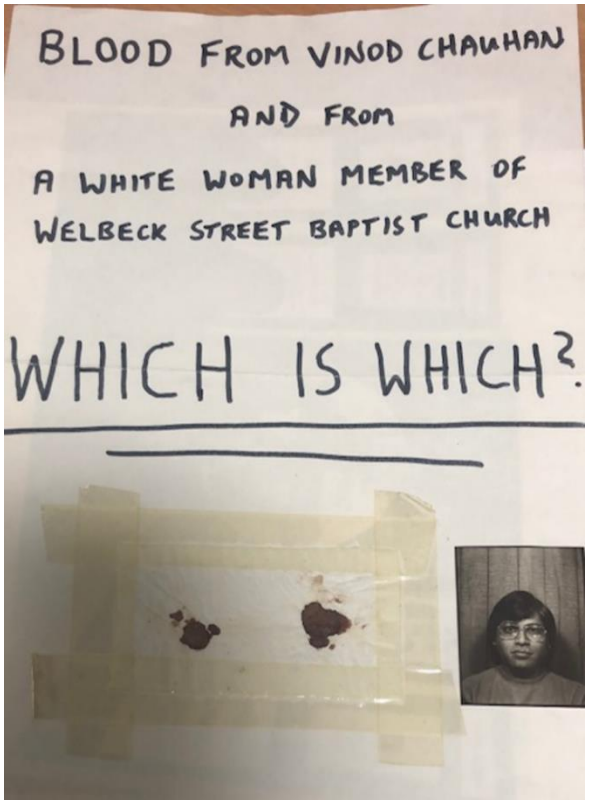
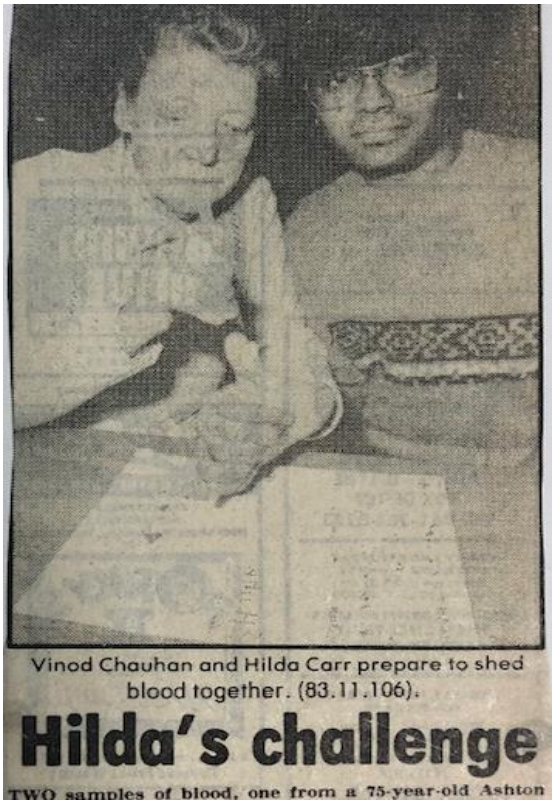
Introduction

Early one November morning in 1983, seventy-five-year-old Hilda Carr, who was described by onlookers as 'a very typical straight-forward Lancashire woman' with no known political affiliations, marched into her regular parish church on Welbeck Street in Ashton-under-Lyne armed with a sterilised sewing needle.[1] The church was hosting a 'sanctuary fast' for local Hindu resident, Vinod Chauhan, to raise funds to fight his imminent deportation to India.[2] Despite having been settled in the area for five years, Chauhan had apparently fallen foul to immigration law after his marriage to a British citizen had broken down.[3] Upon entering the church Carr dramatically unveiled her needle and used it to prick Chauhan's thumb and her own. Collecting the blood on a blotter, she raised it before the crowd and stated: 'Blood from Vinod Chauhan and blood from a white woman member of Welbeck Street Baptist church – which is which?'[4]





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[1] Paul Weller, author interview, Regent's Park College, Oxford, 05/12/2020.
[2] For more on Vinod Chauhan see: Paul Weller, *Legalised Abduction*, (Vinod Chauhan Defence Campaign, 1984) and my appendix A1.
[3] This rule stated that a marriage could not be made for the purpose of evading immigration controls but was routinely used by immigration/ entry clearance offers to trap applicants in a Kafkaesque nightmare set of questions. See: Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and immigration in Post-War Britain: the institutional origins of a multicultural nation* (Oxford UP, 2000), 231-232; *Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules* (London: HMSO, 1980), 20/02/1980.
[4] Weller, *Legalised Abduction*, 8.

Carr had intended to send the blotter to the Home Office in protest, as testimony to the common humanity of Britons and immigrants and as an embodiment of the passion she felt over the justness of the cause.[5] Her form of protest held acute resonance to Christian iconography. Other congregation members joined Chauhan and minister Weller in undertaking a three day fast at the church, while one hundred and sixty people visited the sanctuary to show support. Others still, took to the streets to march in protest, and thirty-three hundred people signed a petition to the Home Office. Chauhan himself wrote candidly and repeatedly to Minister of State at the Home Office, David Waddington: 'My life is in your hands, whatever kind of life I may have left … How can you take someone from a happy and healthy life and put them somewhere where people are dying from starvation?'[6] But despite all such passionate displays of appeal, after a few weeks Chauhan left the sanctuary of the church, went back to work, and was immediately picked up by a group of plain-clothed and uniformed police officers and held 'incommunicado' before being deported back to India.[7] Ultimately – and perhaps luckily for the historical record – Carr and Chauhan's sacrifice came to rest as a rather macabre archival relic, in a dusty regional library record store (see **figures 1 & 2**). For me personally, it is a relic that has come to symbolise the history of anti-deportation conflicts in the UK in the long 1980s in several important ways.

At its simplest, this brief episode in Ashton-under-Lyne was important because of its legacies. Chauhan's sanctuary fast lasted only a few days, and he was expeditiously deported before his anti-deportation campaign members were even able to discover where he was being detained. But he sent them a message from India: 'I won't forget in my life everybody which helped me in England … Don't forget, the way to remember is to organise.'[8] And, in many ways, the momentum generated by his campaign lived on. Hilda Carr was not only featured in the newspapers but also appeared on radio, and even contributed to a video and information pack for other communities thinking about hosting their own fasts or sanctuary campaigns.[9] News and knowledge of the sanctuary fast spread amongst networks of activists. The Baptist minister of Carr's Welbeck Street church and white Christian activist, Paul Weller, was part of Greater Manchester's Ecumenical Council and went on to publish widely on the subject of sanctuary.[10] The development of sanctuary anti-deportation campaigns spread throughout the decade, flourishing particularly in Britain's multicultural inner-city spaces, most

[5] Tameside Local Studies Archives, (TLSA) DD89/3, 'Press release: Vinod completes sanctuary fast', 9/11/1983, 1.
[6] TLSA, DD89/5, 'Letter from Chauhan to Waddington', 19/3/1984.
[7] TLSA, DD89/3, 'Press release: Vinod arrested – held incommunicado', 15/4/1984.
[8] Weller, *Legalised Abduction*.
[9] TLSA DD89/3, 'Press release: Vinod completes sanctuary fast', 9/11/1983,1; Weller, *Legalised Abduction*.
[10] Paul Weller, *Sanctuary - the beginning of a movement?* (London, Runnymede Trust, 1987); Paul Weller, *The multi-faith dimensions of sanctuary in the United Kingdom,* (Canterbury: University of Kent, 1989); Paul Weller, 'Sanctuary in Britain', in Vaughan Robinson (ed.), *The International Refugee Crisis* (Basingstoke: Macmillan,1993), 196-209.

famously in Manchester's Hulme, home to Viraj Mendis's sanctuary at the Church of Ascension from 16 December 1986 to 18 January 1989.[11]

But Greater Manchester was not the only place offering sanctuary: campaigns also emerged in London, Leicester, Bradford and Birmingham (see appendix A.). By taking *prolonged* sanctuary in religious sites, sanctuary seekers and their supporters presented government officials with a dilemma. The Home Office had been able to apprehend Chauhan relatively simply on his return to work, but individuals remaining within the confines of places of worship indefinitely challenged the British governing authorities to either sanction a physical immigration raid – and thereby cross the cultural threshold of sacrality of places of worship – or capitulate and revoke the deportation orders – thereby exposing fallibility in the immigration system. Both options often proved undesirable to the Home Office and government officials, resulting in lengthy stalemate situations. 'Obviously, it's an embarrassment', conceded Waddington, in one interview at the time.[12]

Why was it an embarrassment? And, indeed, why did it matter? This thesis takes seriously this embarrassment, such emotion signalling as we shall see, certain ways in which the late-twentieth century British state thought of itself, just as it takes seriously the emotions of those taking sanctuary and supporters such as Hilda Carr. In doing so, this work shows how sanctuary movements, that otherwise could be taken as a historical footnote, as being revealing of key trends in late twentieth-century Britain, within the Home Office and British government, within the Anglican Church as an establishment, and within wider religious sites as hubs of grassroots activity. And just as Carr's interaction with Chauhan showed how Britain's urban parochial landscape was changing, this thesis demonstrates how sanctuary movements can be used to illuminate a set of beliefs and political practices that influenced local governments as sites of municipal multiculturalism, and that converged within the unique urban spaces that acted as a site for the campaigns.

Situating Sanctuary

These sanctuary campaigns can also be seen as just one strand of a much wider international phenomenon stretching across place and time. In the 1980s offers of sanctuary were being upheld from Hackney, London, to Phoenix, Arizona – particularly via the hundreds of United States congregations involved in providing safe haven for Central American refugees fleeing civil conflict –

[11] In 1979, two Moroccans were given sanctuary in the Regent's Park Mosque in London, but the first physical public and prolonged public sanctuary campaign was for a Cypriot couple, Vassilis and Katerina Nicola in 1984 London, see chapter 1.

[12] David Waddington, interview, n.d. at [3:30] in Revolutionary Communist Group, 'Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign'. Online:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mxTPnEdEsg&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fmanchester1984.uk%2F&source_ve_path=Mjg2NjY&feature=emb_logo.[accessed 20/06/2023].

but they were also drawing on a powerful biblical tradition.[13] The legal concept of sanctuary was abolished in England by parliamentary statute in 1623, but as is shown by the actions of Carr – and many others explored later – within some religious circles sanctuary fully regained its moral legitimacy in the late twentieth-century.

We should also understand that these public sanctuary campaigns were just one off-shoot of *many* actions fighting against deportations in this period. One 1989 *Observer* report even announced that a British 'underground railroad' had been established by the lobby group Refugee Forum.[14] According to its spokesperson and former Baptist minister, Ronnie Moodley, there were one hundred contacts or 'stations' where people were prepared to protect refugees from deportation, and which had already helped over one-hundred-and-twenty-five people over the previous four years.[15] Yet while much has been written about historical manifestations of sanctuary, and while modern American and Canadian movements have received attention, Britain's counterparts have been largely neglected. If sanctuary has been looked at, it has largely been via a contemporaneous lens and thus driven by questions surrounding its strengths and weaknesses as a campaigning tactic.[16] This dissertation focuses less upon assessing sanctuary and anti-deportation campaigns as a tactic of success or failure, than upon what these campaigns can tell us about the institutions, places and people involved.

Principally, the existence of these campaigns of course beg questions as to what was going on with British immigration controls and what was driving individuals and families to take such drastic actions. How did confining themselves to the claustrophobia inducing conditions of uninhabitable religious spaces for months and sometimes years at a time, sleeping on camp beds, living off donated food, starved from sunlight, and watching passers-by on the street and wishing they 'were free like

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[13] This author has found no evidence that the US sanctuary movement was connected to the UK sanctuaries cases other than in terms of providing inspiration, friendship, and tangential support. The immigration lawyer Steve Cohen for example, did write to members of US Jewish congregations for example, and arranged visits during speaking tours. See chapter 3.
For more on the contemporaneous US sanctuary movements see; Sarah and Glen Goldstein, *Providing Sanctuary: The Jewish Role, a Practical Guide for Congregations and Individuals* (New York, 1987); Adam Waters, 'Alternative Internationalisms: The Sanctuary Movement and Jim Corbett's Civil Initiative', *Diplomatic History*, 46:5 (2022), 984–1009; Robert Tomsho, *The American Sanctuary Movement* (Austin, Texas Monthly Press, 1987); Ann Crittenden, *Sanctuary: A Story of American Conscience and the Law in Collision* (New York, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988); Miriam Davidson, *Convictions of the Heart, Jim Corbett and the Sanctuary Movement* (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 1988). On the ancient traditions of sanctuary: Shannon McSheffrey, *Seeking Sanctuary: Crime, Mercy, and Politics in English Courts, 1400-1550* (Oxford University Press, 2017). On sanctuary in continental Europe see: Weller, *Sanctuary – the beginning of*, 9-10.

[14] On the difference between 'concealment' and 'exposure' sanctuary campaigns see: Weller, 'Sanctuary in Britain', 197-199.

[15] Eileen MacDonald, 'Revealed: Safe House Network for Refugees', *The Observer*, 8/01/1989, 3; Eileen MacDonald, 'Refugees 'railroad' probed', *The Observer*, 15/01/1989, 7.

[16] See, for example: Robin Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity: The British and The Others* (New York: Longman Publishing, 1994), 130-160; Janet Batsleer, 'The Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign: struggles and experiences of sanctuary', *Critical Social Policy,* 8:22(1988),72-79; Robin Cohen, *Frontiers of identity: the British and the others* (London: Longman, 1994); Weller, *Sanctuary: The Beginning of.*

them', become the most attractive solution to their problems for over a dozen different families and individuals?[17] In part, the obvious answer lies in the changing state of immigration law at this time. Primary immigration had all but ended with the 1971 Immigration Act, which entrenched the rights of migrants who arrived in the UK before 1 January 1973, but also shifted the logic of tight immigration control to a squeeze on dependents, family reunifications, and asylum claims. Sanctuary campaigns are therefore situated in a particular moment in time, in which migrants were increasingly having to defend their rights to enter and remain, against increasingly complex rules and qualifications. This investigation therefore employs a broad focus on the long 1980s, centring around the cumulate of anti-deportation campaigns within the 1980s, but also cursorily spanning the period of the 1970-90s, in order to avoid the spread of so-called historiographical 'decaditis'.[18]

Parallel to this arch of migration restrictionism Prime Minister Thatcher was also promoting an ideology of family unity and Christian morality. In her own words 'family is the building block of society', and strong families make for a strong society.[19] She also appreciated the value of upholding the "traditional", if mythical, status of Britain as a great liberal power. 'Throughout our history, we have carried the torch for freedom', she preached in 1978.'[20] And in 1988 Bruges Speech, specifically referred to the pride 'in the way in which for centuries Britain was a home for people from the rest of Europe who sought sanctuary from tyranny.'[21] To many contemporary anti-deportation campaigners involved it was already apparent that the paradox between the purported governmental values of "family" and "freedom from tyranny", and their contradictory actions when it came to immigration was no accident.[22] 'None of this is contradictory', wrote renowned immigration lawyer Steve Cohen, because 'the family supported by Thatcher' is the 'white, British, nuclear and heterosexual family'.[23] Other kinds of family relationships, for instance, the extended family relationships of migrants,

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[17] Martin Wroe, 'Sunday's only hope rests in a room with a pew', *The Observer*, 26/02/1995, 7; Catherine Bassindale and Gill Martin, 'Sweet taste of freedom', *Evening Standard*, 8/07/1997, 19.
[18] Jason Scott Smith, 'The Strange History of the Decade: Modernity, Nostalgia and the Perils of Periodization', *Journal of Social History*, 32:2(1998),297.
[19] Margret Thatcher, Speech to Conservative Women's Conference, 25/05/1988. Online: https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107248 [accessed 29/05/2023]; Joe Moran highlights how Thatcherism was constructed around the creation of a normative everyday family 'whose iconic figures were 'home-owning, car-owning neo-suburbanites': *Reading the Everyday* (Oxon, Routledge, 2005), 14; Daniel Brown and Matthew Morrow, assert that Thatcher took "family" in its deepest Christian sense and tied it to social issues: 'Margaret Thatcher's Sermon on the Mound: "Christianity and Wealth", *Journal of Communication & Religion*, 33 (2010), 48. Jon Lawrence and Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite point out, a deliberate feature of Thatcher's political language, suggested a popular constituency grounded in a rhetorical construction of 'hard-working respectability and family-centred individualism': 'Margaret Thatcher and the Decline of Class Politics', in Robert Saunders and Ben Jackson (eds.), *Making Thatcher's Britain* (Cambridge UP, 2012),134.
[20] Margaret Thatcher, Speech at Kensington Town Hall, 19/01/1976. Online:https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/102939.[accessed 20/06/2023].
[21] Paddy Coulter, 'No Port in a Storm', *Marxism Today,* 1/09/1989.
[22] See, for example Anwar Ditta's comments in *Socialist Challenge*, 5/03/1981, 9. Or, Angie Marston and Ruth Marshall's in *Shocking Pink!* (On the offensive issue, 1987), 7.
[23] Steve Cohen, *Immigration Controls, the Family and the Welfare State*, (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2001), 37.

immigrants and refugees, 'are perceived as alien and un-British.'[24] In the 1980s the number of all deportation and removals (including but not limited to asylum seekers) averaged around 2,000 annually and had reached 4,390 by 1990.[25] Figures which plainly reveal a normalisation of forcible and enforced removals, and which, in short, have pressed me to question, how did they get away with this? This question drives the underpinning thrust of my discussion in chapter 1, analysing the language and actions of the Home Office and its opponents regarding anti-deportation campaigns, in order to illuminate the dichotomies of passion and emotion within these camps.

The fact that multiple individuals and families, from Penzance to Bradford, were turning to their local places of worship in their hour of need, and receiving sanctuary some three-hundred-and-fifty years after the practice was legally abolished, also prompts questions as to what was happening within these British religious institutions that made this a viable option to begin with. Throughout the long 1980s, I have traced the stories of fourteen public sanctuary type campaigns, eight within British churches, two within Hindu temples, two within Sikh gurdwaras, one within a mosque and one in the 'community' (see appendix for full list of known cases). A list which highlights that while this may have been a relatively small-scale phenomenon, it was a practice which gained significant traction across faiths, and predominantly within British churches.

Was the conversion of pulpits into makeshift bed and breakfast-cum-campaign centres an act sanctioned by the higher echelons of the Anglican Church or something regarded as the embarrassing misdeeds of a few renegade reverends? These are the questions explored in chapter 2. In chapter 3 we will then consider how the religious grassroots of these campaigns fit within the predominant narrative that since the 1960s, 'the churches have become increasingly irrelevant in the new cultural and ethical landscape'?[26] As minister Weller has recalled, when they began down the path of hosting modern sanctuaries, ministers did not know if they would find themselves arrested and imprisoned for 'harbouring a fugitive', yet this was a risk they knowingly took on for a godly cause.[27] Does this kind of action then perhaps link to earlier manifestations of Christian radicalism, typically associated with the late 1960s? Moreover, the fact that sanctuary campaigns were not just being held in Christian churches but also in mosques, gurdwaras and temples across the country alerts us to the fact that this was not just a Christian parable, but a story revealing of the competing moral universes being invoked by law and faiths more universally in the long 1980s.

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[24] Ibid.
[25] Robin Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity* (London, Longman, 1994), 61; Alice Bloch and Liza Schuster, 'At the Extremes of Exclusion: Deportation, Detention And Dispersal', *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 28:3(2005),491-512; Steve Cohen Collection (SCC) of the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Centre (AIURC) SC/C/L/54/13.
[26] Callum Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800–2000* (Oxon: Routledge, 2001), 191.
[27] Paul Weller, author interview, Regent's Park College, Oxford, 5/12/2019.

Sanctuaries were primarily clustered in multicultural urban areas and, in particular, stemmed from the hubs of anti-deportation campaigning occurring in Manchester and London. This pattern discernibly indicates that these campaigns were also connected to a wider history of the changing nature of Britain's multicultural urban areas and the forms of resistance manifesting within them. Part of the reason the campaigns for individuals such as Chauhan were able to gain particular media traction was due to the fact that they secured the backing of their local councillors in their appeals against the Home Office.[28] In Chauhan's case, Tameside Council agreed to display campaign leaflets and petitions in the entrance halls of Council offices where people come to pay their bills and set up an exhibition which was on display for three weeks.[29] Councillors were undoubtedly persuaded by the presence of noisy marching protests, petitions with growing lists of signatures in support, and effective press-gathering sanctuary tactics, but their support nonetheless demonstrates that at least on some level, this was a form of resistance which gained political currency within local government. How, then, does this fit within the surrounding context of a reformulating of the New Urban Left in labour metropoles? This is my question of focus in chapter 4. In chapter 5, we will then consider how these reformulations were interacting with the particular forms of social action present in the places and spaces where sanctuary was being evoked. What was it about these particular places and spaces which proved so fertile for sustained sanctuary and anti-deportation campaigns?

Before answering these questions we must understand the context in which these events were playing out. In this next section I therefore establish where these campaigns can be situated within the existing literature, and where they might reframe our historical understanding. Principally this discussion can be divided into three themes: the British state's immigration systems; the British faith institution's influences and involvement surrounding issues of race and immigration; and the local state and space's influences, involvement, and limitations, when it came to intervening in these issues as part of a wider mandate of municipal multiculturalism playing out in Labour-controlled metropoles.

The making of sanctuary in Thatcher's Britain

Much of the groundwork for the chaos of deportation orders and appeals that had engulfed the lives of individuals, families, and indeed whole communities had already been laid in the 1971 Immigration Act; the prevailing 'cornerstone of immigration law.'[30] The 1971 Act restricted the 'right of abode' in the United Kingdom to 'patrials' – an obscure archaism resurrected for and by immigration law, to include only UK citizens and Commonwealth citizens who had a parent or grandparent born in the

[28] 'Council boost in battle to save Vinod' *Tameside Advertiser*, *n.d* November 1983.
[29] *Right to be Here: a campaigning guide to the immigration laws* (London: GLC Anti-Deportation Working Group, 1985), 54.
[30] Cohen, *Immigration controls,* 33.

United Kingdom. It also established a voluntary 'repatriation' payment scheme, whereby the government would pay for the travelling expenses of any 'non-patrials' who wished to settle permanently in another country.[31] Police officers and immigration officials were granted the right to arrest any person suspected of violating the immigration regulations, without a warrant. Work permit holders were also restricted to a specific job at a specific location, prohibited from changing jobs without government approval. [32] Yet, at the same time, the 1971 law created a new 'loophole' patrial clause, for the white descendants of Britons in Australia, New Zealand and Canada – if their parents or grandparents had been born in the United Kingdom, they did not have to qualify for the work voucher scheme. Dilip Hiro estimates that it would thus actually allow for an increase in total immigration.[33] Moreover, with the entry of the United Kingdom into the European Economic Community in 1975, European workers were of course given free access to the British labour market.

It was after the Conservative election victory of 1979, however, that in Cohen's words, 'immigration control became out of control'.[34] This government had been elected partly on the back of its pledge to reduce immigration. Building on Thatcher's infamous World in Action interview in which she sympathised with people who feared being 'rather swamped' by immigrants, the Conservative manifesto had declared that 'firm immigration control' was 'essential' for 'good community relations', and promised to introduce new immigration legislation.[35] Becky Taylor has highlighted how this administration also built on the views shared by those shaping immigration policy over the previous two decades in terms of making little distinction between refugees specifically and international migration generally.[36] As Taylor finds, Britain may have been cornered into accepting thousands of Vietnamese refugees so as not to lose standing internationally, but this only intensified the need for a tougher domestic position on immigration. The new Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, for example, privately advised the Prime Minister that:

> It is necessary to tighten our immigration controls: it is also necessary that we should have a positive and defensible policy towards refugees from a brutal Communist tyranny … *if we are to take more Vietnamese refugees we must be especially vigorous in controlling immigration generally*.[37]

Before detailing his attempt to formulate new, explicitly race-based, immigration restrictions, envisaging them as 'a kind of steeple-chase, designed to weed out South Asians in particular', and

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[31] Charles Blake, 'Citizenship, Law and the State: The British Nationality Act 1981', *The Modern Law Review,* 45:2, (1982), 179.
[32] A. Sivanandan, *A Different Hunger: Writings on Black Resistance* (London: Pluto,1982), 111.
[33] Dilip Hiro, *Black British, White British* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1971), 362-3.
[34] Cohen, *Immigration controls, the*, 33.
[35] Conservative Party election manifesto, 1979. Online:www.conservativemanifesto.com/1979/1979-conservative-manifesto.shtml [accessed 31/05/2023]; Thatcher's Granada World in Action interview, online:www.youtube.com/watch?v=SpkwHr7t03w.[accessed 31/05/2023].
[36] Taylor, *Refugees,* 229.
[37] My italics. The National Archives (TNA), PREM19/130, confidential note to Margaret Thatcher PM from William Whitelaw, 9/07/1979.

expressing that although he had intended his new immigration legislation to be prepared slowly, he was willing to bring it forward so that a 'reduction in the inward flow of immigrants might compensate for a higher intake of Vietnamese refugees'.[38]

The promised new legislation came in the shape of the 1981 British Nationality Act. Ian Sanjay Patel and many others have demonstrated how the introduction of this 'enormously complex' Act 'all but ended' imperial citizenship, by dismantling the inclusivity that had been codified by the 1948 British Nationality Act.[39] Ostensibly, the 1981 Act was about defining a legal status of British citizenship for those who were 'closely connected' with Britain and who 'belong[ed]' to Britain 'for international or other purposes'.[40] But instrumentally it was an immigration act, designed to continue a process of racial exclusion by constructing British citizenship on the foundation of the 1971 Act's concept of 'partiality', tying citizenship to the right to entry and abode.[41] In a manner that denied the relevance of the British Empire in producing the category of Citizenship of the United Kingdom and colonies, Whitelaw's reading of the Act thus denied these citizen's 'close ties' with Britain, claiming that they did not 'actually belong' in Britain.[42] It removed the entitlements to citizenship from British nationals in the Commonwealth (the former colonies) thereby restricting immigration to the British Isles and creating 'aliens' within the borders of the nation-state. It thus instituted a 'citizenship gap' within the British state, and between the state and former British colonies, as large numbers of British nationals found they had been designed out of citizenship.[43] Race and ethnicity were never directly named, but as Ian Beacom points out the Act effectively designed citizenship so as to exclude Black and Asian populations in the Commonwealth while leaving 'routes home' for white nationals born within the boundaries of the empire.[44]

By the 1980s the UK had therefore become a country to which primary, non-white immigration had effectively ceased. As Randall Hansen has highlighted these Acts were also running parallel to a cycle of 'exceptional restrictiveness' in post-1970s British immigration *rules*.[45] As the focus on reducing numbers of migration shifted from economic migrants to restricting family reunifications and dependents.[46] In particular we see this manifested in forms such as the grotesque

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[38] Ibid.
[39] Ian Sanjay Patel, *We're here because you were there: immigration and the end of empire,* (Verso, 2021), 13, 10-11; David Dixon, 'Thatcher's People: The British Nationality Act 1981', *Journal of Law and Society,* 10:2(1983), 162; Nadine El-Enany, *(B)ordering Britain* (Manchester UP, 2020).
[40] British Nationality Act 1981.
Online:https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/61/contents.[accessed:05/03/2023]
[41] Rieko Karatani, *Defining British Citizenship* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), 181-190.
[42] HC Deb 28/01/1981, vol.997, cc.935-1047, 935; El-ENany, *(B)ordering Britain*.
[43] Imogen Tyler, 'Designed to fail: A biopolitics of British citizenship', *Citizenship Studies*, 14:1(2010), 62, 61–74; Alison Brysk and Gershon Shafir (eds.), *People out of place: Globalization, human rights, and the citizenship gap* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
[44] Ian Baucom, *Out of place: Englishness, empire and the locations of identity* (Princeton UP, 1999), 195.
[45] Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and immigration in Post-War Britain: the institutional origins of a multicultural nation* (Oxford UP, 2000), 233.
[46] Ibid.

virginity tests from the late 1970s but also through the spurious application of the now infamous 'primary purpose rule'(see appendix B.), introduced via the new immigrations rules of 1980.[47] As Hansen highlights immigration rules are some of the most important instruments in restricting migration, but are not debated in Parliament as bills are; they are laid before Parliament and take force immediately unless MPs object. If they do, the rules are then debated in committee, where the option is acceptance or rejection, but not amendment.[48]

In part, the 1971 Immigration and 1981 Nationality Act, and the tightening rules, also increased pressure on asylum seeker procedures as many people from Commonwealth countries who would have previously qualified for automatic right to abode had to turn to formal asylum. At the start of the 1980s, the UK was receiving around 4,000-5000 asylum seekers a year. By the end of the decade the numbers were over 10,000.[49] As Dallal Stevens notes, the 1980s was a period that witnessed a rise in the individual claims across Europe, due to a complex mix of European-wide tightening of regular channels of migration, improved air transport, and global shifts in economic, political, ethnic, environmental and human rights factors.[50] Anna Maguire has further shown how we can think about 'a long 1990s of changing immigration and asylum policy in Britain', as the European Community drew closer together and sought to 'harmonise' immigration policies. [51] A security-driven approach to asylum was propelled, for no member country wanting to be regarded as the 'soft touch' entry point through which the borders of 'Fortress Europe' might be breached.[52] Acknowledging the very genuine plight and refugee claims of tens of thousands of Sir Lankans, Kurds and other groups would have also made a mockery of the British government's anti-immigration pledge. Instead, the government not only openly regarded this rise in applications as a *problem*, but also as the *fault* of the asylum seekers, and enacted several changes in UK policy, particularly aimed at obstructing access to those in unsettled former Commonwealth countries and those seeking asylum more widely.

In 1985, new visa restrictions were introduced for Sri Lanka. From this time onwards, in almost every case in which a rise in asylum applications from a specific country were observed, e.g. Ghanaians in 1986, Kurdish in 1989, and Ugandan nationals in 1991, successive Home Secretaries

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[47] *Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules* (London: HMSO, 1980), 20/02/1980; Women arriving from India to marry were forced to undergo a vaginal examination to determine whether they were virgins: Ann Dummett and Andrew Nicol, *Subjects, Citizens, Aliens and Others*, (Northwest University Press, 1994), 25.
[48] Hansen, *Citizenship and immigration*, 238.
[49] Home Office Statistical Bulletin, Asylum Statistics UK 1992, Issue 19/93, 15/07/1993, table 1.3. These figures exclude dependents: Dallal Stevens, *UK Asylum Law and Policy: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Sweet & Maxwell, 2003), 92.
[50] Stevens, *UK Asylum Law,* 91-92; Within the European Community, the UNHCR recorded a growth from 70,500 claims in 1983 to 290, 650 claims in 1988 – though notably, Europe continued to harbour less than five per cent of the world's refugees and the brunt was, in fact, borne by the poorest countries: UNHCR Regional Office for the European Communities, Brussels, 1991,19.
[51] I am grateful to Anna Maguire, for sharing: 'Freedom of Movement in Fortress Europe: Campaigning for Refugees and Migrants in the 1990s', Rethinking the 1990s Workshop, Cambridge, September 2021. 4
[52] Maguire, 'Freedom of Movement', 3.

promptly introduced a visa requirement against the country concerned, where none previously existed. Increasingly, asylum-seekers were granted 'exceptional leave to remain', a status which could be revoked, and which was seen to denote a 'second-class' form of asylum.[53] The Carriers Liability Act of 1987 then penalised carriers, international airlines and shipping companies, if they transported people to the UK without valid documentation.[54] In effect, making 'staff at airline checkout desks surrogate immigration officers.'[55] The then Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, explained to the House of Commons that these measures were necessary because many seeking asylum simply 'leave their own homes in the Third World and seek greater security, comfort and prosperity elsewhere'.[56]

An encompassing fear of the 'scrounging foreigner' and the 'bogus refugee' thus gained significant traction in the media and public discourse.[57] Nonsense stories evoking pictures of 'floods' of 'swarming' immigrants and refugees were regularly invented, repeated, and dramatized across the press circuit. Immigration, asylum, and race coalesced into a 'magnetic' issue.[58] The origins of this hysteria might be intelligible if it was clear that the system was being widely abused. Yet the data did not support this contention. In 1989, the Refugee Council reported that only about 15,000 asylum-seekers had been received in Britain, compared with 140,000 in West Germany and 43,000 applications in France.[59] Certainly, the majority of applications came from Turkey, Sri Lanka, Somalia, and Uganda – all countries associated with poor human rights records and civil or political upheaval at the time.[60] The government-sponsored, if not led, demonization of asylum seekers and refugees was thus a necessary counterpart to denying the major geo-political structural problems that shaped their migrations, as acknowledging these would have implied that the West needed to open its borders to millions of refugees.

The 1988 Immigration Act, then gave additional powers with regard to deportation by limiting the scope of appeals for those without UK citizenship and the right to appeal against deportation for asylum-seekers. Under the 1988 Act, immigration officers were given the power to make deportation orders and offer the alleged offender a fast-track exit.[61] In effect, withdrawing the right to challenge expulsion before an independent body. It was followed by a significant increase in

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[53] Labour History Archive (LHA), CSC/22/14, British Refugee Council, *Closing Doors. Third World Refugees in Western Europe*. As cited in Maguire, 'Freedom of Movement', 5.
[54] Anne Ruff, 'The Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act 1987: its Implications for Refugees and Airlines', *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 1:4(1989), 481–500.
[55] Jill Rutter, Refugee Council. Recent Changes in Asylum Policy in Britain. As cited in Maguire, 5.
[56] Douglas Hurd, HC Deb. vol.112, col.706, 16/03/1987.
[57] S. Zimmermann, 'Reconsidering the problem of 'bogus' refugees with 'socio-economic motivations' for seeking asylum', in N. Gill, J. Caletrio and V. Mason (eds.), *Mobilities and Forced Migration* (London: Routledge, 2014), 35–52.
[58] Nancy Murray, 'Anti-racists and other demons: the press and ideology in Thatcher's Britain', *Race & Class,* 27:3(1986), 4.
[59] LHA, CSA/22/14, *Closing Doors.*
[60] Stevens, *UK Asylum,* 92.
[61] Immigration Act 1988, 10/05/2023. Online:https://www.refworld.org/docid/47fdfade0.html.[30/06/2023].

deportations at the end of the 1980s, in conjunction with the increase in the number of asylum-seekers arriving in the UK.[62] It is within *this* wider context of migration restrictionism and demonization that we must situate and interpret the unfolding debates regarding deportation cases.

Intriguingly, however, this developing restrictionism was also occurring in tandem with a rise of in the public sanctification of humanitarian values and the rights of individual refugees. Samuel Moyn has laid-out how from the middle of the twentieth-century human rights became 'injected into tradition' via public politics and international law.[63] He argues that it was not until the 1970s that the moral world of westerners significantly shifted, 'in a moment of ideological recovery' following the failure of other global emancipation ideologies such as socialism and anti-colonialism, which 'opened a space for the sort of utopianism that coalesced in an international human rights movement that had never existed before.'[64] Steffan-Ludwig Hoffman takes this further, asserting that we can speak of individual human rights as a basic concept that is, 'a contested, irreplaceable and consequential concept of global politics', only in the 1990s after the end of the Cold War.[65] Human rights, he argues, 'gained currency' through the revolutions, crises and wars, and thus the collapse of the old and emergence of a new international order in the 1990s. Much like the previous international settlements of 1918 and 1945, the chain of events after the end of the Cold War was also the implosion of empires, the eruption of ethnic civil wars, the division of states and the accompanying refugee crises and ethnic cleansings, on the one hand, and the promise of democratic participation as well as lofty visions of a new, more peaceful and just international order, on the other.[66] Moyn has subsequently reflected that 1980 marks the point when 'an unprecedented density of human rights politics truly began.'[67]

Certainly, we can see the language of the 'rights revolution' percolating into deportation cases throughout the long 1980s. As we will see throughout this thesis people under threat of deportation, their lawyers, and religious and political supporters alike employed this rhetoric. 'The Home Office classify Rosmina as a Second Class citizen thus denying her and her children a fundamental human right to family life' stated one campaign poster.[68] 'What is British justice?' asked one woman whose husband was under threat of deportation asked at anti-imperialist rally: 'Is it to take away human

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[62] Bloch and Schuster, 'At the extremes'.
[63] Samuel Moyn, *Christian Human Rights* (University of Pennsylvania, 2015), 5.
[64] Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia* (Havard UP, 2010), 206, 1; Debate remains over the date human rights, as a construct superseding nationalism began. Martinez believes human rights as a legal concept originated in international law forbidding the slave trade: Jenny Martinez, *The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law* (Oxford UP, 2014); Lynn Hunt argues they gained in currency in the eighteenth century: Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: Norton & Company, 2007).
[65] Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, 'Human Rights and History', *Past & Present*, 232(2016), 279-310, 282.
[66] Hoffman, 'Human Rights and', 290.
[67] Samuel Moyn, *Not enough: human rights in an unequal world* (Harvard UP, 2018), x.
[68] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/12, 'Stop the Deportation of Mohammad Azhar', 1

rights from us?'[69] Both campaigners and the British authorities also made repeated and explicit reference to the right for individuals to be protected from a 'well-founded fear of persecution' through refoulment in particular. Matthew Gibney has highlighted how the Refugee Convention curbed the politics of restrictionism in the realm of asylum by complicating, frustrating, and competing with government attempts to manage asylum in a way that causes the least possible political disturbance.[70] Human rights organisations, national constitutions, and international declarations and conventions certainly had important spillover effects for non-citizens, 'not least of all in the case of immigrants', primarily manifest in the development and consolidation of due process protections for asylum seekers.[71]

Such dialectical trends, asylum restrictionism and the rights revolution, might seem inherently contradictory. But we must recognise that states sign human rights conventions for a variety of reasons – both principled and pragmatic – ranging from a real commitment to human rights, to the desire to stabilise democratic governance internally, to the hope of gaining entrance to regional or international bodies, like the EU.[72] Andrew Moravcsik has added that 'the primary proponents' of reciprocally binding human rights obligations were actually the governments of newly established democracies; focusing on the establishment of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in particular reveals that what ostensibly appears to be a conversion to moral altruism was 'in fact, an instrumental calculation of how best to lock in democratic governance against future opponents'.[73] The end of the Cold War may have thus triggered human rights to 'gain currency' internationally in some respects, but this did not necessarily translate into the realm of asylum rights. As Gibney views it, with the demise of the threat of communism, European governments lost the most 'cogent national interest justification for accepting refugees' and became deprived of 'the most powerful argument they had for constraining highly restrictionist public attitudes.'[74]

Viewing these strands of historiography collectively then situates this as a period during which there was a growing pressure on the British government and its ministers to refer to human rights and to appear to be taking them into account, accompanied by a growing governmental

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[69] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/12, 'Anti-imperialist unit London rally', 1.
[70] Gibney, 'State of Asylum', 73.
[71] Gibney states that prior to the passage of the Human Rights Act (UK) in 1999 the protection and safeguarding of rights was left to governments more concerned with the pragmatics of majority votes. He presents the courts as the guardians of rights especially since that Act came into existence.
As Yasemin Soysal has shown, in most European states permanent residents enjoy a panoply of legal rights and protections that make them difficult to distinguish under law from citizens, see Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (University of Chicago Press, 1994).
[72] Matthew Gibney, 'The State of Asylum: Democratisation, Judicialisation and Evolution of Refugee Policy', in Susan Kneebone (ed), *The Refugees Convention 50 Years on: Globalisation and International Law* (Kent: Ashgate, 2003), 74.
[73] Andrew Moravcsik, 'The Origins of Human Rights Regimes: Democratic Delegation in Postwar Europe', *International Organization,* 54:02(2000), 220.
[74] Gibney, 'The State of Asylum', 57-59.

prerogative to circumvent them. This perhaps supports Taylor's findings that individual asylum seekers increasingly 'needed to draw explicitly on their own rights set out in the [1951 United Nations] Refugee Convention to demonstrate their own particular experience of persecution in order to be granted refuge.'[75] According to contemporary Home Office minister, Timothy Renton, the Refugee Convention 'is at the heart of our approach to the determination of refugee status and processing the cases of individual asylum-seekers'; standing 'to one side of our general Immigration Rules and outside normal procedures'.[76] To maintain this public balancing-cum-distancing act, it was thus not only necessary to present a narrative of the "asylum problem" as one in which the system was being commonly abused as opposed to human right conventions, but it was also pragmatic for the Home Office to expound that their decisions to reject claims and enforce deportations were driven by factual numbers, considered legal clauses, and unemotional, level-headed "normal procedure". In the case of Chauhan, for instance, he was simply told by the Home Office representative before the Immigration Appeal's Adjudicator that in cases like his 'the normal course' was deportation.[77]

It is truism that language and action are often two very different things, however, and work surrounding history's 'emotional turn' has encouraged us to pay closer attention to displays of emotion or their apparent absence, as historically and culturally contingent, and as a sociological process.[78] Several scholars, for instance, have provided ways to think about how emotions are produced as group or cultural experiences, and how such group understandings of emotion then come to have social and political effects in daily life.[79] Such theories might readily be employed to help explain how many of the anti-deportation campaigners and their governmental and Home Office opponents that we encounter in this study frequently appeared to be "talking past" each other. As we shall see in chapter 1, in particular, the two sides of this debate only seemed to become more polarised in style and content throughout the 1980s.

Yet we should also be cautious of falling into the predominant but overly simplistic popular narratives that start and finish with the popular criticism of bureaucracy as a formalized and emotionless form of societal governance. This image of bureaucratic government systems, as 'cold'

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[75] Taylor, *Refugees*, 273.
[76] Timothy Renton, Minister for State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office between 1985 and 1987, in 'Refugees: The Responsibilities of the UK Government', in Vaughan Robinson (ed.), *The International Refugee Crisis* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), 296.
[77] TLSA DD 289/3, Press release 15/4/1983, 2.
[78] Frank Biess *et al*., 'Forum: ''History of Emotions'', *German History*, 28:1(2010), 67–80.
[79] In particular: Rosenwein coined the phrase 'emotional community', to describe a group of people who shared the same language and system of valuation of emotion: Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 2011); Peter and Carol Stearns's concept of 'emotional styles' has emphasised how cultures promoted particular 'styles' of emotional life that then became a marker of cultural difference: Peter Stearns and Carol Stearns, 'Emotionology: clarifying the history of the emotions and emotional standards', *The American Historical Review*, 90:4(1985), 813–836; And William Reddy's concept of 'emotional regimes', has highlighted how cultural ideas about emotion become implicated in political systems, where people who conform to the norm are rewarded as well as the reverse: William Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling* (Duke UP, 2009).

and rational, is of course deeply ingrained and goes back to Max Weber's famous description of bureaucracy as a system 'without anger and fondness'. [80] However, studies from the history of emotions and science perspective have shown how notions closely associated with dispassionateness, such as objectivity, can just as well be viewed as inherently political notions, reflecting the moral values of the practitioners and their emotional attachments to them.[81] Patently such theories could have important implications for how we view systems of governance pertaining to migration too. Indeed, Nick Gill's recent empirical research into the construction of indifference towards suffering amid post-2003 practices of UK immigration control and asylum politics, finds that 'bureaucracy and sensitivity are *woven together in subtle and insipid ways*', presenting a 'softer side' that actively enrols emotions such as care among its functionaries while simultaneously entrenching forms of 'moral distancing' between functionaries and people under their care.[82]

Could paying attention to the Home Office's dealings with asylum and deportation cases in the long 1980s thus reveal further insight into how this process of 'insipid' emotional enrolment and detached moral distancing has come about? As we will explore further in chapter 1 further, being alive to the dichotomies in affective expression and action between individuals such as Chauhan and Carr on the one hand, and Hurd and Waddington on the other, is perhaps essential to understanding how a tightening system ostensibly driven by numbers and facts was perhaps far more increasingly driven by emotion and encouraged public perceptions of emotion than first meets the eye.

Faith in Transition

The other historiographical area sanctuary campaigns plainly touch upon is religion, and the Church relations which made sanctuary a viable option in the first place. Admittedly, upon beginning my research into church action in late twentieth-century Britain, I was immediately struck by pangs of imposter syndrome. I did not know the lingo; my prelates from my priests, my schisms from my denominations, and my only terms of reference were some half-remembered hymns from the obligatory attendances at family christenings, weddings, funerals, and the occasional Christingle

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[80] Max Weber, 'Politics as vocation', in M. Weber*, et al*. (eds), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Routledge, 1948), 77–128; Weber, 'Bureaucracy', in Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, trans., *Economy and Society* (University of California Press, 1978), 225:
Zygmunt Bauman has also persuasively outlined how bureaucracies tend to produce 'moral distance' through various mediating mechanisms, which allow their functionaries to treat their subjects dispassionately, indifferently and unemotionally: Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), 25.

[81] Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007); Peter Becker 'Decency and Respect. New Perspectives on Emotional Bonds between State and Citizens', *Administory*, 3:1(2018), 80-90; David Graeber, *The Utopia of Rules* (London: Melville House, 2015), 164.

[82] My italics. Nick Gill, *Nothing personal? Geographies of Governing and Activism in the British Asylum System* (Blackwell: Online ed: 2016), 20.

service thrown in for good measure. Callum Brown's account of a modern British public who 'may have a sense of religiosity or spirituality' but are 'not familiar – like their parents and their grandparents – in having to express this', therefore struck close to home.[83] His explanation is of a 'profound rupture' in the British psyche during the "swinging sixties", which bred suspicion of creeds in favour of the flowering of less regimented beliefs that 'permanently disrupted' the cycle of inter-generational renewal of Christian affiliation resonated.[84] And, by all accounts, this matches the overwhelming weight of statistics that prove that in unprecedented numbers the British people since the 1960s have stopped going to church, have allowed their church membership to lapse, have stopped marrying in church and have neglected to baptise their children.[85] All of which led Brown to declare the 'Death of Christian Britain', the 'demise of the nation's core moral identity' and the destruction of the nation's 'core religious culture' by the end of the twentieth century.[86]

Coming from my outsider's viewpoint, I had prejudicially expected to find this decline being both carried and resisted by a predominantly conservative, insular, Church of England. Quaint but detached Vicarages of Dibley being run by busy-body parish councils and retirees overly concerned with summer fetes and parking permits perhaps? Or tea parties of deeply moralistic Mary Whitehouse-fans, indoctrinated by a popular politicisation of moralising Christianity from the Right?[87] Whitehouse, after all, has been described by Lawrence Black as 'Britain's most recognisable Christian', and she was certainly a household name at this time, for as Matthew Grimley has emphasised such moralist sections of the New Right gained strength as Thatcher's premiership progressed.[88] Whitehouse and her supporters blamed the Church's response to secularisation, as much as secularisation itself, for the nation's 'moral decline.'[89] Such tropes were certainly still alive and well, as A. D. A. France-Williams's recent account of institutional racism and the Church of England attests, for many in high office in the English church, 'factors like college, cricket, class and context' continue to confer a set of interlocking, advantages known as 'white privilege'.[90] Yet I also found examples of white women, including Hilda Carr, making radical acts of Christian self-sacrifice, becoming engaged in anti-racist and explicitly political acts. In addition to Carr, I found a whole range

[83] Brown, *The Death of,* 182.
[84] Brown, *The Death of*, 1.
[85] Bryan Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective* (Oxford UP, 1982); Brown, *The Death of,* 190.
[86] Brown, *The Death*, 1-3.
[87] Ben Thompson, *Ban This Filth!: Letters From the Mary Whitehouse Archive* (London: Faber & Faber, 2012); Eliza Filby, *God and Mrs Thatcher* (London: Biteback, 2015) 99-115;143-163.
[88] Lawrence Black, *Redefining British Politics: Culture, Consumerism, and Participation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 124; Matthew Grimley, 'Thatcherism, Morality, and Religion', in *Making Thatcher's Britain*, 79.
[89] Lawrence Black, 'There was Something about Mary: The national viewers' and listeners' Association and Social Movement Campaigning', in Nick Crowson, Matthew Hilton, and James McKay (eds.) *NGOs in Contemporary Britain: Non-State Actors in Society and Politics Since 1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 191.
[90] A. D. A France-Williams, *Ghost Ship: Institutional Racism and the Church of England* (London: SCM, 2020), xv.

of Christian activists dedicated to progressively combining their faith with pressing areas of social injustice and modern politics, not just within in their local areas, but often with an eye towards national and international change. Priests and parishioners who were equally morally concerned about homelessness or police prejudice in their locality as they were with Britain's humanitarian responsibilities as a global power.

Far from just fastidious village fete facilitators, such figures seem to share more similarities in outlook and action with the radical Christians highlighted by Samuel Brewitt-Taylor as making significant contributions to the political radicalism of the late 1960s.[91] Or the Christian 'radical revivalism' Holger Nehring identified within the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) between 1957-1964, as participants sought to bring back a set of moral beliefs and community to the centre of British politics which they felt had become absent.[92] Indeed, Brewitt-Taylor has diligently traced a trajectory of 'Christian radicalism' from William Temple's 1940 *Hope of a New World*, to Anglican actions against world hunger and apartheid, to the Student Christian Movement's (SCM)'pursuit of the politics of world transformation' in the late 1960s.[93] Brewitt-Taylor's narrative ends at this point, however, with the fading hope of imminent political transformation ensuring the disintegration of the movement for a Christian revolutionary politics – symbolised by SCM's withdrawal to a rural commune in 1973. Yet sanctuary campaigners alert us to ways that traces of this radicalism in fact continued to emerge well into the 1980s. In direct opposition to the politicisation of Christianity on the Right – as emblemised by the passionate politics of Mary Whitehouse – and in part influenced by a radical tradition of Christianity in America – perhaps forgotten due to the vocality of the Christian Right.[94]

Certainly, sanctuary campaigns and their passionate participants do not ostensibly align with Brown's narrative of churches not only declining since the 1960s but becoming 'increasingly irrelevant in the cultural and ethical landscape', signifying the wider 'death', 'demise', and 'destruction' of Christian Britain.[95] Perhaps they thus add to the growing weight of research suggesting that this narrative is an overly-emotionally charged one, driven by nostalgia and certainly blinkered to the significant uplift that Commonwealth and later generations of migration have had, and continue to have, on the Anglican Church. Albeit sometimes in new and more diverse forms such as Pentecostal and Evangelical worship. Yes, Britain undoubtedly experienced a secular turning point

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[91] Samuel Brewitt-Taylor, *Christian Radicalism in the Church of England and the Invention of the British Sixties, 1957-1970* (Oxford UP, 2018), 202-223.
[92] Holger Nehring, 'The Long, Long Night Is Over.' The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 'Generation' and the Politics of Religion (1957-1964)', in Garnett J, Grimley, M, Harris A., *et al*. (eds.) *Redefining Christian Britain: Post 1945 Perspectives* (London: SCM Press, 2011), 140, 144-145.
[93] Brewitt-Taylor, *Christian Radicalism*, 213.
[94] Jessica Prestidge, 'Housewives having a go: Margaret Thatcher, Mary Whitehouse and the appeal of the Right Wing Woman in late twentieth-century Britain', *Women's History Review*, 28:2(2019), 277-296.
[95] Brown, *The Death*, 190., 3.

in the 1960s; however, this process was by no means absolute.[96] And the historiographical tide is perhaps now turning in favour of more nuanced descriptions such as that provided by Rebecca Cato and Linda Woodhead, who find that although religion may have seemed to have gone away in the 1960s-1990s, 'the religious field was in fact *transforming* outside of the control of the state and church and in relation to new opportunities, market and media.'[97] Historians such as Matthew Hilton and Anna Bocking-Welch, have simultaneously highlighted the growth and spread of a modern moral humanitarianism at this time, as demonstrated by the rise of NGO as an alternative kind of 'ordinary politics', and inclusive of religious groupings such as Christian Aid.[98]

So to what extent can sanctuary campaigns be seen to represent this process of transformation in British religion as opposed to decline? As we see in chapter 3, far from manifestations of religious sites becoming increasingly 'irrelevant in the cultural and ethical landscape' sanctuary campaigns better evidence how some were rising to the needs of 1980s Britain's multicultural inner-cites, by not only creating radical multifaith spaces of exchange and unification for people of different races, religions, cultural and political outlooks, but by further propelling immigration inequalities onto the public and political agenda.[99] We will further consider how sanctuary may even be seen as an early manifestation of what Jane Garnett and Alana Harris have observed as a new forms of 'religious rescripting' occurring in Britain's cities in the twenty-first century: 'ways in which religious constructions of identity and ways of imagining the world have engaged with the contingencies and pluralism of migrational life' and in so doing have 'developed distinctive ways of thinking both about religion and about migration' [100]

Sanctuary campaigns also offer us a well-positioned window through which to observe some of these potential 'transformations' occurring within the establishment of the Anglican Church in particular. They offer a chance to understand how factors such as 'college, cricket, and class' could continue to influence the Church, simultaneously to radical networks of anti-apartheid, anti-nuclear, and anti-racist concerns. Sanctuary campaigns are uniquely placed to offer insights into wider historiographical ambiguities surrounding the established Church's in three realms: international engagement, political engagement, and race relations engagement in the long 1980s. These campaigns sit at a natural cross-section between these three historiographical realms, which have been

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[96] See, Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain Since 1945: Believing Without Belonging* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).
[97] My italics. Linda Woodhead, Rebecca Cato, *Religion and Change in Modern Britain*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2012), 1.
[98] Matthew Hilton, 'Politics is Ordinary: Non-governmental Organizations and Political Participation in Contemporary Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 22:2(2011), 230–268; Anna Bocking-Welch, *British civic society at the end of empire* (Manchester UP, 2019).
[99] Brown, *The death of*, 191.
[100] Garnett and Harris, *Rescripting Religion in ,*16.

independently extensively researched, but less so in ways which attempt to make sense of these narratives collectively.

As Gerald Parsons describes, in the decades after the Second World War the relationship between religion and politics generally shifted from one based on consensus to one of confrontation.[101] As the post-war consensus supporting the welfare state broadly aligned with progressive and prominent Christian social thought on social and economic matters, gave way to more widespread debate on such matters in the context of the spirit of 'decline' and "crisis" pervasive in 1970s Britain.[102] It is also significant that during the decade from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s the British churches' discussion and thinking about political and social issues was being increasingly impinged upon by international developments.[103] The ecumenical movement – and especially the World Council of Churches (WCC) – entered upon a markedly politicized phase of its history, as decolonized and developing counties increasingly took their places within the WCC and issues of racism, inequality and support of the 'liberation movements' came to prominence. Culminating in the establishment of a Programme to Combat Racism in 1969.[104] And, theologically finding expression in the reinterpretation of traditional understandings of 'salvation'.[105] Around the same time, we also see the emergence of Latin American 'Liberation Theology', and 'Black Liberation Theology' with its emphatically left-wing political stance and emphasis upon the biblical text as a narrative of God's liberation of his people from oppression and injustice.[106]

These events and ideas fed back into the life of the British Churches, changing the context and ethos of debate and discussion of social and economic issues, and contributing to what Jane Garnett, Matthew Grimley and Alana Harris *et al.* observed as 'a clear transition' from the notions of 'liberal Anglican' idea of the common good in 1945, to its reconfiguration within a pluralistic and global context.[107] Tal Zalmanovich, for example, has highlighted the 'embedment of the local in the global' evident in the Church's acts of protest at this time, as the World Council of Churches (WCC) and its national counterpart the British Council of Churches (BCC), demonstrated discernible influences via anti-apartheid movements.[108] In chapter 3 I seek to extend this history into the 1980s to

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[101] Gerald Parsons, 'From consensus to confrontation' in *The Growth of Religious Diversity* (London, Routledge, 1994), 131.
[102] Alwyn Turner, *Crisis? What Crisis? Britain in the 1970s* (Arum, Online:2013).
[103] Parsons, 'From consensus to', 128.
[104] Between 1970 and 1975 the WCC's PCR donated a total of $70,000 to a range of British anti-racist groups, including the Anti-Apartheid Movement, the Institute of Race Relations, and a Free University for Black Studies: Darril Hudson, *World Council of Churches in international affairs* (Leighton Buzzard, 1977), 303.
[105] *Church Times,* 30/05/1969; Claude Welch, 'Mobilizing Morality: The World Council of Churches and its Program to Combat Racism, 1969-1994', *Human Rights Quarterly* (2001), 866; Pauline Webb, *Salvation Today* (London: SCM, 1974).
[106] For a useful introduction to liberation and black theology see: Linda Woodhead, Hiroko Kawanami and Christopher Partidge (eds.), *Religions in the Modern World* (London: Routledge, 2009).
[107] Garnett and Harris, *Redefining Christian Britain*, 14.
[108] Tal Zalmanovich,' "What is needed is an ecumenical act of solidarity:" the World Council of Churches, the 1969 Notting Hill Consultation on Racism, and the anti-apartheid struggle', *Safundi*, 20:2 (2019), 176.

examine what progressive Christianity looked like at the grassroots level, whereas in chapter 2 we consider the extent to which this radicalism permeated the higher levels too.

Considering the weight of the contextual international and domestic political issues effecting the Church and government it was perhaps inevitable that the 1980s has become commonly viewed as the time when this transition from 'consensus to confrontation' came to a head, with the British churches and government appearing sharply and consistently at odds with each other.[109] The press certainly had a catalogue of confrontations to report on, from debates over the terms of the British Nationality Act of 1981 and the tone of Archbishop of Canterbury's sermon at St. Paul's Cathedral after the Falklands War to, most notoriously, *Faith in the City*, the Church of England's heavily critical 1985 report on government policy in the inner cities.[110]

Thatcher, the Prime Minister, and Archbishop Runcie, the primate of the Church, plainly had antithetical styles of leadership and sharply contrasting moral outlooks. Thatcher's 'conviction politics' have been noted to have promoted a particular kind of 'moralistic individualism'.[111] In her words: 'Christianity is about spiritual redemption, not social reform' and 'if a man will not work, he shall not eat.'[112] Runcie, on the other hand, preferred 'leading from behind' and warning virtuously of the danger of regarding 'success as a sort of blessing or reward for righteousness'.[113] Yet personal reflections from contemporary politicians and Runcie have also revealed remarkably friendly relationships between the two sides of the Thames.[114] Eliza Filby has also found the Church hierarchy's response to Thatcherism 'remained inherently limited'.[115] This contradiction between public perceptions of animosity and private recollections of friendship surely warrant further questioning into the exact nature of this relationship between the two British establishments. Can sanctuary campaigns, which necessarily involved both the Church and the government offer us more insight into how this relationship of power played out, be that friendly or confrontational?

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[109] D. L. Baker, 'Turbulent priests: Christian opposition to the Conservative Government since 1979', *The Political Quarterly*, 62 (1991), 90-105, 91; Johnathon Raban, *God, Man and Mrs Thatcher* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1989) 21; Graham Walker and Tom Gallagher, *Sermons and Battle Hymns* (Edinburgh UP, 1990), 105.
[110] Parsons, 'From consensus to', 125, 135-144; 'Runcie challenges Tory Handling of Miners' Strike', *The Times*, 8/10/1984; *Faith in the City: a call for action by church and nation, The Report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas* (London: Church House Publishing, 1985).
[111] Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 'Neo-Liberalism and morality in the making of Thatcherite Social Policy', *The Historical Journal*, 55:12(2012), 497-520.
[112] Margaret Thatcher, 'Sermon on the Mound', 21/05/1988, General Assembly Church of Scotland; Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 'Neo-Liberalism and morality in the making of Thatcherite Social Policy', *The Historical Journal*, 55:12(2012), 497-520; Filby, God and Mrs Thatcher: Religion and Politics in 1980s Britain, PhD Thesis, University of Warwick, 2010,132.
[113] 'leading from behind' quoted from chaplain Graham James in Humphrey Carpenter, *Robert Runcie: The Reluctant Archbishop* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1996), 379; David Say, 'Nudging the Government: Runcie and Public Affairs', in S. Platten (ed.), *Runcie: On Reflection* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2002), 33; Runcie in *Director*, magazine of the Institute of Directors, 1989, in Ian Bradley, *Marching to the Promised Land* (London: John Murray, 1992), 137.
[114] Carpenter, *Robert Runcie*, 220.
[115] Filby, God and Mrs, 132.

In particular, according to Parsons, 'perhaps the most obvious instance', of this shift towards the Churches confrontational stance 'was in the area of race relations', which he found 'rapidly became a major concern of the British churches, both within individual denominations and in interdenominational groups' from the 1970s.[116] But again, under closer examination this straightforward teleological narrative becomes more complex.

Without question, the story of post-war Anglican church's race relations is one marked by painful interactions between white and racialised Christians in Britain. As countless personal testimonies attest, for many Commonwealth migrants in the 1950s and 1960s their attempts at relating to the mainline churches in Britain proved a bitter if not traumatising experience.[117] Instead of the warm fellowship of a 'mother' church that bound members into one spiritual family, many have recounted experiencing 'cold' standoffishness, if not outright hostility, from white parishioners; vicars telling them not to come again because his 'congregation wouldn't like it'; a child's robe being lifted before his baptism 'to check for his tail'.[118] In response many left the Church altogether.[119] Others persevered, such as a small but significant proportion of Afro-Caribbeans who attended Catholic churches.[120] Others still, left to help establish Black majority independent churches that better fitted the urgent congregational needs and the doctrinal positions, church teachings and social activities and came from within a Black Christian heritage.[121] And, in short, were less racist.

From the 1970s we certainly find repeated interdenominational initiatives to at least address some of the issues of racial inequalities prevalent within British churches and society more widely: the British Council of Church's Community and Race Relations Unit (CRRU), and the Evangelical Race Relations Group was founded in 1974, the Joint Working Party of Black-led and White-led

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[116] Parsons, 'From consensus to', 130.
[117] Io Smith and Wendy Green, *An Ebony Cross: Being a Black Christian in Britain Today* (London, Harper Collins, 1989), 40–41; Philip Mohabir, *Building Bridges: A Dramatic Personal Story of Reconciliation and Evangelism* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988); Rosemarie Mallet 'A Testimony to Staying Power and Resilience', in Richard Reddie, *Race for Justice* (Monarch Books, Online:2022).
[118] John Wilkinson, Renate Wilkinson and James Evans, *Inheritors Together* (London: Race, Pluralism and Community Group of the Board of Social Responsibility of the Church of England, 1985), 13; Mukti Barton*, Rejection, Resistance and Resurrection: Speaking Out on Racism* (London: Longman & Todd, 2005).
[119] One 1963 survey conducted in London found that sixty-four percent of West Indian immigrants questioned used to attend church regularly before coming to Britain. However, ninety-four percent of them who had, no longer did so: Clifford S. Hill, *West Indian Migrants and the London Churches* (Oxford UP, 1963), 5.
[120] Johnson's Midlands study found a small but significant proportion of Afro-Caribbeans attendeding Catholic churches: Mark Johnson, ''Race', religion and ethnicity: religious observance in the West Midlands', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 8:3(1985), 427; Hornsby-Smith estimated that there were approximately 150,000 Roman Catholics in Britain born in the New Commonwealth in 1985: Michael Hornsby-Smith, 'The immigrant background of Roman Catholics in England and Wales: a research note', *New Community,*13:1(1986),79-85; How we stand: a report on black Anglican membership of the Church of England in the 1990s (General Synod, 1994). Online:https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/how_we_stand_1990s.pdf.[accessed 22/05/2023].
[121] Patrick Kalilombe, 'Black Christianity in Britain', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 20:2(1997), 306-324; Mark Sturge, *Look What the Lord Has Done!* (Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 2005).

Churches, was established under the auspices of the BCC and Black leaders in 1977, and the militantly anti-racist organization, Christians Against Racism and Fascism, formally launched in 1978. Edson Burton has noted how the appointment of Gus John, 'the very apostle of Black Power' to lead the BCC Working Party responsible for the report by the Working Party *The New Black Presence in Britain: a Christian critique* (1976), reflected a 'serious attempt to gain a credible perspective' on Black experience in Britain from the Churches - over a decade before the Church commissioned its more famous *Faith in the City* report.[122]

The wider histories of Black experiences of the city in post-war Britain, as Tank Green points out, have only touched on the role of religion, but this is beginning to change.[123] Claude Welch has particularly emphasized the 'mobilizing morality' of World Council of Churches Programme to Combat Racism from 1969-1994, in terms modifying popular attitudes and government policies toward apartheid in particular. John Maiden has also outlined the significance of the grassroots development from the 1970s of a cross-cultural ecumenical dialogue, sponsored by the BCC, in the context of both growing white liberal interest in the 'multi-racial' society and the increasing public assertiveness of collective Black Christian consciousness. According to Maiden this dialogue marked 'the beginnings of a shift towards an inclusive understanding of British Christianity and an ecumenism based on a model of Christian partnership.'[124] Moreover, David Geiringer's important intervention on the role of radical priests and parochial domesticity in 1980s inner-cities, Kieran Connell's discussion of Methodist and Pentecostal Churches in Birmingham, and Camilla Schofield and Ben Jones's exploration of a 'motley group' of Methodist ministers and Christian Workers critiquing a '[w]elfarist, ameliorative approach to antiracism after the 1958 Notting Hill riots', together highlight how in at least some areas, British churches were being reworked from below to better befit the demands of a more multicultural nation.[125] Ostensibly, the trajectory of such research thus supports Parsons 'perhaps the most obvious instance', of this shift towards the Churches confrontational stance from the 1970s 'was in the area of race relations',.[126]

Yet accounts from within the Church of England, and from the various later reminiscences of ethnic minority Christian leaders also attest that for most working to improve the Church of England's

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[122] Edson Burton, From assimilation to anti-racism: the Church of England's response to Afro-Caribbean migration 1948-1981, PhD thesis, University of the West of England, Bristol, 2004. 382; *The New Black Presence in Britain: A Christian Scrutiny* (London: BCC/CRRU, 1976); *Faith in the,* (1985).
[123] Tank Green 'Digging at Roots and Tugging at Branches: Christians and "Race Relations" in the Sixties', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Exeter, 2016, 3.
[124] John Maiden, ''Race', Black Majority Churches, and the Rise of Ecumenical Multiculturalism in the 1970s', *Twentieth Century British History*, 30:4(2019), 531–556, 556.
[125] Kieran Connell, *Black Handsworth: Race in 1980s Britain* (University of California Press, 2019),140-46; Claude Welch, 'Mobilizing Morality: The World Council of Churches and its Program to Combat Racism, 1969-1994', *Human Rights Quarterly* (2001), 863-910; Camilla Schofield and Ben Jones, '"Whatever Community Is, This Is Not It": Notting Hill and the Reconstruction of "Race" in Britain after 1958', *Journal of British Studies,* 58:1(2019), 142–73.
[126] Parsons, 'From consensus to', 130.

response to race relations, it has continued to be, as Bishop Rosemarie Mallet has recently summarised: a 'testimony to staying power and resilience'[127] In 1992 Reverend John Root, specified the myriad forms of racism still to be found in the Church of England.[128] Anglican parish priest David Isiorho's examination of Church reports on race from 1985 to 1996 found them to be merely an 'exoneration for senior office holders who abdicate any individual responsibility'.[129] In 2005 Bishop Sentamu used the Forword to Mukti Barton's book to criticize fellow church leaders for failing to deal properly with discrimination in the organization.[130] Even more recently, the books of the indomitable lay advisor for Glynne Gordon-Carter and the Black Anglican priest Azariah France-Williams have detailed the continuation of a hostile environment within the church.[131]

Matthew Grimley has suggested that some diversity in experience might be expected, for the Anglian parochial system meant that 'it was well placed to respond to the needs of immigrants in particular communities', but conversely meant that when local clergy or congregations failed to do so 'the entire church could be accused of racism'.[132] Yet Grimley also concluded his 'long-view' on the Church of England, race, and multiculturalism, by emphasising 'Above all,' the 'ambivalence' of its collective response to immigration: 'sometimes hamstrung by assumptions of cultural or religious superiority and caught off-guard by the suddenness of change but also sometimes willing to incur the wrath of politicians, press, and by defending ethnic minorities.'[133] My examination of the Church's response to controversial sanctuary campaigns in chapter 2 seeks to shed further detail not only into how these ambivalences occurred, but how they might seem institutionally destined to be repeated.

The state multiculturalism and the New Urban Left

The third thematic area in which sanctuary and anti-deportation campaigns hold potential to shed light between current historiographical debate is that of the nature of municipal multiculturalism and anti-racism. How was it that while the British national government and its spokespeople were adamant that deporting individuals such as Chauhan was "the normal course", representatives from his local city government were simultaneously offering statements of support and sanctioning their offices to display promotional material about his campaign.[134] And, what can a closer examination of this

[127] Mallet, 'A Testimony to'; David Haslam, *Race for the Millennium* (Cambridge: Grove Books,1996).
[128] John Root, 'Racism in the Church of England', *Anvil*, 9:1(1992), 11-25.
[129] Isiorho, 'Black Theology in', 29-48.
[130] Barton, *Rejection, Resistance and*, vii.
[131] Glynne Gordon-Carter, *An Amazing Journey: the Church of England's response to institutional racism* (Church House Publications, 2013); France-Williams, *Ghost Ship.*
[132] Matthew Grimley, 'The Church of England, Race and Multiculturalism, 1962–2012', in Garnett and Harris, *Rescripting Religion*, 192.
[133] Grimley, 'The Church of', 201.
[134] Weller, *Legalised Auction.*

interplay of power show us about the leverage and limitations of the project of municipal multiculturalism more widely? In particular, could exploring how such interaction came about between sanctuary campaigns and the local state helpfully expand the narrative of the New Urban Left at this time, to include faith representatives, NGOs, or groupings sometimes overlooked in this blurry area of activism and local state negotiation and incorporation? The New Left of the 1970s did not just disappear overnight with the ascent of Thatcherism, so it follows that a portion of its thinking and people became enveloped into the remaining New Urban Left in the 1980s. Sanctuary campaigns offer a remarkable window into municipal politics in the 1980s; the institutions, beliefs and political actors involved; the importance of both internationalism and local community representation uncovering, then, a new history the left in late-twentieth century Britain.

Of course, during the Conservatives nearly two-decade-long reign from 1979 to 1997, most metropolitan local authorities were labour, prompting a prolonged ideological and fiscal battle. Large councils such as the GLC, Manchester, and Sheffield, became bastions of the Left, fighting to keep their heads above the tide of Thatcherite corporate monetarism, and Britain's collapse into its deepest economic recession for fifty years.[135] Following the logic of what now might be called a 'rainbow coalition', groups previously referred to as 'disadvantaged'— women, sexual minorities, and ethnic minorities — were being brought together under the same left-wing roof of the local and metropolitan councils as part of a project of "municipal socialism" and, or, "municipal multiculturalism". In part, these changes were a pragmatic response to the changing population composition of the council's constituencies.[136] A consequence of the 1981 urban rebellions in particular was racial inequality being more prominently placed on the agenda.[137] But the development was also informed by new academic thinking, particularly of the New Left which increasingly saw multicultural municipalism as 'a political project'.[138] As Taylor puts it, Labour-led local government engagement with new social movements of class and identity politics coalesced to forge a new urban-leftist coalition against Thatcherism.[139] This New Urban Left viewed multiculturalism, as well as anti-sexist and anti-homophobic politics, as vehicles of resistance to Thatcherite policies, and as part of a wider programme of reforming local service provision and democratising local politics.

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[135] Tony Travers, 'Local government: Margaret Thatcher's 11-year war', *The Guardian,* 9/04/2013. Online:https://www.theguardian.com/local-government-network/2013/apr/09/local-government-margaret-thatcher-war-politics.[accessed 24/03/2023]; Daisy Payling, 'City limits: sexual politics and the new urban left in 1980s Sheffield', *Contemporary British History*, 31:2(2017), 256-273.
[136] Taylor, *Refugees*, 223; Stewart Ranson and Kieron Walsh, *Community Education for Equal Rights and Opportunities in Haringey* (London: 1986), 6.
[137] Kalbir Shukra, *The Changing Pattern of Black Politics* (London: Pluto, 1998),53-57; Paul Gordon, 'A Dirty War: the New Right and Local Authority Anti-Racism', in Wendy Ball and John Solomos (eds.), *Race and Local Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1990).
[138] Stuart Hall, *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left* (London: Verso, 1988); Gerry Stoker, *The Politics of Local Government* (London: Red Globe, 1991), 192–214.
[139] Taylor*, Refugees,* 235.

As the 'GLC Story '81-86' history project has highlighted, the GLC visibly 'became the hub' of this project.[140] It drew up equal opportunities policies, established race relations units, and provided funding to minority groups.[141] Its flamboyant leader Ken Livingstone vowed to 'use the council machinery as part of a political campaign both against the government and in defence of socialist policies'.[142] The recent work from Daisy Payling has also demonstrated how understanding the ways this project was playing out in different city contexts is an area of research ripe with potential.[143] In her words, 'a complex activist milieu' was fostered by the Sheffield City Council in the 1980s, made up of labour activists, feminists, international peace campaigners, communists, shop stewards, and the occasional vicar.[144] How might expanding this narrative via the microcosm of anti-deportation and sanctuary campaigns then – which necessarily involved members of faith institutions, lawyers, and affected local residents – further our understanding of the messy boundaries of the New Urban Left? To what extent can we view this as a successful co-ordinated project, or at least reactive partnership, between the local state and an increasingly diverse NGO's, faith representatives, and Leftist political activists? Or should these episodes of support just be seen as a cynical attempt by local councillors to adopt local issues of political expedience?

It must be noted that throughout the long 1980s local governments were also bearing the effects of profound changes in funding and power; their powers were systematically eroded, abolished, transferred to private companies or NGOs, or repatriated to Whitehall.[145] The Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 introduced a compulsory competitive tendering (CCT), requiring public sector organizations to allow private sector firms to bid for the delivery of services. Local authority housing was sold-off en masse as a result of the 1980 Right to Buy scheme. And the interventionist style of urban regeneration introduced via the Urban Programme bypassed local governments and constructed public–private partnerships funded directly from Whitehall. The 1982 Local Government Finance Act then framed 'block grants' with ceilings on local spending, transgressors were penalized by the withholding of block grants.[146] Between 1981 and 1984, £713 million in block grant was 'held back' from local governments in England.[147]

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[140] Lansley, S., *et al*., *Councils in Conflict: The Rise and Fall of the Municipal Left* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989).
[141] Ball and Solomos, *Race and Local*; On the emergence of the 'rainbow coalition' structure: Davina Cooper, 'Off the banner and onto the agenda: the emergence of a new municipal and gay politics, 1979-86', *Critical Social Policy*, 2:36(1993), 20-3.
[142] Ken Livingstone quoted in Chritsian Joppke, *Immigration and the Nation-State* (Oxford UP, 1999), 241.
[143] Daisy Payling, *Socialist Republic* (Manchester UP, 2023).
[144] Payling, *Socialist Republic*, 10, 13.
[145] Taylor, *Refugees,* 222; John Stewart, 'An Era of Continuing Change: Reflections on Local Government in England 1974–2014', *Local Government Studies,* 40:6(2014), 836.
[146] Joppke, *Immigration and the*, 244.
[147] Stoker, *The Politics of ,*161-229.

Local governments responded to this assault with a variety of measures, such as seeking redress in court, 'creative accounting', and – above all – raising the rates to be paid by local residents. In turn Thatcher inserted a paragraph in the 1983 General Election Manifesto promising to deal with the 'excessive and irresponsible rate increases' imposed by 'high-spending councils' and the abolition of the 'wasteful and unnecessary tier of government'.[148] The subsequent 1984 rate act gave government the power to limit the rates of authorities, and a list of eighteen local authorities to be 'rate-capped' in the following year was published; sixteen of them were Labour. A number of radical urban Labour leaders decided to adopt a policy of not setting a rate, and councils such as Sheffield, Liverpool, Islington, Lambeth and Haringey all set out towards illegality. A number also made partnerships with wider leftist NGOs during this time as they mutually aligned to fight national government cuts. How can viewing such alliances through the prisism of anti-deportation campaigns in particular then help us to understand the strengths and limitations of this alliance in a time of such increasing economic uncertainty? How were local authorities able to help some societies most vulnerable when they themselves were under attack?

In the end all authorities backed down from not setting a rate. And, ultimately, Thatcher's government moved to abolish the GLC and the six metropolitan county councils under the local Government Act 1985. Despite a virulent anti-abolition campaign, and the Thatcher government failing to show any tangible evidence of expected economic savings, in 1986 the metropolitan county councils and GLC were abolished.[149] Due in part to its dramatic abolition, and the surrounding media frenzy, the GLC almost immediately became a part of 'socialist folklore' – a byword for both "glorious failure" narratives and also "loony left" incompetency jokes.[150] Assessing the impact of this wider New Urban Left, championed by the GLC, has also not been made easier with hindsight, as continuous politically charged discussions over the 'crisis of multiculturalism' to the repeated 'death of multiculturalism' further muddy the waters.[151] The potential political cross-roads moment municipal multiculturalism symbolised, continues to generate both nostalgia for a heyday of Leftist

[148] Paul Foot, 'London Lefties', *London Review of Books*, 9:16, 17/09/1987; Gordon, 'A Dirty War', 175. Thatcher had always resented rates, believing them to be unfair because only part of the population paid, likely be drawn from 'our people': Richard Vinen, *Thatcher's Britain* (Simon & Schuster, 2009), 260; David Butler, Andrew Adonis and Tony Travers, *Failure in British Government. The Politics of the Poll Tax* (Oxford UP, 1993), 52.
[149] Taylor, *Refugees,* 232, 233-34.
[150] Foot, 'London Lefties'; Owen Hatherley, 'Interview'. Online:https://www.common-wealth.co.uk/publications/interview-owen-hatherley-on-municipal-socialism-and-londons-housing-history.[accessed:09/06/2023]; John Carr quoted in Will Woodward, 'The case against Ken Livingstone', *The Guardian,* 19/01/2000. Online:https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2000/jan/19/londonmayor.london.[accessed:21/06/2023]
[151] Christian Joppke, 'What is dead and what is alive', in *Is Multiculturalism Dead? Crisis and Persistence in the Constitutional State* (Polity Press, 2017).

progressive politics in action, and vehemence for allegedly birthing the 'woke agenda continues to tighten its grip on British public life'.[152]

Yet one significant line of criticism follows that as multiculturalist policies institutionalised Black culture, the practice of ethnicised funding segmented and divided Black communities. As Arun Kundnani put it, 'a new class of 'ethnic representatives' entered the town halls from the mid-1980s onwards, who became the surrogate voice for their own ethnically defined fiefdoms.'[153] Kalbir Shukra highlights how fragmentation occurred between Black 'moderate' and 'radical' groups in Lewisham as they vied for influence to lead consultative arrangements with Lewisham Council.'[154] An empirical study of the institutional systems established in 1980s Birmingham, also supported that initial attempts to improve representation on council consultations failed to recognise the heterogeneity of populations and effectively led to a 'patronage structure' of the 'usual suspects', 'male middle-aged and often first generation'.[155] Once it became apparent that resources were dwindling, with the announcement of the GLC's abolition and the third Conservative electoral victory, competition was only heightened, stoking tensions which as Solomos and Back put it, easily 'degenerated into ethnicism and intercommunal conflict'.[156]According to Kenan Malik, multiculturalist policies were even to blame for fostering a sense of 'tribalism' that to led to the violence between sections of Handsworth's African-Caribbean and Asian populations in 1985.[157]

Along with these problems of fragmentation, the incorporation of anti-racism and progressive radicalism into municipalism came with more insipid, but perhaps no less dangerous drawbacks. Namely, that the resulting acts of collaboration amounted only to acts of window dressing, distracting from the "real work" needed to overhaul systems of institutionalised racism and elitism. According to Kundnani 'ethnic representatives' often entered into a pact with the authorities: 'they were to cover up and gloss over black community resistance in return for free rein in preserving their own patriarchy.'[158] Gita Sahgal and Nira Yuval-Davis, of the Asian women activists group Southall Black Sisters, also observed how the municipally fostered 'multicultural consensus', at times reduced the fight against racism 'to preserving the "traditions and cultures" of the different ethnic minorities',

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[152] Jan Nielsen, 'LETTERS: Ken Livingstone fought for the left and progressive politics', *Socialist Worker,* Iss. 2606, 28/05/2018. Online:https://socialistworker.co.uk/letters/letters-ken-livingstone-fought-for-the-left-and-progressive-politics/.[accessed:09/06/2023]; Leo Mckinstry, 'How Red Ken's loony Left rabble began', *Daily Mail*, 8/05/2022.
[153] Arun Kundnani, 'Death of Multiculturalism', *Race & Class*, 43:4(2002), 68-69.
[154] Shukra, *The Changing Pattern,* 57-59.
[155] Graham Smith and Susan Stephenson, 'The Theory and Practice of Group Representation: Reflections on the Governance of Race Equality in Birmingham', *Public Administration*, 83:2(2005), 332, 334; Kenan Malik, *From Fatwa to Jihad* (London: Atlantic Books, 2009), 63-72.
[156] John Solomos and Les Back, *Race, Politics and Social Change* (London: Routledge, 1995), 194–5.
[157] Malik, *From Fatwa to*, 65.
[158] Kundnani, 'Death of', 69.

rather than 'tackling the central problem of racism itself'.[159] Paul Gilroy has particularly criticised the anti-racist output of the GLC for lacking priorities and genuine strategic calculation; reducing the complexity of racism to 'an aberration or an exceptional problem essentially unintegrated into the social or political structure.'[160] Plainly, there was also a danger that accepting funding from the council came at the price of some autonomy and, as with any form of single-sourced funding there was also a danger of organisations becoming reliant.

It is perhaps overzealous to tar all of the municipal multicultural and anti-racist efforts with the same 'tokenistic' or 'ineffectual' brush, however. Its tactics may have been limited and at times questionable, but metropoles were able to support, or at least fund, some important progressive steps. Malik has also observed how once the GLC established a political structure with which to engage minority communities, 'cash tumbled out of its myriad institutions'. In 1980/1 the GLC dispensed some £5 million to voluntary organizations. Five years later, in its final year, the figure had climbed to £77 million. In 1983/84, its first full year of operation, the Ethnic Minority Unit dispensed more than £2.3 million some three hundred groups. Other council institutions joined in too. The industry and employment committee, the arts and recreation and many others provided finance for minority groups.[161]As Gloria Khamkar has shown this funding could have important effects in terms of supporting projects that helped make 'minority communities feel part of British society.'[162]

It is also notable that key pioneering figures in Britain's race relation research sector did undertake important and influential work for the GLC, or as a result of municipal council funding. Gilroy himself worked as a researcher for the GLC's Police Committee Support Unit setup in 1982. A unit, which funded numerous community and research-based projects, and produced informational materials relating to criminal justice matters, including videos, travelling exhibitions, posters, leaflets, and an anti-Police bill record. In its final year the GLC also financed the two most important criminal justice campaigns in Newham – the Newham 7 Campaign (5,800) and the Justice for the Pryces (£9000).[163]

Ambalver Sivanandan also credited the GLC with funding the Institute of Race Relations with half the money to buy their building. Sivanandan, explicitly saw municipally funded multiculturalism as part of a longer story of anti-racist resistance. At one activist meeting in Manchester in 1987 he stated:

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[159] Gita Sahgal and Nira Yuval-Davis, 'Introduction' to Gita Sahgal and Nira Yuval-Davis (eds.), *Refusing Holy Orders: Women and Fundamentalism in Britain* (Virago, 1992), 15.
[160] Paul Gilroy, *Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* (London: Routledge, 1987), 236.
[161] Malik, *From Fatwa to,* 58-59.
[162] Gloria Khamkar, 'The Greater London Council's initiatives', *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*, 25:2 (2018), 38.
[163] See, GLC Ethnic Minority Committee, Grants Approved for 1985-86, 1985 as cited in Tompson, *Under Siege*, 183.

> Even I wouldn't be able to have a job, if those kids didn't do things in Brixton and Handsworth and Moss Side and Liverpool 8 … That doesn't mean that is the way forward, because we need to have a constructive, creative, way of changing society.[164]

But as he saw it:

> It's because the kids burned down the place, the GLC gave us half the money to buy the building. Now I must return that money to the kids, I'm holding it in custody, it is not mine.[165]

Sivanandan's emphasis here that the GLC money was not his, but that he was holding 'in custody', perhaps betrays a residual uncomfortably with taking such state-funded 'hand-outs'. In the aftermath of the 1981 uprisings he had written approvingly of organizations that had not 'compromised with government policy or fallen prey to government hand-outs'.[166] Yet just two years later he argued, in a speech opening a GLC conference, that anti-racists should not be 'purists', should not 'stand outside':

> We can't fight the system bare-handed. We don't have the tools, brothers and sisters; we've got to get the tools from the system itself and hope that in the process five out of ten of us don't become corrupt.[167]

Just a cursory overview of Sivanandan's life's work demonstrates how his approach to working with 'the system' in the 1980s hardly amounted to him being 'bought out'. His shifting position should thus highlight to us the futility of seeking simple 'good' or 'bad' binary assessments on the impact of the municipal multiculturism, or indeed oversimplistic notions of who was part of this broad New Urban Left project.

The fact that Sivanandan was also making these statements about the connection between the 1981 uprisings and the GLC, whilst sat in the church hall in inner-city Manchester, which was simultaneously hosting the Viraj Mendis sanctuary, should also alert us to the importance of remade and formulating community institutions at this time, and the complexities of the history of anti-racism. The politics of faith, internationalism, refugees, and Black Britain are plainly not the same story and yet here we see how the racial politics of citizenship in this period was drawing aspects of all of these together. Individuals and involved communities fighting deportations and the tightening requirements for refugee status, were forming hybrid forms of collective resistance with the resources, relations, and allies available. How might this then inform the predominant story of Black politics in Britain in the 1980s as usually told as one of 'defeat and rupture' on the one hand, and the story of refugees predominantly told as one of 'speechless emissaries' on the other?[168]

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[164] 'A. SIVANANDAN MEETING – PRESENTATION' 1987', Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), North West Film Archive (NWFA) collection, Film:7677.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ambalver Sivanandan, *A Different Hunger: writings on Black resistance* (London: Pluto, 1982), 25.
[167] A. Sivanandan. 'Challenging Racism strategies for the 1980s', *Race & Class*, 25:2(1983),1-11.
[168] Camilla Schofield, Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, Rob Waters, 'The privatisation of the struggle': Anti-racism in the age of enterprise', in *The Neo-Liberal Age,* 202; Liisa H. Malkki, 'Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization', *Cultural Anthropology* 11:3(1996), 377–404.

Christian Joppke has recently advocated for a 'multiculturalism of the individual' stemming from his observation that 'multiculturalism is incoherent but necessary' in a liberal state.[169] Tariq Modood has also voiced that while many genuine criticisms of multiculturalism have to be taken seriously, 'none of them are reasons for abandoning, rather than strengthening through modifying, multiculturalism.'[170] Perhaps then there is now room for us to reassess such potential strengths, limitations, and potential modifications with more nuance. In chapter 4 we will do so through the significant but overlooked microcosm of municipal involvement in anti-deportation campaigns. In chapter 5 we will then consider how this involvement coalesced with the particular socio-political currents and demands, that were feeding into and out of the urban spaces of sanctuary campaigns.

Methodology

From the outset of this research, I was acutely aware of some potential historiographical and ethical problems I might encounter. The historical field of migration and minorities has come a long way since Colin Holmes pointed out how those 'who sought shelter on account of racial, religious or political persecution have been neglected.'[171] Yet observers such as cultural anthropologist Liisa Malkki have commented that modern representations can still silence the voice of refugees and capture them only as a 'blur of humanity'.[172] Myria Georgiou has highlighted how even in digital Europe there remains constraints for refugees and migrants to speak of their own histories; there is a difference between voice as an 'agentive presence' and 'conditional recognition'.[173] The predominant Western discursive frame produces refugees as a universal and dehistoricised category of humanity, neglecting or denying the importance of the political in their experience of exile and concealing the

[169] Joppke, *Is Multiculturalism Dead?,* vii,xiv.
[170] Tariq Modood, 'Is multiculturalism dead?' *Public Policy Research*, 15:12(2008), 88.
[171] Colin Holmes, *A Tolerant Country?: Immigrants, Refugees and Minorities* (Abingdon, Routledge, ed:2016), 1. Tony Kushner has further revealed the self-righteous hypocrisy of British attitudes towards immigration and how refugees in particular are often 'the forgotten of history, the abused of politics': Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*: Then and Now (2006), and in the last decade we have seen a welcome expansion of historical interest in refugees coming to modern Britain, driven in no small part by pioneering anthologies from Kushner, Taylor and Peter Gatrell: Tony Kushner and Kenneth Lunn (eds.), *The Politics of Marginality: Race, the Radical Right and Minorities in Twentieth Century Britain* (London, 1991); Taylor, *Refugees*; Peter Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford UP, 2013). At the other end of the scale, there has been an expanding number of shorter studies that often take as their subject the experiences of a single refugee cohort, a historic moment, or literary representations. See, for example: Kevin Myers, 'The hidden history of refugee schooling in Britain: the case of the Belgians, 1914–18', *History of Education* 30:2(2001) 153–162; Kevin Myers, 'The ambiguities of aid and agency: representing refugee children in England, 1937–8', *Cultural and Social History*, 6:1(2009), 29–46; Becky Taylor, 'Don't just look for a new pet: the Vietnamese airlift, child refugees and the dangers of toxic humanitarianism', *Patterns of Prejudice,* 52:2–3(2018), 195–209; Jordanna Bailkin, *Unsettled: Refugee Camps and the Making of Modern Multicultural Britain* (Oxford UP, 2018); Lyndsey Stonebridge, *Placeless People: Writing, Rights and Refugees* (Oxford UP, 2018).
[172] Malkki, 'Speechless Emissaries: Refugees,', 377–404.
[173] Myria Georgiou, 'Does the subaltern speak? Migrant voices in digital Europe', *Popular Communication*, 16:1, (2016), 45–57.

discourse of the West's past involvement in producing the causes of conflict and forced migration.[174] For this reason I was determined to use oral history interviews of those personally involved in the campaigns we are looking at, usually conducted over several sessions, to ensure their multi-layered stories were being told, as much as possible, in their own voices.

For me, it was also particularly important to reflect the complexities of these stories because of the ways the narrative surrounding the political and public representations, and legal definitions and restrictions around who was classed as a refugee, a migrant, and indeed a citizen were fundamentally changing at this time. It was not therefore sufficient to focus on refugees or migrant cases of deportations, and I pursued the stories of those appealing their deportations based on a whole milieu of increasingly complex reasons (see appendix A). I also found it was not sufficient to simply capture their stories in terms of the simplistic tropes of 'victimhood and trauma'.[175] Those involved in anti-deportation campaigns were necessarily at the forefront of resisting and immigration laws and their stories are also that of modalities of solidarity and belonging.

At the same time, it was not sufficient to ignore the trauma that my interviewees and protagonists experienced. As Philip Marfleet has observed, 'forced migrations have a long half-life'.[176] The same may be said about attempted forced-migrations and deportations. Anthony Brown, an early victim of the changing 1971 immigration laws who successfully resisted deportation in 1982, and has now become a leading advocate and legal defender of contemporary victims of the 'Windrush scandal', has spoken candidly to me and the press about the ongoing affect his experience of being under threat of deportation had on him: 'You compartmentalise the fear and work out how to live with it, but looking back I can see the impact it has had on my life. It doesn't leave you.'[177] His sentiments were echoed by many, if not all, of those I interviewed. I was thus conscious to always loosely pursue a life-history interview model, so as to allow respondents to tell their narrative organically, while not necessarily centring it around a source of their trauma. Where appropriate I then made follow-up, or prompting questions based on a flexible list of bullet points as suggested by sociologist Jean-Claude

[174] Philomena Essed *et al.* (eds), *Refugees and the Transformation of Societies* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004); Nando Sigona, 'The Politics of Refugee Voices: Representations, Narratives and Memories', in Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh *et al*. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies* (Oxford UP, 2014), 372.
[175] Sigona, 'The Politics of', 371.
[176] Philip Marfleet, 'Explorations in a foreign land: states, refugees, and the problem of history', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 32:2(2013), 15.
[177] Anthony Brown, quoted in 'Anthony Brown: the man who resisted deportation – then fought tirelessly for Windrush survivors', *Guardian*, 12/05/2021. Online:https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/may/12/guardian-200-anthony-brown-resisted-deportation-fought-for-windrush-survivors.[accessed:12/06/2023].

Kaufmann, and so as to try not to 'disturb' respondent's intrinsic stories, as discussed by David Jones.[178]

Of course, oral histories bring with them their own well-documented methodological problems.[179] But it also became apparent that issues such as representivity were not always a concept of relevance when it came to anti-deportation campaigns, which were inherently diffuse and diverse, and each testimony thus bore its own 'intrinsic validity' .[180] Maguire has recently addressed the possibilities of a diversification of who we regard as political actors and who had access to the British state as a way of enlivening political history's future.[181] Employing oral histories enabled me to bring focus to the actions of such individuals and groups, who might have been otherwise overlooked in studies of larger 1980s movements.

COVID-19 struck at the time I planned to be integrating with networks of people involved in these campaigns and travelling to the regional archives. In many ways this forced me to be creative. Remote interviewing was not my first choice of method, and as Tracey Loughran, Kate Mahoney and Daisy Payling have discussed it did present unexpected challenges.[182] Talking to vicars and their wives through how to set up Zoom meetings became a new personal skill. At times, much like Emily Peirson-Webber also found, online interviewing could facilitate the process of 'achieving a sense of mutual connection'; the way certain individuals agreed to open-up to me and donate their time discernibly benefited from the context of limited social contact and a homebound enforced state of reflection.[183] Yet I also found building rapport over buffering videocalls could take longer, and there was understandable reticence surrounding why this strange stranger was asking about things which happened twenty-years-ago when the present-day world seemed to be imploding.[184]

These restrictions also heightened some pre-existing barriers to me as a researcher. The Church of England as the established Church holds excellent accessible records at institutions such as Lambeth Palace Library, but centralised equivalents are not so transferable to all faith institutions in Britain. As a female, white, atheistic, university student, some places of faith I approached were quite rightly cautious of me. I received some non-responses, rejections based on GDPR, queries over whether I in-fact worked for the Home Office, or was a journalist trying to write some scandal piece about historic 'radicalism' in the mosque. Much of this was remedied once restrictions were lifted and

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[178] Jean-Claude Kaufman, *L'intervista* (Bologna: Mulino, 2009); David W. Jones, 'Distressing Histories and Unhappy Interviewing', *Oral History Society,* 26:2(1998), 51.
[179] Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford UP, Ed:2000), 134.
[180] Trevor Lummis, *Listening to History: The Authenticity of Oral Evidence* (London: Hutchinson, 1987), 83.
[181] Anna Maguire, 'Diversifying British Political History', *The Political Quarterly*, 94:2(2023), 258-264.
[182] Tracey Loughran, Kate Mahoney and Daisy Payling, 'Reflections on Remote Interviewing in a Pandemic: Negotiating Participant and Researcher Emotions', *Oral History*, 50:1(2022), 37-48.
[183] Emily Peirson-Webber, 'Mining Men: Reflections on Masculinity and Oral History during the Coronavirus Pandemic', *History Workshop Journal*, 92(2021), 242–250.
[184] Oral History Society, 'Advice on Remote Oral History Interviewing during the Covid-19 Pandemic,' Online:https://www.ohs.org.uk/advice/covid-19/.[accessed 13/06/2023].

I was able to travel to these places in person, opening a more gradual relationship to discussion and offers of anonymisation, as is reflected in chapter 3 particularly.

I do believe there is work to be continued here, however, whether by me now that I have established relationships of trust with individuals who can 'vouch' for me, or by someone already more established within these communities and knowing of cultural and religious norms. Similarly, I was not able to find anyone from the police force or immigration enforcement who was willing to go on the record, and many official records are still protected by Data Protection Legislation and personal data exemptions to Freedom of Information requests. I therefore had to rely on official records or snippets of information gleaned from contemporary press records, campaign papers, and the Home Office papers which are open. But, again, there is perhaps room therefore for future research here, particularly when further Home Office records are released.

In important ways these restrictions on my research period also forced me to be creative with the archival materials that I did have access to. Primarily, I had access to open Home Office papers relating to specific groups being affected by changing migration laws, such as Sri Lankan Tamils, and high-profile individuals such as Mendis. But my experience resonated with Gatrell's discussion of the need to see past these people's stories as 'flotsam and jetsam, fleeting 'cases' that passed across the desk of officials, or as spectral figures whose presence can be disquieting.[185] I was conscious that what these 'cases' represented and that my analysis of them was inherently fragmentary 'extracts from a few case files that illuminate only one aspect of the lives of people who entered the realm'; 'a few documents on which to hang a life'.[186] As many of my interviewees were keen to remind me, they also felt their campaigns had to represent the thousands of others under threat of deportation, whose stories would never find their way into the archival or oral history record. Of course, some of those issued deportation orders simply did not have the resources or inclination to fight them and so left the country, others chose to resist through going into 'hiding' from the state.

Thankfully, alongside a building collection of oral history interviews, I also had access to a large collection of campaign papers, primarily through the Steve Cohen Collection (SCC), the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Centre's (AIURC) activist group papers, as well as localised and focused collections such as can the found at the Tameside Local Studies and Archives (TLSA) or the Bishopsgate Institute (BI). The contrasts and continuities I found between these sources and that from the 'official' institutions of the government and Church, through their own records, statements and even reflective

[185] Peter Gatrell, 'Raw Material: UNHCR's Individual Case Files as a Historical Source, 1951–75', *History Workshop Journal*, 92(2021), 226–241; Heath Cabot, '"Refugee Voices": Tragedy, Ghosts, and the Anthropology of not Knowing', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 45:6(2016), 645–72.
[186] Laura Cummings, *On Chapel Sands: My Mother and Other Missing Persons* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2020), 199.

autobiographies underpinned many of my research questions, and drove me to explore further into the 'affective ecologies' permeating and navigating both sides of this dialogue.[187]

Still, I found that to move beyond a cursory overview of all these stories I needed to focus further on specific campaigns. The focus on sanctuary cases proved fertile, as it allowed me to explore how the nuances of space and place interwove with these campaigns, building upon Brooke's assertion that the local might also provide an effective way to illustrate the variety of trajectories at play in the long 1980s, and following in the approach of Matt Cook, who – in his research on 1970s Brixton gay squats – saw the relationship between 'the bigger and smaller pictures' as 'symbiotic' and jointly crucial to understanding identities, and communities.[188] Such a focus particularly enabled me to shed light on the individual experiences involved in campaigns.

Hilton has written of seeing 'in the everyday a whole host of interactions... from which politics... emerges'. He shows how viewing the growth, diversity and complexity and of the post-World Word Two NGO sector in particular, through the lens of, or at least with one eye to the 'ordinary' can serves as a means of identifying extra-parliamentary politics and allow us to better encapsulate the full range of motivations behind people's actions.[189] I combined this approach with that of anthropologist Clifford Geertz's concept of 'thick descriptions' as a means of using individual perspectives and accounts of everyday life, when carefully contextualised to explain wider contexts and reveal deeper meanings.[190]

In also paid particular attention to the emotions displayed and expressed in protagonist's everyday interactions with these campaigns, in both the archival records and oral histories. The history of emotions is an expanding field of work in its own right, of course, some of which, such as the research seeking to elucidate how emotion is understood and experienced in different times and places in terms of biological sensations and psychological responses, is distinct from the perimeters of this thesis.[191] Yet even while analysing historical migration systems we might still fruitfully engage with the call to take emotion seriously and consider how emotions – including the Home Office civil servant's embarrassment – became 'active' as a historical agent, shaping human behaviour and at

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[187] Stephen Brooke, 'Space, Emotions and the Everyday: The Affective Ecology of 1980s London' *Twentieth Century British History*, 28:1(2017), 110–142.
[188] Stephen Brooke, 'Living in 'New Times': Historicizing 1980s Britain', *History Compass,* 12:1(2014), 22; Matt Cook, ''Gay Times': Identity, Locality, Memory, and the Brixton Squats in 1970's London', *Twentieth Century British History*, 24:1(2013), 84–109.
[189] Hilton, 'Politics is Ordinary', 248; Hilton works from Raymond Williams definition of culture as 'ordinary' because it consisted of the 'common meanings and directions' of a society: Williams, 'Culture is Ordinary', in Norman Mackenzie, (ed.), *Conviction* (London, 1958), 75, 74–92; see also, Alice Kaplan and Kristin Ross, 'Everyday Life: Introduction', *Yale French Studies*, 73(1987), 1–4
[190] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Basic Books: 1973).
[191] Katie Barclay, 'State of the Field: The History of Emotions'*, The Journal of the Historical Association,* 106:371(2021), 456-466.

times even acting as a form of social structure itself that can be resisted and reformed; as Ute Frevert has repeatedly emphasised, 'emotions both have a history and they make history'.[192]

My overarching approach in this research has thus perhaps been a combination of listening to the stories of how 'ordinary' people, in the sense that they were not politicians, in increasingly 'ordinary' contexts of migrant exclusion and politicisation, chose to partake in or interact with extraordinary campaigns of resistance. Sometimes through acts of 'ordinary' resistance derived from emotive local or faith-based solidarity, but also through explicitly radical acts which were actively attempting to redefine the very remits of the ordinary and the political. As can be seen through the following chapter outline, this adaptive approach enabled me to analyse the effects and influences of sanctuary and antideportation campaigns in a number of realms.

[192] Ute Frevert, *Emotions in History - Lost and Found* (Central European UP, 2011).

Thesis Outline

In **chapter one** we focus on the revealing language, register, and actions of both the Home Office and the wider state, in contrast to that of those campaigning against deportations in the long 1980s. We engage with the details and technicalities of Home Office files dealing with individual deportation cases, to question whether immigration policies that claimed to be driven by numbers and bureaucracy, were in fact were underpinned by emotion and official discretion.

In **chapter two** we turn our focus to how sanctuary campaigns played out at a high church level. How they were received and navigated through the individuals and systems within the upper echelons of the Anglican Church as an institution. We will question to what extent sanctuary campaigns were supported, tolerated, or opposed by the Church, and consider how its stance was affected by its unique position as a semi-independent arm of the British establishment.

Chapter three, then hones into sanctuary campaigns at the grassroots level. It considers how Garnett and Harris's theory of new forms of religious rescripting might be explored through the recorded acts, practices, and testimonies of those involved in sanctuaries.[193] In particular, it further employs Chris Baker's framework of "belonging, becoming, and participating" to highlight the intersecting and mobilising ways faith, bonding, and political protesting became enmeshed for many key individuals.[194]

In **chapter four** we explore how sanctuary campaigns and anti-deportation campaigns in general, can be situated within the wider shifting political terrain of the New Urban Left. Focusing on the microcosms of local anti-deportation campaigns to expand our understanding of the ways the local state was being radicalised by messy networks of activists and hybrid "street level bureaucrats" and "citizen agents".

Finally, in **chapter five** we explore how sanctuaries occurred in the particular locations which they did. Using Doreen Massey's framework of space and place, we explore how faith, politics, and forms of belonging and solidarity infected and interacted with sanctuary campaigns across multiple spatial scales. In so doing forming a "cultural compression" of forces, primed to generate mobilising identities.

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[193] Garnett and Alana Harris (eds.), *Rescripting Religion in the City: Migration and Religious Identity in the Modern Metropolis* (London: Routledge, 2013), 16.
[194] Chris Baker, 'The Contagion of the Sacred and the Right to the City: Modalities of Belonging, Becoming and Participating amongst Diasporic Religious Communities and the Growth of the Post-Secular City', in *Rescripting Religion*, 91-99.

In the **conclusion** we then reflect upon our findings throughout the thesis, consider their implications towards the current debates surrounding the long 1980s, and signpost ways this might support future work.

CHAPTER 1:

Bureaucratic Violence and the Home Office

Home Office papers are notoriously dense, dull, and, in my experience, despair inducing. On one particular visit to The National Archives, having spent hours sifting through stacks of said papers relating to deportation cases, all laden with repetitive jargon, mystifying acronyms, and seemingly endlessly circular memos, I felt the last effects of my (third) overpriced coffee of the day fade away from me, and began to question whether there was a story to be told here at all. Where were the voices of those whose lives hung in the balance of these long, protracted, and bureaucratised, paper wars? Who was ultimately in charge of making these life-changing decisions? And upon which sub-sectioned paragraph of continuously changing and extensive policies were they really being made?

It was only after stepping away from the records of officialdom in order to contrast and connect them to the accounts from those fighting these cases from the other side, that I realised that this absence of clarity, transparency, and apparent understanding, evident within the Home Office's language, tone, and actions in these cases, in comparison to that of those experiencing and resisting them, *was* in fact the story – or at least a critical, overlooked, aspect of it. The two sides fighting deportation cases were speaking different languages, one fluent in professional platitudes and the other more adept in runway protests and chaining themselves to fences. As sanctuary campaigns escalated across the nation, with varying degrees of success, the debates between campaigners and the government grew more frequent and more fraught. As we have seen, potential deportees, activists and supporters, like Viraj Mendis, Pell Weller, and Hilda Carr, deployed a political urgency, morality, and passion. In contrast, the rhetoric and register of the government and civil servants were deliberately de-personalised, dry, and soaked in the language of due process. And, as we shall see in this chapter this language barrier was merely emblematic of the differences in the deeper moral universes motivating them.

There is a rich literature on approaching bureaucratic and even colonial archives against the grain to see beneath the veils of dispassionate rule.[195] Gatrell, in particular, has highlighted how the 'raw material' of the UNHCR's case files from 1951-1975 expose the 'detachment that officials were expected [to] but did not always display in reaching a verdict' and the way refugees were

[195] Jordana Bailkin, 'Where Did the Empire Go? Archives and Decolonization in Britain,' *The American Historical Review* 120:3(2015), 884-899; Antoinette Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House Home and History in Late Colonial India* (Oxford UP, 2003); Cassie Findlay, 'Archival Activism', *Archives and Manuscripts*, 44:3(2016), 55-59; Stuart Hall, 'Constituting at Archive', *AVAA 'The living archive' papers* (2008), 89-92; Hannah Ishmael and Rob Waters, 'Archives Review: the Black Cultural Archives, Brixton,' *Twentieth Century British History* 28:3(2017), 465-73; Karen Steele, 'Gender and the Postcolonial Archive', *The New Centennial Review*, 10:1(2010), 55–61.

consequently 'caught in a web of power relations'.[196] Kushner and others have established how the dominance of the myth of British tolerance and the "cult of gratitude" foisted upon refugees, has been maintained by Britain's public grandstanding but increasingly partial acceptance of refugees.[197] As Kushner puts it, Britain has a 'fundamentally ambivalent' relationship to refugees: 'It has both embraced a historical commitment to the 'right to asylum' and distanced itself from the reality of what, in the words of [one] civil servant, this 'well-sounding but vague' axiom has meant in practice.'[198] Becky Taylor, in particular, has noted how refugee experiences of voluntary and state agencies and of assimilation should be understood in the light of histories of the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor, ideas of charity and welfare in the Britain from the beginning of the twentieth-century.[199] Recently Radhika Natarajan has also interjected on how from the passing of the 1962 the Home Office particularly targeted forms of South Asian family reunification as categories to reduce unwanted immigration. Obscuring migrant stories, employing intensive interrogations, and skewing and extrapolating investigatory data to reinforce colonial conceptual repertoires about the mendacity of South Asians: 'Suspicion towards migrants was built into every step of the system.'[200]

It is my argument that focusing on the "raw material" of deportation cases in the 1980s highlights how applications for asylum and migration were increasingly judged by government officials within the parameters of skills and attributes socially accepted as befitting of "good" British citizens; with this, the status of 'refugee' and the 'immigrant' blurred. Paying particular attention to the official discourse being employed exposes how superficially dispassionate public announcements by the authorities citing 'common-sense', 'community relations', and the support of the 'great majority', were actually shorthand for inherently subjective value-laden judgements, which set in motion chains of bureaucracy which were precedent setting and had real-world ramifications. As we shall see, the phraseology of 'firm' and 'fair' controls, for instance, was pervasive throughout Home Office papers and politicians press statements, long before the introduction of Labour's white paper and policy document: *Firmer, Faster, Fairer - a modern approach to immigration and asylum* (1998).[201] This rhetoric not only disguised the level of discriminatory bias driving Home Office

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[196] Gatrell, 'Raw Material: UNHCR's', 226–241.
[197] Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*. See also: Wendy Ugolini and Gavin Schaffer, "Victims or Enemies? Italians, Refugee Jews and the Re-Working of Internment Narratives in Post-War Britain," in Monica Riera and Gavin Schaffer (eds.), *The Lasting War: Society and Identity in Britain, France and Germany after 1945* (Basingstoke: Macmillan 2008), 207-25; Liza Schuster and John Solomos, 'The politics of refugee and asylum policies in Britain: historical patterns and contemporary realities', in Alice Bloch and Carl Levy (eds.) *Refugees, Citizenship and Social Policy in Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 67.
[198] This phrase is that of Eaglestone in his Home Office history. See: TNA HO 213/1772, as cited in Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, 9.
[199] Becky Taylor, '"Their Only Words of English Were 'Thank You'": Rights, Gratitude and 'Deserving' Hungarian Refugees to Britain in 1956', *Journal of British Studies*, 55:1(2016), 120-144.
[200] I am grateful to Radhika Natarajan for sharing: 'The 'Bogus Child' and the 'Big Uncle': The Impossible South Asian Family in Post-Imperial Britain', 1-42, 20.
[201] See, for example, Timothy Renton, Minister of State, explaining that 'We must prevent abuse of the asylum process if we are successfully to maintain a fair system of immigration control', in 'Refugees: The'. 29.; *Firmer,*

decisions but has served to obscure the designed violence of the British immigration system, both in its indirect intentions and direct actions. The provoked passionate responses from those affected and their supporters were underpinned by a moral universe in which all human being had the right to safety, dignified treatment, and ties of belonging built upon human connection. But this passion also became all too easy to dismiss as an angry 'rent-a-mob', 'muddleheaded clerics', 'the great unwashed' and the 'loony left'.[202]

Polite Anxieties

The disconnect in register and tone between authorities and anti-deportation campaigners is evident within one of the very first instances of modern sanctuary campaigns in Britain, that of Katerina and Vassilis Nicola at the Anglican church of St. Mary's, Somers Town, in 1985. The couple sought sanctuary after the Home Office refused to accept their claim to be allowed to remain in Britain as refugees following the seizure of their village during the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. The government granted a concession of indefinite leave to remain to 600 Cypriot refugees living in the UK in 1982, but the concession did *not* apply to those like the Nicolas who hadn't arrived immediately after the 1974 war.[203] Vassilis had been conscripted into the army to fight the Turkish invasion, and had remained in service until the end of 1975, while Katerina was living in a refugee camp. They eventually fled to Britain in January 1976 and by the time they sought sanctuary had been settled in London for nine years.[204]

The vicar of the church, Father Dyson, recounted to me how he and his area bishop at the time, and the campaign's spokesman, George Eugeniou, 'all went off' to see David Waddington, the Minister of State in charge of immigration cases:

> The bishops backed us, I think because the argument we had was a *moral* argument, if people are here, and have been here for nine years, we should not just be throwing them out![205]

As Dyson saw it, it was the moral grounds that underpinned the church authorities support for the Nicola's campaign:

Faster, Fairer - a modern approach to immigration and asylum (UK Home Office, 1998). Online: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fairer-faster-and-firmer-a-modern-approach-to-immigration-and-asylum[accessed 24/06/2023].

[202] Bob Graham and Danny Buckland, 'Mendis flown out as police face 'rentamob' fury', *Daily Mail*, 21/01/1989, 16; the phrase muddle-headed cleric is taken from: Lambeth Palace Library (LPL) RUNCIE/ MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Chad Varah to Archbishop Runcie, 2/02/1989, 1.

[203] Jeremy Corbyn, MP Islington North in HC Deb. 26/03/1985, c.260.

[204] LPL BSR/RACE/T/4/4, 'Sanctuary for Katerina and Vassilis Nicola, n.d'

[205] My italics. Father Dyson, author interview, telephone recording, 04/09/2020.

> And, we went and just tried to persuade him on the moral argument that was all, you know, because we couldn't do anymore. It was all a moral argument really.[206]

Figure 3: A chorus of Cypriot women delivering a wreath to 10 Downing Street, before the cameras, (spot a young Jeremy Corbyn MP). Image a still from 'Sanctuary Challenge',[20:41]. Online: https://archive.org/details/GeorgeEugeniouSanctuaryChallenge [accessed: 22/06/2023].

Jeremy Corbyn MP told parliament that the 'Kafka-like procedures', being employed against a 'couple from a country that has been a colony of this country for many years and is now a member of the Commonwealth' were an 'appalling', 'disgrace to the country'.[207] Even the European Parliament voted for a resolution (by 135 votes to 28), asking that the UK government's 1982 Concessionary Policy be widened and the Nicolas be granted the status of refugees.[208]

But none of these moral, religious, or political arguments had a persuasive effect on the British government's stance. Dyson's recollection of their meeting with the Home Office Minister of State for Immigration, David Waddington, was one of a polite, if pointless, performance:

> He was very courteous; you know, I mean they weren't nasty, and they weren't lecturing us. They were quite happy to see us. I mean, there we were, in what was the old Home Office in Queen Anne's Gate… and we were received very graciously. It was a sort of sitting round the table and talking… and just trying to make our points, and, obviously, as ministers they made their points, and we tried to make ours, but … that was it at the end of the day.[209]

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[206] My italics. Dyson, author interview.
[207] Jeremy Corbyn HC Deb. 26/03/1985, vol.76, c.260-261.
[208] European Parliament Resolution, 13/06/1985.
Online:http://www.hri.org/Cyprus/Cyprus_Problem/eudocs/C20.html.[accessed:01/013/2023].
[209] Dyson, author interview.

Church groups continued to write pleading letters, 'We stretch out our hands and humbly raise our voices to beg you, THE HOME OFFICE', using devotional imagery in an attempt to prick the conscious of the decisionmakers.[210] Kenneth Leech wrote on behalf of the Church of England's Board for Social Responsibility (BSR), to express their concern that the impending deportation was in 'conflict with Christian principles', and to remind Waddington of his *own* references 'from time to time' of the need for a 'compassionate approach' to the law.[211] At the same time, those more experienced in political campaigning, such as Eugeniou, succeeded in winning a considerable amount of publicity through the employment of more dramatic tactics: press and politicians were called, petitions drawn up, an overnight candlelit vigil outside the Home Office was held, and seven women dressed like a Greek chorus were used to carry the petition and wreath to 10 Downing Street (see **figure 3**).[212]All 'to make the point much more effective', as Eugeniou put it, to 'protest and plea' and 'present the human struggle and human injustice that was created by the British government.[213]

The roundtable discussion between the campaigners and authorities at the Home Office was likely just a façade of democratic procedure – a de-escalatory tactic on account of the gathering media pressure to be seen considering the feelings of constituents and campaigners. Indeed, the charade is reminiscent of an episode described by Waddington in his own memoirs, of how a typical church-hall constituency meeting played out in his political infancy: 'I listened patiently, comforted by the fact that the vicar had said that there would be no vote at the end.'[214] Yet in his private notes during the 1980s he vented about how he hoped 'the churches will take a little time off from encouraging illegal immigrants to defy the law'.[215] Words which directly evidence how bland inaction could be used as a mask for anti-immigration views.

When asked whether the government would reconsider, Lord Glenarthur, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, told the House of Lords that the Nicola's case had been 'carefully considered by ministers of different appellate authorities', and that 'the European Parliament is free to discuss what it likes … we have to look at each case on its own merits.'[216] In other words, we know

[210] LPL BSR/ RACE/T/4/4, Letter from members of the St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church to the Home Office immigration department, 25/04/1985.
[211] LPL BSR/ RACE/T/4/4. Letter from Kenneth Leech, Race Relations Field Officer to David Waddington, 24/05/1985.
[212] Susan Tirbutt, 'Exiled couple fight on', *The Guardian,* 25/06/1985, 3; Martin Wainwright, 'Sanctuary in shade of brownies', *The Guardian*, 1/03/1985, 2; 'Sanctuary couple fail in court plea', *Evening Standard,* 9/07/1985, 5; 'Plea on fate of Cypriot refugees', *Birmingham Evening Mail*, 14/06/1985, 13; Heather Mills, 'Sanctuary for Cypriots', *The Daily Telegraph*, 2/03/1985, 8; 'Sanctuary pair must go', *Liverpool Daily Post*, 10/07/1985, 4.
[213] Eugeniou quoted from 'Sanctuary Challenge',[20:07]. Online:https://archive.org/details/GeorgeEugeniouSanctuaryChallenge.[accessed:22/06/2023].
[214] Waddington, *Memoirs: Dispatches from Margret Thatcher's Last Home Secretary*, (London, Biteback Publishing, 2012), 130.
[215] Waddington's personal contemporary notes, as cited in Waddington, *Memoirs,*122.
[216] Lord Fenner Brockway, HL Deb 21/06/1985 vol 465, c.487; Glenarthur, HL Deb 21/06/1985 vol.465 c.485-487.

what the European Parliament thinks, and we do not care. Glenarthur believed that there were '*no strong compassionate features*' and it would 'be *unfair* to many law-abiding people if the couple were to benefit from their *unlawful* behaviour.'[217] Lord John Monson, reasoned that because the Southern Cypriot economy was 'booming', there were 'plenty of jobs available' and 'therefore there is no need for this couple to come to England'. Rather, they 'should look to the Greek Cypriot authorities from which they have *no well-founded fear* of persecution.[218] In his personal correspondence Waddington again worked to minimise the refugee element of their case:

> The compassionate features which *do* exist, as they do in most cases, are by no means as strong in the Nicolas' case as in some others given the fact that they are still comparatively young, have no children and have families in Cyprus [living in refugee camps].[219]

The fact that the families mentioned were living in refugee camps and the Nicolas had no house to return to because their former village was now in Turkish occupied territory was seen as irrelevant to their case. For, 'there will be many cases in which preventing an individual working or settling here when he would like to do so will cause inconvenience or hardship to him and to his family'.[220]

Waddington's reference to the 'many' other cases implicated is perhaps key here. In concluding, he emphasised that the government's 'firm immigration control should be fair <u>to</u> individuals and <u>also</u> fair <u>between</u> individuals' and that their 'general policy *does not rest on any judgement of the worth of the individuals* who would like to work or settle here' but on 'a *judgement of the public interest* in operating the control'.[221] Implicitly then there is a clear disconnect between government claims to judge cases neutrally and the overall goal of keeping down numbers. Waddington is claiming to judge cases on an individual basis, but simultaneously conceding that he is concerned that 'many' other Cypriots might use a concession in this case, as a precedent, and the wider ramifications on 'the public interest' as a result. Fairness is thus linked to public interest in the Home Office's mind, to keeping down numbers, rather than fairness to individual claimants. The issue for Waddington was precedence. This mindset also then calls into question the claim in his next sentence that he 'need hardly say' that he 'must judge their case on its merits, rather than by the number or level of representations on their behalf, or by the degree of media coverage'.[222]

After five months of not getting anywhere besides "eat-sleep-and-pray-ing" in a draughty church hall, and no sign of a concession in sight, the Nicholas wearily conceded to their deportation in July of 1985. Mr Nicola made an emotional public appeal for justice before being deported:

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[217] My italics. Lord Glenarthur, HL Deb. 21/06/1985 vol 465, c.486.
[218] My italics. Lord John Monson, HL Deb. 21/06/1985 vol 465, c.486.
[219] My italics. LPL BSR/RACE/T/4/4, Letter from David Waddington to Lord Bethell MEP, 25/04/1985.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Underlining in source. My italics. Ibid.
[222] Emphasis in original. LPL BSR/ RACE/T/4/4, Letter from David Waddington to Lord Bethell, 23/04/1985.

> I feel very angry when a man has a just case and cannot find justice. Next week it will be the eleventh anniversary of our leaving Cyprus and now we are being thrown out of our home in England. I do not know where we are going to stay. My relatives have many problems and they have nowhere to live. My wife is finding it very difficult to cope with the strain we are going through.[223]

Kenneth Leech wrote scathingly in private to Waddington following the deportation: 'May I say, though I know it will make no difference, how disgusted I am', at this 'classic and pathetic example of legalism for its own sake… It makes any further rhetoric about compassion seem like the sham that increasing numbers of people believe that it is.'[224] Evidently, it was becoming apparent to campaigners and those under threat of deportation that a problem with the government's position was an increasing disconnect between its claims and its actions.

Indeed, as short-lived as it may have been, the Nicola's case was in many ways emblematic of a new immigration regime that kept its eye on the overall numbers and not on the individual merits of a case. Notably, the Nicola's campaign had also inspired a second sanctuary, one street away at the neighbouring Roman Catholic church, which experienced a strikingly different outcome. Not quite three weeks after the Nicolas had started their protest a Filipina, Pina Manuel, and her son, Arman, took refuge in St Aloysius. Manuel had been working on a domestic workers' permit which had expired after her employer had failed to make a proper application for its renewal.[225] The conditions in this church were easier, and while the Manuel's received the support of the local Filipino and Latin American populations and funding from organisations including Pimlico's Migrant Resource Centre, 'this campaign kept away from trying to gain press coverage'.[226] By August 1985, Pina and her friends and supporters were able to hold a celebratory Mass in St Aloysius, after winning her appeal and being granted permission to stay.[227]

So how can we interpret the difference in outcomes between these parallel cases? Is it an example of the Home Office prioritising Pina as a single mother over a couple with no children? Or evidence of them bowing to persistent pressure when not so publicly cornered? Were they so determined to deport the Nicolas as their campaign spokesman, Eugeniou, viewed it, in an attempt to 'split' the gathering momentum behind sanctuary campaigns: 'The Home Office got worried. The only way to loosen the effect and the power of the sanctuaries was to divide it and split it.'[228] Or was it just a 'classic case of legalism for legalisms sake' as Leech suspected? Perhaps, the key factor was the Home Office's knowledge that there were likely to be a whole lot fewer asylum claims from the

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[223]'Couple in church give up battle to stay', *The Times*, 13/07/1985, 4.
[224] LPL BSR/RACE/T/4/4, Letter from Kenneth Leech to David Waddington, 16/07/1985.
[225] Weller, *Sanctuary- the beginning*, 11.
[226] Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity,*135; Eugeniou quoted in a report: AIURC SCC GB3226.026/01/178, 'Organise against deportations and all immigration controls – East London conference – 16/1/1985', 4.
[227] 'Victory of Filipino here to stay', *Westminster and Pimlico News*, 13/09/1985, 1.
[228] Eugeniou quoted in 'Sanctuary Challenge' [25.30].

Philippines than from Cyprus. There were far fewer numbers of migrants, and so a likelihood of even fewer numbers of asylum claims, from the Philippines. There was simply less at stake in the concession to the Manuels then there was to the Nicolas.

We might never know for certain what set the Manuel's case apart from the Nicolas's, the paper trail runs cold.[229] However, between these two cases virtually on the same street, we can observe characteristics conspicuous of unfolding deportation campaigns in Britain throughout the long 1980s. Namely, dialectical definitions of a '*well-founded fear of persecution'*, '*compassionate*' circumstances, and the oxymoronic conception of a '*fair*' 'judgment of the public interest' not inherently involving the 'judgment of the *worth*' of individuals to Britain.

By turning our focus now to these recurring themes in other anti-deportation campaigns we can expose the competing conceptions that such supposedly objective terms disguise. Specifically, we will focus on the juxtaposition in meaning, and actions surrounding: "a well-founded fear of persecution"; "compassionate' circumstances"; and judgements "on merit". And, finally, we will consider how ultimately these disjunctions in meaning fed into dialectical conceptions of what was "fair and reasonable".

A 'well-founded fear of persecution'

Central to the Nicola's case, and increasingly to that of many others fighting deportation orders throughout the long 1980s, was their claim, and the government's denial of their claim, of having a 'well-founded fear of persecution', Article 1A(2) of The 1951 Refugee Convention.[230] This subjective standard was critical to the definition of a refugee under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, and thus critical to the Home Office's consideration of the UK's obligations in any asylum application.[231] Outwardly, the Home Office took these obligations seriously.[232] As Home Office

[229] Further information into these deportation cases will be discoverable when the Lord Chancellor's Department: Immigration Appellate Authorities administration files are no longer exempt under section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act; TNA FCO 9/4034 'Deportation of Cypriots from the UK' 1983, is set to remain closed until 1/01/2059.
[230] The fuller definition reads: 'owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country', in, 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Article 1A(2). Online:https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-relating-status-refugees.[accessed:24/06/2023].
[231] Stevens, *UK Asylum*, 266.
[232] Britain signed the Convention and the principle that the Convention could be invoked in asylum appeals was acknowledged in the Immigration Act 1971 but its primacy in guiding the reception of refugees in Britain was not formally included in statute until the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993.

Minister, Timothy Renton, wrote 'We *scrupulously* obey the principle that no-refugee should be returned to a country which he has a well-founded fear of persecution':

> The 1951 United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees is at the *heart* of our approach to the determination of refugee status and the processing the cases of individual asylum-seekers. It stands to *one side* of our general Immigration Rules and *outside* normal procedures.[233]

His description of the Convention being somehow simultaneously at the heart, to one side, and outside, of normal procedures is indicative of the fact that the Convention's primacy in processing refugees was not formally included in statute in Britain until the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993.[234] But, Renton was insistent that 'these are major humanitarian commitments which the government is proud to uphold.'[235] In keeping with the long-standing practice of politicians perpetuating the myth of British tolerance, he made repeated references to how the United Kingdom was 'one of the first signatories of the Convention': 'we were active in winning international acceptance of it'; 'one of the first to ratify the 1967 Protocol'; and 'active in our support of the international programmes led by UNHCR'.[236]

As we saw in the introduction, human rights as a way of understanding and articulating asylum claims became more important in the last two decades of the twentieth century. Moyn has laid-out how from the middle of the twentieth-century human rights was 'injected into tradition' through public politics and international law, before the moral world of westerners shifted during the 1970s and 'opened a space for the sort of utopianism that coalesced in an international human rights movement that had never existed before.'[237] Gibney, in particular, has outlined how the 'rights revolution' percolated into the field of immigration, as human rights organisations, national constitutions, and international declarations and conventions had important 'spill over effects' for non-citizens, in the case of immigrants, primarily manifest in the development and consolidation of due process protections for asylum seekers.[238] But also in terms of how the Refugee Convention curbed the politics of restrictionism in the realm of asylum by complicating, frustrating, and competing with government attempts to manage asylum in a way that causes the least possible political disturbance.[239] Certainly, we can find the language and ideas of human rights being mobilised in anti-deportation campaigns: 'The Home Office classify Rosmina as a Second Class citizen thus denying her and her children a fundamental human right to family life' stated one campaign poster. 'What is British justice?' one woman whose husband was under threat of

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[233] My italics. Renton, 'Refugees: The Responsibilities', 26- 27.
[234] Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993. Online: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/23/content [accessed 03/03/2023].
[235] Renton, 'Refugees: The Responsibilities', 27.
[236] Renton, 'Refugees: The Responsibilities', 26- 27.
[237] Moyn, *Christian Human Rights,* 5; Moyn, *The Last Utopia*, 206, 1.
[238] Gibney, 'The State of Asylum', 57-59; Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship.*
[239] Gibney, 'State of Asylum', 73.

deportation asked an anti-imperialist rally: 'Is it to take away human rights from us?'[240] But predominantly both campaigners and authorities made repeated and explicit reference to the contested definition of an individual's right to be protected from a 'well-founded fear of persecution' as the cornerstone of Britain's human rights credentials.

In particular, the contested presence of a 'well-founded fear of persecution', was an increasingly pertinent factor in Mendis's case – as the political violence in Sri Lanka intensified with every year he remained in sanctuary.[241] Late twentieth-century Sri Lanka witnessed ongoing civil disturbances between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamil populations, specifically the Eelam War I (1983–1987), the Indian intervention (1987–1990), then the Eelam War II (1990–1995). Mendis was Sinhalese but feared that as a communist and vocal supporter of the Tamil national liberation struggle his life would be at risk if he were to be returned. Contemporary academics with expertise in the political landscape of Sri Lanka, such as Professor James Manor, a specialist in Indian and Sri Lankan politics, wrote to the Home Office and even testified in court that Mendis's fears were justified. 'Sinhalese extremists in the JVP have carried out more than 500 assassinations in the last year and a half against Sinhalese whom they regard as soft on Tamil separatism'.[242] Another academic expert on the politics of Sri Lanka warned that the British government had 'consistently underestimated the scale and nature of the problems of providing security for individuals and the risks run by both well-known and obscure political figures', which made 'it *impossible for the Government to provide any guarantees of personal safety to anyone with a known political stance*'.[243] Adding that 'one of the leading businessmen' in Sri Lanka had stated that 'it *could* 'very well be a death sentence for Viraj to be deported.'[244] Even internationally respected NGOs such as Amnesty International also made multiple appeals to the Home Office, stressing that if Mendis was deported to Sri Lanka, he 'would be at risk of prolonged detention without charge or trial, during which he would be at risk of ill-treatment and torture', if not, 'disappearance' or extrajudicial execution by members of the Sri Lankan security forces.'[245] Amnesty International submitted pages of statements, photographic evidence, and medical records of people 'who were in custody when torture, killings, and "disappearances" are alleged to have taken place'.[246] They cited that they were aware of 685

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[240] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/12, 'Stop the Deportation of Mohammad Azhar', 1; AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/12 'Anti-imperialist unit London rally', 1.
[241] TNA HO 394/899, Letter to Wistanley-Burgess (solicitors) from Home Office BI Division.
[242] Quoted in TNA HO 394/904, Letter from Winstanley-Burgess to the Treasury Solicitor, 21/12/1988, 2-3.
[243] My italics. TNA, HO 394/900, Letter from Dr Bradnock, SOAS, geography lecturer specialising in Sri Lanka, 19/02/1988.
[244] Ibid.
[245] Amnesty's receipt of the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize had lent it new prestige and attention. Quote from: TNA HO 394/904, Letter from Niall MacDermot, Secretary General of Amnesty International to Douglas Hurd, 22/12/1988, 1; See also: TNA HO 394/900, Amnesty International, 'URGENT ACTION: UNITED KINGDOM: Viraj Mendis's, 23/12/1986; TNA, HO 394/900, Amnesty International, 'Sri Lanka: An Update to Amnesty International's continued opposition to refoulement of Tamils to Sri Lanka' 20/02/1987.
[246] TNA HO 394/904, Amnesty International, 'Sri Lanka: What has happened to the "disappeared?"', June 1988, 3, 1-18. For more on how Amnesty International (with other NGOs and groups) helped build a conception on

"disappearances" documented between 1983 and July 1987, when the Sri Lankan and Indian governments signed a peace accord, and specifically detailed that there were 'many reports recently that Sinhalese young men have "disappeared" since then.[247]

The Home Office's response to Mendis's lawyers regarding assessments from professionals such as Professor James Manor, was simply that Manor's 'interpretation of the implications and developments in Sri Lanka is, *of course*, as open to question as that of anyone else.'[248] The casual employment of ,'of course' here, reveals a comfortability with rejecting expertise if it did not support the Home Office's position. They did accept that 'there is and has been considerable civil unrest in Sri Lanka', but maintained that it 'has at no point been established that Mr Mendis has a well-founded fear of persecution within the terms of the United Nations Convention':

> There is no evidence that he is at greater risk than any other person who may be returned to Sri Lanka and we cannot accept the proposition that it is wrong to send someone back to his own country simply because of civil unrest there.[249]

Thus revealing a normative attitude that so long as the risk does not fall within the bounds of a particularly restrictive legal definition, it is essentially acceptable to deport someone despite it being unsafe, for the alternative would be to open the door to greater numbers of asylum cases. Such a casual rejection of expertise advice might seem contradictory to the well-evidenced narrative of the 'rise of the expert' in late twentieth-century Britain.[250] However, the way experts in conjunction with NGO Amnesty International, were hereby attempting to hold government to account, can actually be seen as supportive of Hilton's findings that NGOs and 'ordinary experts' were also integral to driving this rise, and the constructions of the subjects for whom they speak: 'the presence and, at times, success of NGOs have meant they have in turn become a driver of the growing authority of professional expertise.'[251]

Privately, the Home Office were aware that their grounds for denying Mendis's well-founded fear of persecution was increasingly dubious. In a confidential November 1988 report, drafted at the behest of the Home Secretary to consider the latest 'implications for continuing to return failed Tamil asylum seekers' and 'how we would respond to any sudden outflow of Sinhalese', it was accepted that:

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disappearances through the discovery and reporting of violations, leading to international recognition that a method to grapple with disappearances was needed at the UN see: Ann Marie Clark, *Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International and Changing Human Rights Norms* (Princeton UP, 2001),70- 100.

[247] TNA HO 394/904, Amnesty International, 'Sri Lanka: A Review of Alleged Human Rights Abuses', June 1988, 1; TNA HO 394/904, 'Sri Lanka: What has happened', 2.

[248] My italics. TNA HO 394/905, Letter to Winstanley-Burgess, January 1989, 1.

[249] TNA HO 394/905, 'letter to Winstanley Burgess: Viraj Jerome Mendis's; TNA HO 394/903, 'Viraj Mendis' Memorandum from Private Secretary Collette McCallister', 3/11/1988.

[250] Phrase borrowed from Joseph Hodge, *Triumph of the Expert: Agrarian Doctrines of Development and the Legacies of British Colonialism* (Athens: OH, 2007).

[251] Hilton, 'Politics is Ordinary', 234.

> There is certainly an arguable case that conditions have not been suitable for the return of Tamils an any stage over the last four years. Ministers have rejected that case … We have a high risk policy: Sri Lanka is dangerous and returnees run the same risks as everyone else. But that is nothing new.[252]

Clearly, the Home Office legal adviser's reference to the fact their 'high risk policy' is 'nothing new', points to a rationale for continuing a policy based on unsound and dangerous assumptions, rather than a rationale which continuously questions their policy based on humanitarian concerns.

Furthermore, the adviser believed that the recent 'heightened activity' did not 'pose a particular threat to Tamils', so 'it would be odd' to 'suspend action against failed Sri Lankan asylum seekers' who were almost exclusively Tamil.[253] They added:

> The obvious exception is Viraj Mendis. If a decision were taken to suspend removals of Tamils – especially against a background of an increased risk for politically active Sinhalese – it would be difficult to justify returning him.[254]

Mendis was deported within three months of this report's production. Evidently, while the Home Office was outwardly being guided by codified human rights established by the Geneva Convention, behind closed doors they appear predominantly motivated by the potentially significant numbers of asylum seekers and how they could 'justify' avoiding them, in spite of Article 1A(2).

The evidence is clear that the UK government's policy towards Sri Lankan asylum seekers was driven not by human rights considerations but by numbers. As Stevens has argued the arrival of Tamil asylum seekers from 1985 prompted a rush of legislature and actions which paint a 'picture of a government panicked into restrictive rule-making'.[255] In May 1985 Hurd decided to impose a visa restriction against Sri Lanka which took effect overnight. This was a somewhat unexpected step in immigration practices at this time, especially since Sri Lanka was a former Commonwealth country.[256] The immediate effect was to hinder the departure of individual asylum seekers from their country of origin since no visa for 'asylum' exists. A further barrier to claiming asylum was then introduced through the 1987 Carriers Liability Act. The Act introduced the fining of any carrier (ship or aircraft) for every undocumented passenger transported. Effectively undermining the ability of refugees substantiated right to claim asylum and making 'staff at airline checkout desks surrogate immigration officers.'[257] Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, made it explicitly clear that 'the immediate spur' to this law was 'the arrival of over 8000 people claiming asylum in the three months up to February', many

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[252] TNA HO 394/771, P Wrench, Home Office legal adviser, 'CONFIDENTIAL: Sri Lanka' 11/11/1988, 2.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Ibid.
[255] Stevens, *UK Asylum* Law, 93; See also Shah*, Refugees, Race and the*, Ch. 7.
[256] From this time onwards, in almost every case in which a rise in asylum applications from a specific country were observed, successive Home Secretaries introduced a visa requirement against the country concerned. For example, against Turkey in 1989, Uganda in 1991, the former Yugoslavia in 1992, Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast in 1994, Kenya in 1996, Slovakia in 1998, Zimbabwe and Algeria in 2003.
[257] Ruff, 'The Immigration (Carriers'', 482.; Jill Rutter, Refugee Council, Recent Changes in Asylum Policy in Britain: As cited in Maguire, 'Freedom of Movement', 5.

of whom he suspected of merely leaving 'their homes in the Third World' for 'greater security, comfort and prosperity'.[258]

The Home Office's treatment and discussion of Sri Lankan refugees and their adamance to deport Mendis in particular, also supports and in fact chronologically extends Maguire's recent findings that towards the 1990s British immigration policy was being driven by the context of a European 'security-driven approach to asylum', and a concern not to be seen as the 'soft touch' entry point.[259] Indeed, that same confidential Home Office report considering the 'implications' of their Tamil asylum policy' in November 1988, noted that they had returned fifty-six Tamils to Sri Lanka in nine months and refusal decisions remained to be implemented on more than sixty others: 'by far the toughest in the western world: France has managed 15 in returns in 12 months, Australia 7, and the Netherlands 5, while many countries returned none.'[260] Rather than this being seen as a cause for concern, however, this was described as a 'reasonably effective policy', which had ensured that it 'is most unlikely that Tamils would now regard the United Kingdom as in anyway a *soft target.*'[261]

By focusing on how the term 'well-founded fear of persecution' was employed in deportation cases by both sides, exposes how it meant very different things to each. For potential refugees and their campaigners, it carried the connotations of human rights, and encompassed any risk of inflicted homelessness, violence, torture, and death. For authorities assessing these claims, it often represented a usefully subjective standard of proof, cloaked in flat language, which served not only to hide a violence of action – the denial of individuals refugee status and enforced deportation – but also of intent – to reduce immigration generally and asylum applications specifically.

'Compassionate' circumstances

Another key element in contested deportation cases was the existence of and allowance for compassionate circumstances. The need for compassion was a rhetoric heavily employed by campaigners, and responded to by the Home Office and involved authorities. The concept of compassionate grounds was embedded in immigration rules, which allowed the secretary of state to 'take into account all relevant factors', including 'age', 'length or residence', 'previous criminal record' and 'compassionate circumstances.'[262] Although it used the word compassion it left it undefined. This would prove to be important. For while the Home Office and campaigners might appear to be united around the idea of compassion, they in fact drew on the idea of compassion

[258] Douglas Hurd HC Deb. 16/03/1987, vol.112 col.706.
[259] Maguire, 'Freedom of Movement', 3.
[260] TNA HO 394/771, 'TAMIL ASYLUM APPLICATIONS' report by T. Flesher, B1 Division, 18/11/1988, 2.
[261] My italics. TNA HO 394/771, 'TAMIL ASYLUM APPLICATIONS' report by T. Flesher, B1 Division, 18/11/1988, 4, 6.
[262] Cohen, *Immigration Controls*, 137.

differently. The following material shows that although this idea was most easily and readily mobilised in relation to children and those with disabilities, for the Home Office it was always tempered by a demand for a heavy burden of proof.

Ostensibly, defence campaign cases with children involved were amongst those "most likely" for the Home Office to grant a leave to remain under their 'exceptional circumstances' for compassionate reasons.[263] As theorists like Carolyn Steedman have long established, the 'sacralisation' of the child that occurred in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries as children were withdrawn from the workforce and economic activity has rendered them 'emotionally priceless'; as symbols of social hope, objects of reformist study and subjects of legislative attention.[264] This was central to the development international humanitarianism, too. We see this is at play the 1987 case of Salema Begum. Salema was a thirteen-year-old girl at the time she was given sanctuary in Chorlton Central Church, Manchester, in an attempt to thwart her deportation by the Home Office to Bangladesh (see **figure 4).** Salema's father had come to Britain and brought the rest of his family in 1973. Salema had stayed with her grandmother in Bangladesh, but when she died Salema was left with no one to care for her. The Home Office granted her temporary admission but refused her permission to stay permanently, with any re-application process likely take years and involve costly blood-tests that were impractical to undertake in rural Bangladesh.[265] As the Reverend Alan Gaunt, a minister in the Chorlton group of churches, stressed to the press: 'This is a child of 13 who needs her family.'[266]

[263] Cohen, *Immigration Controls, the*, 155-165.
[264] Carolyn Steedman, *Childhood, Culture, and Class in Britain: Margaret McMillan 1860–1931* (New Brunswick, Rutgers UP, 1990), 63; Amberyl Malkovich, *Charles Dickens and the Victorian Child*, (New York, Routledge, 2012); Jon Lawrence and Pat Starkey (eds.), *Child Welfare and Social Action from the Nineteenth Century to the Present,* (Liverpool UP, 2001); Emily Baughan, *Saving the Children* (University of California Press, 2011).
[265] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/17.
[266] Michael Morris, 'Church provides refuge to stop girls expulsion', *The Guardian,* 23/10/1987, 4.

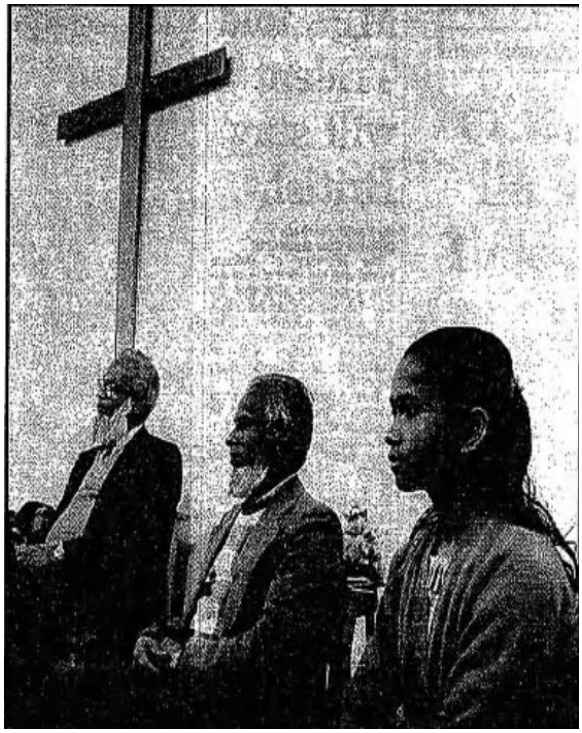

Figure 4 & 5: Salema Begum and her father, Gura Miah, in sanctuary. Photographs screenshotted from 'Tests prove parentage of refuge girl', *The Guardian*, 13/01/1988, 2.

In direct contrast to Mendis's sanctuary campaign, which was simultaneously being held just some two miles up the road, the Home Office found Salema's case compelling. Within twenty-four hours, the immigration authorities wanted to talk. After ten days in sanctuary, she was granted an extension to her temporary permit to stay.[267]

If a young child was regarded as a suitable case for compassion, then following the concept of 'western degrees of compassion' a sick child, or a child with a sick parent was too.[268] We see evidence of this reflected in other successful deportation campaigns, such as the sanctuary for the Adedimeji family, which took place at the City Road Methodist Church, Birmingham, in 1988. The Adedimiji family had lived in Britain over seven years when they came under threat of deportation to Nigeria. Their eleven-month-old son, Oluway, suffered from sickle-cell anaemia, and so faced significant increased risk in Nigeria which lacked the medical resources available in Britain. As his father told the press: 'All we are asking for is the authorities to show some *compassion* for our child whose life is at risk.'[269] They were granted an extension after a month of sanctuary.[270] In the case of Victoria Apetor, who was suffering from clinical depression, and her twenty-month-old son Stephen Apetor,

[267]'Sanctuary girl allowed to stay', *The Guardian*, 16/02/1988, 2.
[268] Fuchuan Yao, 'There are no Degrees in a Bodhisattva's Compassion', *Asian Philosophy,*16:3 (2006), 189-198.
[269] Rob Perkins, 'Church sanctuary family in pledge', *Sandwell Evening Mail*, 28/04/1988, 64.
[270]'Fear for son of Nigerian told to quit UK' *Sandwell Evening Mail*, 29/03/1989, 15.

they eventually won their appeal against their deportation to Ghana on compassionate grounds - after spending eleven weeks 'in sanctuary' from their Manchester home-based campaign.[271]

However, the barometer and parameters for what qualified as exceptional compassionate circumstances to the Home Office was prone to erratic fluctuations. In the case of Rajwinder Singh (see **figure 6**), who took sanctuary at the Guru Nanak Temple, Bradford, in February 1987, for example, we see "compassion" granted only after the case had attracted widespread public outrage, despite the facts of the case available to the Home Office remaining the same. Rajwinder Singh was a twenty-nine-year-old epileptic with significant learning difficulties. His father, Gurdev Singh, migrated to the UK from India in 1967 and after eventually saving enough for a family home in 1976 managed to bring his family too. However, Rajwinder was not granted permanent residence. The family continued to visit him in India at great expense, making return trips on no less than six occasions, and were distressed to see his condition worsen. They involved their local MP, a firm of solicitors, a leading Asian supporter of the Tory party and the Indian High Commissioner in pleading their case for the exercise of discretion on compassionate grounds. All these representations were turned down.

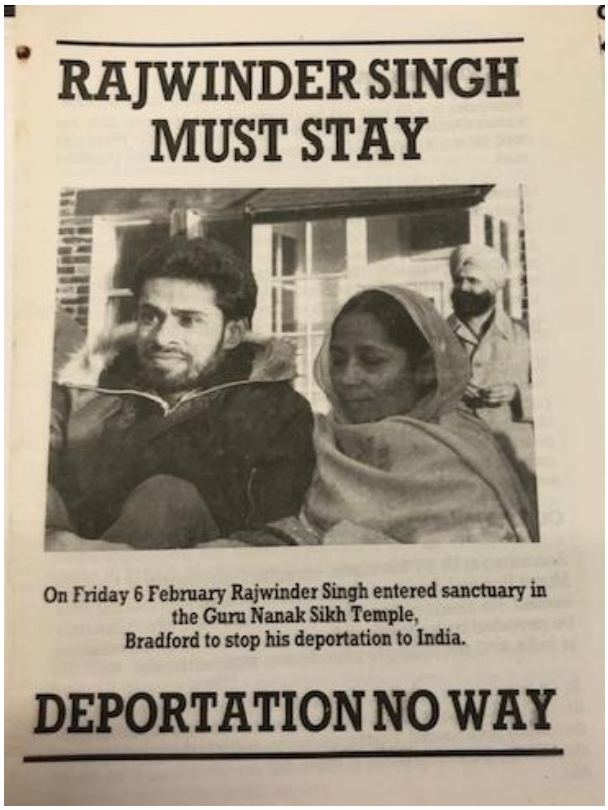

Figure 6: Ahmed Iqbal Ullac Race Centre (AIURC) SCC GB3228.028/01/6, Author's photograph of Rajwinder Singh Campaign literature, courtesy of AIURC.

[271] Janine Watson, 'Victoria wins a promise', *Manchester Evening News*, 15/08/1989, 2; Laurie Bullas, 'Sanctuary mum wins her fight', *Manchester Evening News*, 26/10/1989, 1.

Finally, Gurdev Singh's patience snapped. He violated the immigration rules by obtaining a passport for Rajwinder under a false name. The Home Office picked up on the fraud but allowed Rajwinder temporary admission after Mr Singh's MP, Pat Wall, intervened on his behalf. A consultant psychiatrist at Lynfield Mount Hospital in Bradford, Dr Bavington, reported that Rajwinder's:

> mental handicap had left him with a limited capacity in many areas of his life. His speech and appearance suggest a person younger than 29. . . he is timid, diffident and [has] a dependent personality . . . It is probable that the cause of his mental handicap is some form of brain damage occurring in the early infancy, possibly resulting from birth trauma.[272]

Despite this supportive, expert, account of Rajwinder's condition, immigration officers from the Leeds–Bradford airport called at the family home to arrange a removal for 25 February 1987. According to the family:

> A public meeting was called for, when the local community heard about our family's plight and our son Rajwinder Singh. From this meeting of over a hundred people, Rajwinder's defence campaign was launched. [Six days later] 400 people marched in the streets of Bradford chanting slogans that Rajwinder was here to stay.[273]

Figure 7: Photograph of a march for the Rajwinder Singh Defence campaign n.d, courtesy of AUIR SCC GB 3228.28, Box 10: SC/C/PH/60/1.

The removal was thwarted only due to crowds of neighbourhood support, and Rajwinder was taken into sanctuary.[274]

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[272] All as cited in Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity*, 152.
[273] Ibid.
[274] V.M.D.C: Religious Support Group, *Sanctuary - Manchester Perspectives* (1998), 7.

The obvious sincerity and popularity of the Singhs, which was partly derived from Gurdev having been an Olympic gold medallist, led to a great deal of community support that organised a 'write-in' to over 120 MPs, and made a campaign video entitled 'Rajwinder's Story' (see **figure 7**). Following this, Rajwinder was allowed to stay for *further* 'medical tests to determine whether he is dependent upon his parents'.[275] Home Office Minster, Timothy Renton, said in a letter to the Bradford North MP, Pat Wall, that the offer depended on Singh leaving the Guru Nanak temple.[276] It was over a year after the sanctuary was entered that the Home Office agreed first to re-examine Rajwinder's medical history, and then, finally, granted him the permanent right to stay.[277]

In many ways then, far from being an example of the Home Office's compassion, Rajwinder's case can actually be seen as the exception that proves the rule. The fact that his father was an ex-Olympian may have weighed in his favour in terms of appearing as an exceptional contributor to British society. Many campaigners also speculated that the concession was only granted in Rajwinder's case, with an eye to disrupting the momentum galvanising behind sanctuary as a movement – as Rajwinder's campaign was playing out at the same time that Mendis's was also reaching a critical point.[278] Above all, his story highlights the extremity of the circumstances required to gain a compassionate concession and the heavy balance of proof that both asylum seekers and immigrants alike were increasingly required to meet. A continuation can be drawn here to Natarajan's findings pertaining to the Home Office's processing of earlier South Asian family reunification claims following the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. She finds evidence of suspicion 'towards migrants built into every step of the system', but also with a particular scrutiny towards 'bogus children' or dependents, who were often viewed as workers trying to avoid the newly imposed work voucher scheme.[279] The vague language of the Act authorised immigration officers to act as on the spot experts to evaluate 'the condition of dependents in terms of age, gender, and family relation; and to make 'compassionate' decision where required.[280]

Certainly "compassion" for family sacrality only appeared to matter to the state in immigration cases in the 1980s in exceptional circumstances, and often only when individuals and campaigns went to exceptional lengths to prove said circumstances.[281] As a 1981 editorial in *The Guardian* commented, in 'countless' cases involving Asian and Black families, British immigration officials appeared to have 'started from a premise of suspicion' and on 'this false foundation, apparent discrepancies found an impregnable edifice of disbelief'.[282] The discriminatory grounds for this

[275] Martin Wainwright, 'News in brief: Offer to Sikh', *The Guardian,* 12/02/1988, 2.
[276] Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity,* 152.
[277] 'Offer to Sikh', *The Guardian*, 12/02/1988, 2.
[278] Viraj Mendis, author interview, online, 20/08/2020.
[279] Natarajan, 'The 'Bogus Child', 20.
[280] Natarajan, 'The 'Bogus Child', 12.
[281] See: AIURC SCC GB3228.28/01/111, *What would you do if your fiancé went to the moon*? (MCC, 1987).
[282] 'Mrs Ditta's total victory, *The Guardian*, 20/03/1981, 14.

suspicion varied between the predictable tropes of migrant men being a threat to jobs and women being a burden upon welfare, but the underlying message of hostility over compassion remained a conspicuous theme throughout the immigration system. This was perhaps most infamously laid bare by the exposure of how fiancées wanting to enter Britain throughout the 1970s were sometimes demanded proof of their virginity and asked to sign a standard form stating that they 'agree to a gynaecological examination which may be vaginal necessary'.[283] Others, including pregnant women, were routinely X-rayed as a method of age estimation in family reunion applications.[284]

Family reunion campaigns such as that of Anwar Ditta and her children, which lasted over six years (1975-1982), highlight the painful impact such burdensome and protracted procedures could have upon individuals and whole families.[285] Ditta's three children, who were residing in Pakistan at the time, were refused entry to Britain in 1979 on the grounds that the Home Office had 'quite considerable' doubts that Ditta was the biological mother of these children.[286] 'I was devastated', recalled Ditta: 'there's no words to describe somebody turning around, saying that… You know, you carry your children for nine months.' According to Ditta when she approached her MP Cyril Smith for help, 'he just turned around, and I can still remember his words: "I don't know what all the fuss is about"… I just lost it, I'll be honest.'[287] As she saw it, she 'had no choice but to campaign', because 'they did not want my case to be heard'.[288] She spoke at hundreds of public meetings, gaining the support of Manchester Law Centre, local community relations councils, trade unions, Labour Party branches, and Black organizations, galvanising pickets, leafleting, petitions, pamphlets, and lobbying MPs.[289] The goalposts of proof appeared to continuously shift. She offered blood tests but was told they 'Needn't go that far'. She went to the extent of having a gynaecological examination to prove she was a mother. But was then told by the Home Office this only proved she was *a* mother not *their*

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[283] Melanie Phillips, 'Virginity tests on immigrants at Heathrow', *The Guardian*, 1/02/1979, 1; Evan Smith and Marinella Marmo, 'Uncovering the 'Virginity Testing' Controversy in the National Archives: The Intersectionality of Discrimination in British Immigration History', *Gender & History*, 23:1(2011), 147-165.
[284] Phillips, 'Virginity tests', *The Guardian*, 1/02/1979, 1.
[285] For a concise narrative of Ditta's story see: Paul Gordon, 'Outlawing Immigrants', in Phil Scraton & Paul Gordon, *Causes for Concern: Questions of Law and Justice* (Harmondsworth, Penguin 1984).
[286] Michael Nally, 'New chance for children', *The Observer,* 4/01/1981, 5; The Adjudicator questioned the credibility of the family, stating he 'could not accept that Anwar Ditta and Hamida Rafique [Ditta's sister] were simple Asian village women' and finding that '[a]lthough they left the UK in mid-childhood' and were 'lacking in education', the sisters had 'an excellent command of English and were far more westernised and sophisticated in their demeanour than the average member of the immigrant community'. As Evan and Marmo point out, could be taken to suggest that Ditta and her family were not be believed because they were educated immigrants and therefore presumed to be more devious and calculating than the 'average' South Asian migrant: Evan Smith, M. Marmo*, Race, Gender and the Body in British Immigration Control: Subject to Examination* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014).
[287] Anwar Ditta interview, with the AIUR, 'Conversation with Cyril Smith MP'. Online:https://soundcloud.com/aiucentre/interview2-6?in=aiucentre/sets/anwar-dittas-fight-for-her-children.[accessed:03/04/2023].
[288] Ditta, interview, AIUR 'The Legal System was Against Her'.
[289] Paul Gordon, 'Outlawing Immigrants', 116; Ditta's story became a cause célèbre reported on under heart-pulling headlines like: 'Re-think on children plea', *Newcastle Evening Chronicle*, 17/03/1981, 3;'Mother Reunited with children' *Newcastle Journal*, 15/04/1981, 2; 'Joy for Split Family', *Daily Mirror,* 20/03/1981.

mother.[290] All such additional testing was expected to be paid for by the appellant at their own expense, and only further added delays to the time families spent divided.

Finally, Granada TV 'World In Action' recorded a programme, 'These Are My Children', about Ditta's struggle and funded familial blood testing.[291] Within days of the programme airing the Minister of Immigration reversed his ruling and allowed the children to come to Britain.[292] The cameras were also at Manchester Airport to capture the family reunion (see **figure 8**), but after being separated for six years, it was a bittersweet moment and the children looked visibly bewildered. 'Here is a message for you' said Ditta, turning to address her remarks via television cameras to Home Office Minister Timothy Raison, 'Look what you have done to my children.'[293] Talking to me decades later Ditta continued to believe the separation had caused irreversible damage to their relationships.[294]

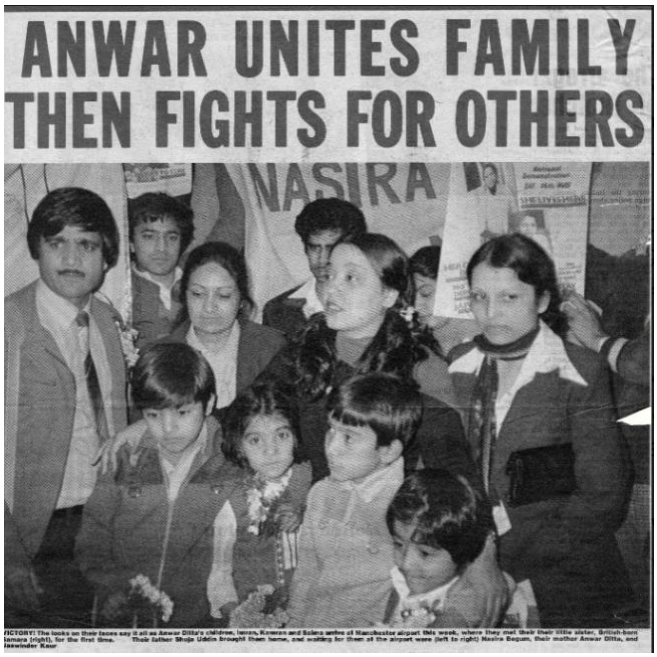
ANWAR UNITES FAMILY
THEN FIGHTS FOR OTHERS

Figure 8: photograph screenshot of newspaper report of Anwar Ditta and her children reunited at Manchester airport. Courtesy of Anwar Ditta and www.tandana.org.

Throughout deportation cases too, time and again we see migrants and asylum seekers alike being subjected to exposing, degrading, and unjustly criminalising British laws and practices. Indeed, the Singh's year-long battle was actually relatively brief in comparison to many other anti-deportation

[290] *Socialist Challenge,* 5/03/1981, 9.
[291] World in Action: These Children Are Mine (The Anwar Ditta Defence Campaign - 1981). Online:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-T4lcI8ork [accessed:03/04/2023].
[292] *The Stage,* 'ITV picks a World in Action',13/08/1981, 45.
[293] Gordon, 'Outlawing Immigrants', 133.
[294] Anwar Ditta, author interview. 'I proved they were my kids to the government, to the immigration officers, to the whole world. But I could never prove to my three kids that I loved them,' Ditta told the Guardian in: Anne Perkins, 'I was robbed of my children's childhood', *The Guardian,* 22/10/1999. Online:https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/1999/oct/22/features11.g24.[accessed:02/03/2023].

campaigns, most obviously in comparison to the later sanctuary of Ogunwobi family. In 1994, Sunday 'Sunny' and Olubunmi 'Bunmi' Ogunwobi and their three young children, under threat of deportation by the John Major government, sought sanctuary in the Hackney Downs Baptist Church. Sunny had lived in Britain for over thirteen years, initially on a student visa, but the Home Office did not recognise his work as a pastor as legitimate grounds to stay. Two of their three children suffered from medical conditions and special educational needs, which they believed could not be adequately treated back in Nigeria. The sanctuary was to drag on for more than three years.

The prolonged uncertainty and confinement had an immeasurable impact upon the family (see **figure 9**). They predominantly lived in cramped and unsanitary vestry rooms above the church, and in constant fear of being raided. The children had to be taken to school by a rotation of volunteers and always with the accompanying fear that they might be 'snatched' by the Home Office or social services on any given day. Campaign leader, Ian Rathbone particularly recalled one episode when one of the children had developed an acute illness, leaving the family with the dilemma of whether to seek medical help, at the risk of having the state consequentially intervening.[295] The reality of their day-to-existence was clearly not one borne out of opportunistic economic gain, as the contemporary government rhetoric might have had many believe. As the Mrs Ogunwobi told reporters at the time: 'It's cold and damp. But we can cope with this because it's better than back home where we have nowhere to go.'[296]

Throughout the years the campaign generated petitions, protests, concerts and weekly candlelit vigils, at one point the sanctuary was even visited by the American political activist Jesse Jackson. A motion proposed by MP Diane Abbott in 1994 that explicitly called on the government 'in the International Year of the Family' to 'exercise compassion and discretion in the matter and lift the deportation order and grant indefinite leave to remain' was signed by ninety-one other MP's – but to no immediate effect.[297] The family were only finally granted the right to remain in 1997 with the advent of the Blair Labour government.

The recurrent theme here is clear. For the campaigners, compassionate circumstances which should carry weight in cases where individuals under threat of deportation, encompassed family sacrality, vulnerability and human empathy. Whereas, to the authorities the compassionate circumstances clause often functioned more as a spurious justification for controls, on the basis that the Home Office was not uncompassionate or unhuman because it retained sufficient flexibility to find in favour of exceptional or "troublesome" cases.[298] Hence, the Home Office definition of compassion was not incompatible with allowing individuals and families to undergo years of

[295] Ian Rathbone, author interview, online, 14/11/2020.
[296] Danny Penman, 'Family seeks refuge in church', *Independent*, 3/06/1994.
[297] EDM number 1347 in 1993-94, proposed by Diane Abbott on 20/06/1994.
[298] Cohen, *Immigration Controls*, 155.

purgatory torment, intrusive trials, and in the case of the Ogunwobis – who became virtual prisoners within a church for four years – essentially dehumanising and criminalising treatment. This was preferable to allowing compassionate circumstances clause to be seen as a soft or easy avenue to British residence.

Figure 9: Sunny Ogunwobi looking out from his confinement in the Hackney Downs Baptist Church. Image courtesy of Ian Rathbone.

If the sick and vulnerable were sometimes omitted from the Home Office's paper definition of compassion in asylum cases, women in particular were regularly treated as the bottom of the pile, if not actively discriminated against. This was explicitly evident through the way women were legally framed as appendages as result of the 1971 Immigration Act. Any man settled in the UK had the right to bring his wife, but women did not in reverse.[299]As Home Office, immigration minister, Timothy Raison, explained to the House of Commons, this was guided by a patriarchal logic:

> the young man seeking to come to the United Kingdom for the purpose of marriage is economically motivated. The reason why women come here is not primarily economic but so they can build a family.[300]

[299] This prevailed until 1985, when women from the Immigration Widows campaign took their cases to the European Court of Human Rights, which in May 1985 ruled that the UK laws were sexist. In responses, the British Government did not liberalise the law to allowing fiancées or husbands the right of entry – but instead "levelled-down" the law by making rules preventing wives and female fiancées coming to the UK; Case of Abdulaziz, Cabales and Balkandali v. The United Kingdom, 15/1983/71/107-109, Council of Europe: European Court of Human Rights, 24/04/1985; Jaqueline Bhaba and Sue Shutter, *Women's Movement*: *Women under immigration and refugee law* (London: Trentham Books, 1994), 2.
[300] Timothy Raison, HC Deb. vol.975 c.367, 4/12/1979.

The wife's right to be in the UK was thus dependent on the husband's – once his leave ran out, so did hers.[301] Another alarmingly common consequence of these policies treating women as their husband's appendage was that it meant their right to stay in the country could become dependent upon them continuing to put their lives at risk in an abusive and harmful marriage. In numerous cases we find women having to campaign to stay, after leaving an abusive husband and being told they must leave, and sometimes even facing the prospect of potential separation from their British-born children.[302] As one such woman, Manda Kunda, a Zambian mother of three whose immigration status was tied to her abusive husband, explained:

> I have managed to escape from a web of violence in which I have been entangled for many years. My heart is at peace and I have a person within myself. I refuse to be pushed back to the misery that I was kept in. You cannot understand the feelings and misery that swell up inside you. The Home Office doesn't realise what it puts you through, as women we are just labelled as creatures of husbands.[303]

Kunda was afraid that under Zambian law her husband's family would gain custody of the children if they were sent back to Zambia.[304] She was eventually granted to remain after extensive campaigning. Lead campaigner, Marilyn Cuffy, told me that the many other active campaigns in Manchester working collectively 'certainly helped strengthen our resolve as well as offering mutual support vitally required' during this time.[305] Thus highlighting, much like the Singh's case, the exceptional work that needed to be done to have a claim recognised, with no guarantee of success. Indeed, Cuffy also recalled saying that Waddington 'must have been in a very good mood' when reconsidering Kunda's case.[306]

The harsh reality of how the policies driving deportations could persecute women, despite extensive campaigning, was exposed most acutely through the case of Afia Begum.[307] Conforming to a policy announced at the end of 1982, Begum and her young daughter were deported following her fiancée's tragic death in a fire in their East End tenant house. The fact that she had lost her fiancé, she had an eighteen-month-old child, most of her relatives were in the UK, as well the vocal support of many in a campaign backed by the Sari Squad, cut no ice (see **figure 11**).[308] The Sari Squad, were a

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[301] Bhaba and Shutter, *Women's Movement,* 100.
[302] See, for example the cases of Nasreen Achtar, Najat Chaffee, Hailmat Babamba, Jaswinder Kaur; Don Redding, 'The not so tender trap', *The Guardian*, 9/01/1991,17; Bhaba and Shutter, *Womens movement*, 103; Southall Black Sisters, *A Stark Choice: Domestic Violence or Deportation? Abolish the one year rule now!* (London: Southall Black Sisters, 1997).
[303] Manda Kunda, quoted in GLC, *Right to be Here*, 76. Kunda's visa was valid until 1987, but she received a deportation order in 1985 after leaving her husband to live in a Women's refuge.
[304] 'Woman's battle to stay in the UK', *Daily Mail*, 5/03/1985, 6.
[305] Marilyn Cuffy, email to author.
[306] Cuffy, email to author.
[307] See: http://www.spectacle.co.uk/spectacleblog/despite-tv/sari-squad-the-afia-begum-campaign/.[accessed:23/03/2023].
[308] The Sari Squad, were a group of women, mostly South Asian, who, as Benjamin Zephaniah recalled, were 'experts in various martial arts and ready and willing to take on any racists who would try to spoil our fun … They fought with style, and would usually burst into song after seeing off any attackers': Benjamin Zephaniah,

group of activist women, mostly South Asian, who, in 1984, along with women from other organisations "took on" Afia's case committedly. Afia and her child went 'into hiding' under their protection, and in April that year they hired a bus to travel to the European Commission for Human Rights in Strasbourg in order to present an emergency proposal to prevent Begum's deportation.[309]

Waddington reflected in his memoir's that Afia's was a 'troublesome case'. We might read this language as betraying a sense of care or concern regarding her situation, but we might equally see it as more denotive of the 'trouble' her case caused him.[310] He wrote that 'some of the tactics used by the campaigners were embarrassing and disruptive. Sometimes they were quite amusing':

> One night I went to a public meeting in Bradford to explain government policy but after each sentence of my speech a line of pretty girls in the middle of a block of seats half way down the hall shot to their feet, each with a placard bearing a letter of Afia Begum's name.[311]

Evidently the political message and demands for compassion from the 'line of pretty girls' – as he patronizingly put it – made little impact on him, other than being 'embarrassing'. In the House of Commons Waddington stated that 'by taking the advice of the Sari Squad' and other 'irresponsible' campaigners, and 'going into hiding', she 'certainly had not improved her case.'[312] Afia's choice of friends and embarrassing resistance tactics thus seemingly trumped her compassionate circumstances, Waddington was able to frame her case as being one of a woman in league with subversive un-law-abiding elements. He ultimately determined that Afia thought by getting a visa to the UK, 'she had won the prize of a better life in Britain and, [was] determined to try and hang on to the prize'.[313] The Home Office maintained that Begum's immigration status was dependent upon her now deceased partner, and the Home Secretary refused to grant a discretionary concession. Begum was arrested in a dawn raid and summarily deported before the European Commission could even rule in her case.[314]

'If we did nothing we would be killed on the streets', *The Guardian,* 28/02/2016. Online:https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/feb/28/if-we-did-nothing-we-would-be-killed-on-the-streets-benjamin-zephaniah-on-fighting-the-far-right.[accessed:23/03/2023]; 'Sari Squad - Afia Begum Campaign'. Online: https://vimeo.com/176730792?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=6547962. [accessed 18/03/3023];'Brittan protest: four bound over' *Westminster and Pimlico News,* 26/08/1983, 5; Shaheen Haq, Pratibha Parmar, Ingrid Pollard, 'Images of Black Women Organizing', *Feminist Review*, 17(1984), 90-95.

[309] Ulysses Santamaria and Kristin Couper, 'The making of the multi-racial society in the United Kingdom: strategies and perspectives', *Social Science Information*, 24/1(1985), 152.

[310] Waddington, *Memoirs*, 119.

[311] Ibid.

[312] Waddington, HC Deb. 11/06/1984 vol.61 c.742.

[313] Waddington, *Memoirs*, 118.

[314] Lyn Owens, 'Families who fear the knock at the door – in Britain', *The Observer,* 6/05/1984, 4.

Figure 10: Sari Squad picketing at the 1983 Conservative Party Conference, Photofusion/REX/Shutterstock.

Taking these cases together it is understandable why the discretionary grounds for compassionate circumstances in deportation cases were seen as confusingly arbitrary, if not always as Leech put it to Waddington, 'like the sham that increasing numbers of people believe that it is.'[315] Ernie Roberts MP, one of the twenty-three MPs named by the Home Office as making excessive numbers of applications to stop deportations, perhaps summed the conception up best when he candidly told campaigners at a conference in 1985, he had 'been successful in some cases', but, 'does not know the reason why.'[316] It is my argument, however, that by turning our focus in the next section to the discourse surrounding the Home Secretary's discretion and specifically his definition of judging cases 'on its merits' rather 'than by the number or level of representations on their behalf, or by the degree of media coverage', provides further insight into the motivations driving this discretion.

Judgements 'on merit'

[315] LPL BSR/RACE/T/4/4, Letter from Kenneth Leech to David Waddington, 16/07/1985.
[316] Ernie Roberts MP as quoted in: AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/178, Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign Conference Report, 16/11/1985, 4.

The Home Office, and specifically, the Home Secretary's subjective powers of discretion were made all the more stark when the treatment administered to Afia Begum was contrasted to treatment that was almost simultaneously being administered to the athlete Zola Budd.[317] Home Secretary Leon Brittan recognised the claims of Budd, a seventeen-year-old South African runner, to British nationality, enabling her to compete as a British athlete in the 1984 Olympic Games. Brittan had asked Waddington to oversee the case, who recounted the 'almighty row' that broke about it in his memoirs: 'it being alleged that she, a white South African, had been put to the top of the queue while millions of black people were waiting patiently for their own applications to enter Britain to be dealt with' (see **figure 11**).[318]

Figure 11: Cutting of cartoon printed in *The Guardian,* 12/04.1985. Saved in the TNA FCO 105/1836.

According to Waddington this argument 'was completely fallacious' and those advancing it were 'deliberately confusing the right to British citizenship with the right of a foreigner to come to Britain for settlement.'[319] Of course, Waddington's own counter argument completely ignores, if not "deliberately confuses", the fact that many of the Black people waiting on said application list would not have been a defined as a 'foreigner' or even a 'British Overseas Citizen' with no right to abode, until the introduction of the 1971 Immigration Act, and then the 1981 British Nationality Act, restricted migration from Commonwealth nations to those with increasingly exclusivist 'patrial' ties.[320]

Even if we were to ignore the discriminatorily constructed laws underpinning the immigration system, it cannot be denied that a level of personal discretion, if not outright corruption, was at play in Zola Budd's speedy offer of citizenship. The confidential Foreign Office papers reviewing the application procedure state that there was 'a pressure to deal with the case at great speed', a

[317] *The Asian Times,* 11/04/1985.
[318] Waddington, *Memoir,* 121.
[319] Waddington, *Memoirs,* 122.
[320] Patel, *We're here because*, 74- 75.

'reluctance to take account of reservations' from the FCO, and, 'on the contrary, a wish to get around them'.[321] Budd's application was processed and accepted by the Home Office within nine days. Explaining to another colleague why he was left out of the decision-making process, one aid, Mr Squire, noted that 'the Home Office pressed for urgent consideration and asked for a ministerial meeting at short notice, with little prior official consultation'. Tellingly, he even added that the Home Office's attitude was assumed to have 'derived from the Home Secretary's direct contacts with Sir David English [then editor of the *Daily Mail*] over the case'.[322] Evidently, Budd's 'extraordinary athletic potential', as acknowledged in the Home Office background notes to her case, if not extraordinary connections, were deemed to be of a particular value to the British community, worthy of the Home Secretary's personal efforts and the Home Office's fast-tracked efforts.[323]

The way such discretionary judgements could work in reverse, as grounds for deportation, in order to prevent "undesirable" individuals from ever claiming permeant British citizenship, was made particularly patent through the lengths the Home Office was prepared to go to throughout the Mendis campaign. From the early stages of his campaign in 1985 the Home Office legal advisors privately acknowledged amongst each other that the 'potential weakness in our case' here, was the length of time Mendis had already been in the UK.[324] Mendis had already been in the UK for eleven years by this point, making it possible to consider whether he should benefit from the 'ten year concession', wherein people resident in the UK could be granted indefinite 'leave to remain' in consideration of the 'ties developed in this country'. By 1987 this "potential weakness" was only heightened because they needed now 'to take into account the fact that Mendis will have been in the country for fourteen years in October', and as one advisor reminded Waddington:

> the guidance on the operation of the ten year concession indicated that individuals who achieved fourteen years' residence, whether lawful or unlawful, should be allowed to remain. If we are to concede on this basis it would be as well to withdraw our action now.[325]

Waddington's reply, through his private secretary, read simply that 'he is amazed that officials should suggest that conceding was even a possibility in this case at this time.' And 'should be grateful for a strengthened draft' of the future options for action.[326]

Evidence also survives within Home Office meeting minutes of individuals planning to see if they could '*inspire some comment* in the popular press in support of the Government's position on Mendis.'[327] Throughout my interviews with activists involved in anti-deportation campaigns, a

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[321] My italics. TNA FCO105/1836, Confidential note from C Squire to Sir J Leahy, 'Zola Budd', 25/04/1984, 7.
[322] Ibid.
[323] TNA FCO105/1836, 'Background' Migration and Visa Department', 13/03/1984, 1.
[324] TNA HO 394/901, D McQueen, Memorandum 'Viraj Jerome Mendis', 23/05/1985,5.
[325] TNA HO 394/900, D McQueen, Memorandum 'Viraj Mendis', 9/03/1987, 2.
[326] Waddington as quoted in TNA HO 394/900 Letter from Private Secretary David Ackland to Mr Platt, 11/03/1987.
[327] TNA, HO 394/902, Note of meeting held on 28/07/1988.

consistent theme was how they felt sure their phones were being tapped. Such claims initially seemed to me to be bred more out of paranoia then reality, but the Home Office papers of the Mendis case confirm that that the Home Office was at least receiving updates from the head of 'GMP Special Branch'. As one Chief Inspector reported:

> I have today discussed the recent events described above, together with the forecast Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign programme, with the head of GMP Special Branch … The Divisional Commander is worried by this running sore in a *notoriously volatile* immigrant area. But SB seem to be under no particular pressure from the uniformed branch to "give in". Their problem is that surveillance of the church is made virtually impossible by the nature of the area (high rise flats). But SB are quite prepared to await their opportunity which they feel must come eventually.[328]

It is unclear what 'opportunity' exactly Special Branch were awaiting, but the reports proves that some form of distanced surveillance on the sanctuary was at least being sanctioned. Moreover, the recent Undercover Policing Inquiry has made pubic that multiple undercover officers infiltrated the Revolutionary Communist Group during the time they were championing the Mendis campaign. And an undercover officer was certainly present to report on public campaign meetings against the deportation of Afia-Begum, reporting ominously that 'a victory in this case would give encouragement to others'.[329] Such actions clearly call into question the extent to which decisions on deportation cases were being made upon 'merit' as opposed to dubious forms of discretion. However, further nuance can be extracted from the language used by the authorities, in comparison to the campaigners, to denote the different interpretations of belonging that was driving these hostile acts of discretion.

Different claims to belonging, in terms of what made a "good" British citizen as economic and political contributors can be seen directly influencing the Home Office's attitude towards deportation cases. 'In the Mendis' case, wrote one legal adviser, he 'would be inclined to recommend no further action', and thereby grant Mendis this concession 'if he had made *better* use of his time here'.[330] Waddington evidently agreed and expanded on this conception of ill-used time in a letter defending the deportation order to Mendis' constituency MP, Robert Litherland: 'I find that Mr Mendis, despite his lengthy residence, has put down no deep roots *of the kind* which would enable me to conclude that he should be allowed to remain here':[331]

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[328] TNA HO 394/900, Letter from J. B. Hallisey, HM Inspector, Northwest District, to C. B. Manchip Lunar House, 12/03/1987, 3.
[329] Special Branch report on a public meeting of the East London Workers Against Racism discussing the forthcoming deportation of Afia Begum', 19/04/1983. Online:https://www.ucpi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/UCPI0000019003.pdf.[accessed 26/06/2023].
[330] TNA HO 394/901, D McQueen, Memorandum titled 'Viraj Jerome Mendis', 23/05/85, 5.
[331] My italics. TNA HO 394/900, Letter from David Waddington to Robert Litherland MP, 8/12/1988, 2.

> Mr Mendis has not found employment since 1980 or 1981; he is subsisting on public funds; he has failed in his studies; he has no relatives in this country; and his marriage… appears to have been contracted in a deliberate attempt to avoid deportation.[332]

Indeed, the Home Office's 'notes for supplementaries' on Mendis is thick with dramatic language and detail used to reinforce this point. Mendis did not just fail his exams and work in order to pay the fees for resitting them, he 'abandoned' his studies, 'abandoned' his employment and 'failed his examinations three times more (in 1979, 1980 and 1981)'.[333] His marriage did not just end after two months, it was deemed 'a sham'.[334] He did not become naturally politicised throughout his time at university, and through opposing the increasing violence sanctioned by the Sri Lankan government, this was 'a deliberate and cynical attempt on his part to place himself in such a position that he could not be deported to Sri Lanka'.[335]

Evidently, Mendis did not demonstrate the kind of qualities valued in Whitehall, that might have made him worthy of a discretionary concession to British citizenship. And yet the same facts of Mendis's case being disparaged within the Home Office were actually actively being advertised to garner support for his campaign in flyers and pamphlets:

> Viraj Mendis (known as Malik) has lived in Manchester for 11 years… and is settled here. He has been actively involved in anti-racist and anti-deportation campaigns as a Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! supporter…
>
> Viraj came to Britain from Sri Lanka at the age of 17 to continue his studies. In 1975, due to a shortage of money he had to leave his studies and work as a labourer; as a result he could not renew his student visa. 8 ½ years later, the Home Office decided to take action against him.[336]

Clearly, the same facts of Mendis' case were presented here not as evidence of him being some kind of failure or fraudster, but rather as "one of the people" – poor, left-wing, and active in the local community. Through these opposing interpretations of the same facts we thus see conflicting ideas of who made a good citizen, and what good citizenship looked like in practice. As Taylor's recent works demonstrate 'good citizenship' is rarely as simple as a legally defined set of rights.[337] Rather, it has been reworked throughout the twentieth century in Britain and performed and understood to be tied to particular forms of behaviour. In the case of refugees and migrants, namely: 'orderly', 'compliant', 'eager to get on and assimilate', and 'grateful for being taken in at their hour of need.'[338] In this 1980s setting, we further see how becoming politically and socially active in the cause of social justice could

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[332] TNA HO 394/900, Letter from David Waddington to Robert Litherland MP, 8/12/1988, 2.
[333] TNA HO 394/899, 'Notes for Supplementaries', January 1989, 4.
[334] Ibid., 5.
[335] Ibid., 6.
[336] Bishop of Manchester Collection, M289/6/2/1/6, Box 2, 'Stop the threatened Deportation of Viraj to Sri Lanka' n.d.
[337] Taylor, *Refugees*, 27-28.
[338] Becky Taylor, 'Good Citizens? Ugandan Asians, Volunteers and 'Race' Relations in 1970s Britain', *History Workshop Journal,* 85(2018), 138.

concurrently deemed a worthy value towards British society by some, and an unworthy nuisance or burden upon British society by others.

These competing visions of active citizenship were not unique to Mendis's case. We see a similar disjunction in ideals of citizenship and community across anti-deportation campaigns, but in particular, in the case of Muhammad Idrish. Idrish fell foul of British immigration authorities after the breakup his first marriage after two years. He had come to the UK on a student visa and overstayed during the marriage before applying for further leave to remain.[339] It is pertinent to note that contemporary legal advice was that as 'a rule of thumb for someone overstaying leave is that the longer a relationship lasts before approaching the Home Office, the better.'[340] Within weeks of their separation Idrish was told that his application for permanent residency was being turned down under the contention that it was a "marriage of convenience". Waddington maintained in his memoirs, that 'there could be doubt that was his [Idrish's] motive'.[341] However, in the interim years during which the Home Office had been considering his case, Idrish had been working voluntarily within inner-city communities, completing his university studies at Bristol University and establishing a career as an in-demand Bengali-speaking social worker for Bernardo's and the Handsworth Asian Resource Centre.[342] Thus, he was able to mount an appeal campaign with the backing of his Barnardo's NALGO branch, and as the adjudicator in his appeal tribunal usefully summarised:

> 41 letter from Members of Parliament, 3 Members of the House of Lords , 11 letters from clerics and religious organisation [sic], … 3 from social worker organisations, 14 from community and educational organisations … 52 from various branches of NALGO and 11 from other trade unions and councils.[343]

These testimonies held no weight to Waddington, however, who flippantly recounted that: 'he said he was doing important voluntary work for the immigrant community' in 'spite of having cheated the British Council and his own country, not to mention the lady whom he had married'.[344] This rhetoric of being a fraud or cheat, held a starkly different connotation to the testimonies of all those who testified to his work of being of value, and to that of his separated wife who reported to immigration officers that 'she sympathised with him and believed that he wanted her back' but 'would never do so'.[345] The immigration appeal tribunal eventually gave Idrish leave to remain, based on 'the totality of the evidence' and 'balancing the public interest'.[346] 'I dread to think what sort of message that sent out to others minded to cheat and lie their way into Britain', reflected Waddington.[347] Upholding

[339] Muhammad Idrish, author interview, Birmingham, 30/08/2022.
[340] Cohen, *Immigration Controls*, 142.
[341] Waddington, *Memoirs,* 119.
[342] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/68, Report of Immigration Appeal Tribunal, 24/10/1985
[343] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/68, Report of Immigration Appeal Tribunal, 24/10/1985, 4-5.
[344] Waddington, *Memoirs*, 119.
[345] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/68, Report of Immigration Appeal Tribunal', 24/10/1985, 3.
[346] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/68, Report of Immigration Appeal Tribunal', 24/10/1985, 24.
[347] Waddington, *Memoirs,* 119.

values of propriety and the message of legal inflexibility within the immigration system evidently meant more to some figures of authority within government than the values of social justice and multicultural cohesion manifested within Idrish's community of support.

In many ways Idrish and Mendis's treatment reflects the argument made by Claire Eldridge, Christopher Kalter, and Becky Taylor, that the forms of 'soft' and 'hard' citizenship were at play during the migration of several million 'repatriates' triggered by decolonization.[348] They point out that the factors of 'hard' legal citizenship that let people into a country did not always translate neatly or swiftly into the 'soft' citizenship of unquestioned belonging to the imagined national community. Repatriates were seen variously as 'too reactionary' and as 'harbingers of moral laxity': 'blamed for having caused and sustained damaging and costly colonial wars; seen as loud, uncouth and as putting pressure on local housing, services and employment'.[349] But, crucially, 'full acceptance' as citizens was 'most difficult to achieve' for those who: 'due to their physical appearance, language skills, socio-cultural capital, place of residence, or other markers, were perceived as non-white.'[350] Analysis of the value-laden rhetoric, surrounding community relations as a factor effecting deportation cases, suggests similarly racialised and subjective ideas towards belonging, were still being dispensed and navigated by the British authorities and public in deportation cases that primarily effected non-white people, decades after the process of decolonization and repatriating citizens began.

Personal politics and the bureaucratic state

One report on Mendis sanctuary from a Home Office informant in 1987, for example, is worth reciting at length:

> It has to be said that Mr Mendis has chosen his sanctuary wisely. The Church is immediately adjacent to the Caribbean Club in a very run-down inner city area. Surrounding the Church are modern concrete "slum flats" which are literally within strides of the Church's backyard. Although I could not see any visible sign of protection for Mr Mendis, it is certain that there are young guards who have a communications network of some sort to the surrounding flats and perhaps also to the Club. It would literally take seconds for interested parties to congregate on the walkway in front of the Church. That walkway and its square would produce an ideal battleground. I would imagine the police would have great difficulty in controlling the crowd in such an area … If we were to seriously consider an intervention in the Church, then we would need to attempt some more sophisticated surveillance… We would need to seek a volunteer, but in the absence of anyone from Manchester, I would be quite willing to go.[351]

[348] Claire Eldridge, Christoph Kalter, Becky Taylor, 'Migrations of Decolonization, Welfare, and the Unevenness of Citizenship in the UK, France and Portugal*' *Past & Present* (2022), 1- 39.
[349] Eldridge *et al*, 'Migrations of', 37.
[350] Ibid.
[351] TNA HO 394/902, Letter from T Farrage to Mr Tompkins, 'Viraj Mendis', 14/08/1987.

This informant's ready perception of the Mendis sanctuary as a political, if not physical threat here highlights how the spectre of the uprisings in the area in 1981 still affected official perceptions. Their assertion that the sanctuary was 'wisely' located, based upon his listed observations of the area's age, class and race demographics – surrounded by 'slum like flats', adjacent to a 'Caribbean club' in 'a very-run down' inner city, and protected by the invisible but 'certain' presence of 'young guards who have a communications network of some sort' – also supports the presence of a marked 'us' (the white majority) against 'them' (the ethnic minorities) divided mentality.[352] Their use of loaded militaristic language such as 'battleground' and 'guards' in conjunction with confident affirmations stressing the urgency of the threat i.e., '*it is certain*' they have 'communication networks' and '*it would literally take seconds'* for them to congregate, is indicative of distinct fear based desire to control this 'other'.[353] Laid bare is thus an assumed knowledge that Black people codified trouble to their Home Office readership. While we cannot prove that such views were widely held within the Home Office from one such excerpt, I would argue the fact that the informant felt comfortable reporting in such openly prejudiced language is indicative of a wider institutional culture in which such assumptions were taken for granted.

At the same time, throughout the Mendis campaign senior Anglican bishops repeatedly attempted to negotiate a concession with the Home Office based on a concern for 'community relations' and in the Manchester area, essentially arguing that deporting Mendis as a Black man with the support of many of the area's Black residents could enflame the areas 'race relations'.[354] At one point we find civil servants advising that if Ministers 'were inclined to reverse their decision on the community relations argument, the strong representations from the Archbishop of York and Bishop of Manchester would in their view enable Ministers a 'statesmanlike withdrawal'.[355] Waddington's reported response was that although he concedes 'that the link between immigration control and community relations is particularly important', the 'correct response' is to 'maintain the decision' and tell Mendis's supporters if 'they are worried about community relations the best thing for them to do is to put a stop to this nonsense by telling Mendis to leave the church and *go back to where he belongs*.'[356] Douglas Hurd further supported in his private correspondence that: 'To the extent that the affair has now escalated beyond Mr Mendis himself my view that he cannot be given special treatment is strengthened.'[357] Clearly the anti-deportation campaigners and the government held fundamentally diametric conceptions of the community included within community relations, and therefore who belonged in said communities of Britain. The fact that Mendis had mobilized national

[352] Ibid.
[353] Ibid.
[354] TNA HO 304/900, Bishop of Manchester Stanley Booth-Clibborn to Douglas Hurd, 12/03/1987.
[355] TNA HO 394/900, T. C. Platt Memorandum titled 'Viraj Mendis', 10/03/1987.
[356] TNA HO 394/900, David Ackland, Private Secretary to Mr Platt, 11/03/1987.
[357] TNA HO 394/900, Douglas Hurd to Bishop of York, John Egbor, 19/03/1987.

marches and whole swathes of the Manchester population in support of him, as highlighted in chapter 5, was irrelevant to the British authorities because these were not the right kind of community roots.

When Jeremy Corbyn MP brought the case of the Nicolas's and 'Kafka-like procedures' affecting them before parliament for debate, he did so by framing it within the personal experiences and with the emotional urgency of his constituents. He spoke of the 'many people in north Islington' and many 'indeed in inner cities throughout the country' who 'are worried and frightened about the way in which the immigration law operates':

> *Many* go to bed at night fearing a knock on the door early the following morning, being told they will no longer be allowed to remain in the country, followed by forcible removal. Like many hon. Members who face similar situations, I take up a large number of individual cases every year… This matter can no longer be disregarded and ignored.[358]

This concern for the plight of society's vulnerable and disregarded readily aligned with professed values across faiths and religious institutions. As we have seen in chapters 1 and 2, this was a cause that particularly resonated amongst those with an established concern for social justice at a grassroots or parochial level, but to an extent was also passively supported by the established upper echelons of the Anglican church. The British Council of Churches wrote to Douglas Hurd asking him to reconsider his position on specific anti-deportation cases in 'the spirit of justice, and certainly of 'compassion' felt 'amongst *informed members of the churches and of wider society*.'[359] Following the deportation of Mendis, Archbishop Runcie, released a public statement concluding that he was 'bound to say that *many people of common sense* find it hard to accept the need for such speed once he was in custody'.[360] For these religious leaders the common sense values of Britain were underpinned by humanitarian and theological beliefs.

Yet simultaneously in a press statement following the final deportation of Mendis, Immigration Minister, Timothy Renton, asserted 'I am sure that the *great majority* of people in Britain, regardless of their ethnic origin, will see our action as being *fair and reasonable.*'[361] He was further instructed that 'the line to take' was: 'The Home Secretary and I have made it clear that we are prepared to abide by the decision of the courts and we hope that *common sense* will prevail and that Mr Mendis and his supporters will also accept the decision of the courts.'[362] For those this side of the fence, conceptions of Britain as orderly and law-abiding could equally codify belonging. The fact that

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[358] My italics. Jeremy Corbyn HC Deb. 26/03/1985, c.260.
[359] HO 394/902 Letter from Reverend Bernard Thorogood on behalf of the British Council of Churches to Mr Hurd, 7/10/1988.
[360] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386 'Statement by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, on the deportation of Viraj Mendis', 20/01/1989. 2.
[361] My italics. TNA HO 394/899, 'Draft Press Notice' January 1989.
[362] My italics. TNA HO 394/903, 'Viraj Mendis: Brief for Mr Renton's Interview on BBC Radio 4 on 20 December', 1.

these laws were increasingly shifting and applied with considerable discretion was obscured behind a wall of Home Office fine print.

In written responses ministers always assured campaigners that their claims were being 'very carefully considered', pointed to the importance of adhering to due process, and the work of 'officials and Ministers, both tiers of the independent immigration appellate authority, the Divisional Court and the Court of Appeal', and claimed that Britain remained unwaveringly committed as 'one of the first signatories', to the 1951 United Nation Convention on the Status of Refugees.[363] But as we have seen throughout this chapter, this flat language, could disguise highly subjective decisions of discretion influenced by ideologies surrounding good citizenship and xenophobic ideas of racial belonging constructed far away from the realities of Britain's 1980s inner city communities. These different convictions over belonging also go some way to explaining the increasingly divergent registers of expression throughout anti-deportation campaigns. For the Home Office and the government these cases represented "troublesome" obstacles, to be negotiated in terms of publicly obeying European human right conventions and mythical traditions of British humanitarian tolerance.[364] But, ultimately, remained irrelevant annoyances, which paled in importance to the overall necessity of protecting the exclusiveness of British borders in terms of numbers and race. Denying one case over another, could thus become much like balancing a formulaic equation, enabling their responses to remain confidently, ostensibly, detached.

Conversely, for those under threat, their families, affected communities and wider supporting campaigners, this was a much more personal 'fight', motivated by much more personally experienced forms of belonging: family, friendship, faith and morality; all of which feed into a very different vision of what modern Britain was and who might belong in it. Naturally, we therefore find their language and register reflects this; their actions were urgent, passionate, and sometimes radical. As the campaigners involved in Victoria and Stephen Apetor's community sanctuary described:

> it is a stand which Victoria's friends, neighbours, church and trade union are making against the racist immigration laws which seek to remove *her from us*. It is also an expression of our love and support for Victoria and Stephen.[365]

Similarly, for the thousands of people participating in the anti-deportation rallies, marches, and protests, their sacrifice was personal and often empoweringly bonding and emotive. For those taking part in twenty-four-hour vigils or deportation shrines their acts held the added weight of symbolic resonance – and as we shall explore further in chapter 3 were often embedded in faith-based forms of belonging and morality. For those draping banners from the balconies of their flats surrounding

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[363] Timothy Renton, 'Refugees: The Responsibility of the UK Government' in Vaughan Robinson, *The International Refugee Crisis: British and Canadian Responses,* (Basingstoke: Macmillan 1993), 26-35.
[364] Waddington, *Memoirs,* 119.
[365] My italics. AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/09 'Victoria & Stephen Sanctuary News', 26/08/1989. 1.

church of ascension reading 'Kick out the cockroaches, not Viraj Mendis' and the crowds chanting 'Viraj Mendis is our friend', this conflict was intrinsically situated within local communities of belonging based in shared circumstances and connections of cultural compression - as we shall explore further in chapter 5. The epitome of this support was perhaps physically manifested when supporters attempted to form a human blockade in an attempt to prevent the deportation raid. Their compassion was personal, and so was their campaigning tactics. It is not exaggerative to state that many involved they felt the outcome of their campaigning could be the difference between severe heartache and hardship, if not life and death.

The dry depersonalised responses from the Home Office to these campaigns could thus only increase the sense of helplessness and despair of those trapped in a 'web of violence' as Manda Kunda put it: 'The Home Office doesn't realise what it puts you through.'[366] As we have seen in this chapter, in some cases it was impossible for the Home Office to not realise, it just simply did not fall within their sphere of concern. It can even be argued that the increased desperation of campaigners was actually regarded as a tactical advantage by some in authority, particularly if they were intending to 'inspire some comment within the press'.[367] Raising the profile of campaigns could certainly be a double-edged sword, raising the stakes for both sides. But as the reporting on the Mr Mendis' deportation protests highlights, the more a campaign became impassioned, the easier it also was for right-wing press to dismiss them as Leftist loons. 'Mendis flown out as police face "rentamob" fury' headlined the *Daily Mail*, before detailing how the 'dirty', 'motley' and 'screaming' protestors, were 'howling their hatred' and broke into a 'scuffle' that caused a number to be arrested. A nameless 'senior' police officer 'who monitors Left-wing protest groups', was then quoted as saying:

> The same faces reappear all the time at demos. We know them as the great unwashed, because they all seem to wear the same dirty mode of dress. They make a living out of complaining.[368]

In comparison, the Home Secretary's warnings for 'churchmen to be cautious about sheltering people defying the law', conceivably read as relatively "fair". The framing of campaigners as an unruly and unhinged mob, potentially also made the authorities decision to use fifty police offices to raid the Ascension, dragging Mendis out in his pyjamas, and bundling him into an armoured van straight to Pentonville prison seem more "reasonable". Certainly, in the letters written to Archbishop Runcie in the immediate aftermath of Mendis's widely publicised deportation we find evidence of public opinions being influenced by the perception of the Mendis campaign as bunch of non-law-abiding troublemakers. It is a 'disgrace' that the Church 'should support hooligans, gangsters and

[366] Manda Kunda, quoted in GLC, *Right to be Here*, 76.
[367] TNA HO 394/902, Note of meeting held on 28/07/1988.
[368] Bob Graham and Danny Buckland, 'Mendis flown out as police face 'rentamob' fury', *Daily Mail*, 21/01/1989, 16.

terrorists' wrote one complainant to Runcie.[369] Another wrote 'to protest at the Church authorities in allowing illegal immigrants to use the churches to evade the law and officers of the British Crown in the execution of their duty.'[370] Dr Chad Varah from London, in particular, wrote that while he sympathised that the Archbishop 'may have been hard-pressed by 'muddle-headed clerics', in his view:

> Mr Hurd is to be praised for moving swiftly and decisively after many years of patience, and if he hadn't that slippery con-man Mendis would still be here and be used by, and using, some people who care nothing about the church![371]

Evidently, to some looking from the side-lines, the Government and Home Office's language of emotionless professionalism resonated more strongly as it fitted with generally circulating assumptions around Britain as a decent, law-abiding, and tolerant place, which only appeared more plausible when juxtaposed against the urgent passion of the campaigners – whose actions translated as unruly, illegal, hooliganism. The conflict therefore became an easy topic for ridicule and caricature (see **figure 12),** encapsulating how clashing languages of expression can drown out the nuances of content and the bigger underlying picture of contested visions of who and what belongs in Britain and British culture.

Figure 12: Screenshot taken from Paul Nettleton, 'Hurd under fire for Mendis raid' *The Guardian*, 19/01/1989, 8.

[369] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from D. L. Edwards and J. Edwards, to Archbishop Runcie, 23/01/1989, 1.
[370] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Peter S. Mewes to Archbishop Runcie, 20/01/1989.
[371] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Chad Varah to Archbishop Runcie, 2/02/1989, 1.

Chapter conclusion

Throughout this thesis we will see glimpses into people's lives, sometimes at their most vulnerable and sometimes at their most determined. Through this chapter I have sought to illuminate their stories beyond the flashpoints typically encapsulated in anti-deportation campaigns, in order to show that their narratives while individual and intrinsically personal, were actually just the tip of an iceberg of underlying contestations in what defined Britain and who was defined as British.

Paying particular attention to the discourse being employed within the raw material of these campaigns exposes how the polite pronouncements of the authorities citing 'common-sense', 'community relations', and the support of the 'great majority', were actually shorthand for inherently subjective value-laden judgements. In correlation with Taylor's findings that refugee experiences should be understood in the light of histories of the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor, ideas of charity and welfare in the Britain of the 1950s, Britain's treatment of them in the long 1980s highlights how some thirty years later, applicants for asylum and migration were increasingly being deliberately blurred by the British government and judged within the parameters of skills and attributes socially accepted as befitting of "good" British citizens.[372] An "exceptional" white female athlete with tangential ancestorial ties to Britain was deemed to be far more deserving of discretionary action than an benefit claiming Black Communist with the visibly roused support of his local community.

Further surveying how these complicated asylum and immigration cases played out and received outcomes that could ostensibly appear arbitrary, but were evidentially all being underlined by a preoccupation with balancing numbers and race, allows us to take Kushner's assessment of Britain's 'fundamentally ambivalent' relationship to refugees further. By the 1980s Britain's public grandstanding but increasingly partial acceptance of refugees, by deliberately conflating refugees and migrants by narrowing the formers definition, was about more than 'well-sounding but vague' axioms, it was about calculatedly disguising the violence of immigration laws intent and the violence of action these laws initiated through deportations.[373] The illumination of sanctuary and deportation campaigns highlights the practices of subjectivity and unaccountability which work against those under threat of deportation; serving as a reminder of the ongoing importance of critically analysing democratic humanitarianism and facades of justice that can serve to disguise the mistreatment of society's most vulnerable.

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[372] Taylor, '"Their Only Words', 114-120.
[373] Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, 9.

CHAPTER 2:

Sanctuary and the Anglican Church

In February 1982 the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, guest starred on *Nai Zindagi Naya Jeevan*, the BBC's first major television programme for Hindi and Urdu-speaking viewers. Around the topic of immigration, Runcie was asked whether he thought that Church leaders had 'a positive role to play in their communities in promoting understanding and tolerance?'. 'Yes' Runcie replied, but he was 'reluctant to be too specific here because there is a danger of Church leaders appearing to lecture from the outside.'[374] He continued, nonetheless, to state the need for greater ethnic minority representation, 'not least in rather more authority positions', and emphasised that 'the churches have to do their bit'. He cautioned against some religious leaders 'mistakenly' supposing they are helping 'by interfering' when ethnic groups can run their affairs better themselves, but said that 'it's time we had a Black Bishop' and for Church leaders to use their 'public platforms' to promote immigration not as a problem but an 'opportunity'.[375] All answers which ostensibly pass the litmus test for a leader at least acknowledging and responding to the needs of the growing Black Anglican Communion.[376]

As the interview continued, however, Runcie caveated his responses with more caution:

> There is a grave danger that people always look in these complex matters for short-term solutions and, therefore, I want to encourage ethnic groups … that they can plug-in to … ways of doing things which have been long established as part of the life of this country…
>
> The real danger, if I may speak directly to the ethnic groups, is that there will be a kind of withdrawal into a ghetto-mentality… I hope they … recognize you need to work with patience to be in a position to participate more in our society.[377]

Here then we find a confusing message from the primate of the Anglican Church. He was *for* Church leaders using their 'public platforms' for ethnic minority causes but *against* lecturing 'from the outside'. He was championing ethnic representation but qualifying the need for 'patience' in achieving this. He believed in the need for change, but only within the 'long established' ways 'of doing things'. Runcie was perhaps trying to balance a message of hope, with the reality of the uphill struggle against discrimination that faced ethnic minorities in Britain. But the implication remained, that the onus of the 'work' to be done fell to ethnic minorities themselves, to adapt themselves to 'our institutions' and not the other way round.

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[374] LPL BSR/RACE/T/1/3, Transcript of Runcie in interview with Mahendra Kaul for 'Nai Zindagi Naya Javan', 7/02/1982, 3.
[375] Ibid., 3.
[376] See: *Changes in the Ethnic Diversity of the Christian Population in England* (Council for Christian Unity, 2014). Online:https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/north_east.pdf.[accessed:16/05/2023].
[377] Ibid., 4.

The Anglican Church during the long 1980s was undergoing bouts of soul-searching and uncomfortable conversations, laying the foundations for many moments of painful viewing such as the above exchange. Overall church attendance was falling, while 'moralistic individualism' was rising.[378] Within the confines of Lambeth Palace there was widespread hand-wringing and public 'consternation' over far-ranging issues from what to do about Britain's inner cities, female deacons, same sex relationships, to church disinvestment in apartheid South Africa.[379] There was a tacit acceptance of a need for reform, but a prerequisite that such reform had to be undertaken 'in the right way', which, in practice, often meant slowly.[380]

It is no coincidence that the Church continues to be having many of these same conversations today. For every push in favour of liberal progression, there often remains an established faction against such steps. The 2022 abandonment of a vote on same-sex marriage at the Lambeth Conference, for example, has highlighted how substantial sections of the Anglican Communion have continued to remain sorely behind social change. That episode prompted the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, Michael Curry, to compare 'gay people and their rights' as 'equivalent a struggle in our time to the one over race', implying that the struggle over race had been won.[381] But as France-Williams's recent account of institutional racism within the Church of England attests, 'factors like college, cricket, class and context' *continue* to confer a set of interlocking advantages known as 'white privilege' for many in high office.[382] Even the current Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has conceded that: 'when we look at our own Church, we are still deeply institutionally racist. Let's just be clear about that.'[383] We must therefore be cautious of narratives of linear progress. And while the Church's current stance on gay marriage is widely regarded to be a result of the influence of its African sections, turning our attention here to the debates playing out in the 1980s reminds us that international influences, in the form of the ongoing effects of the decolonising the church and the liberation theologies of the 1960s and 1970s, in particular, have not always been conservative. Thus, further highlighting the complexity of the Anglican Church as an institution. Anglican Christianity has not simply been exported across the globe and re-imported to the colonial metropolis by post-

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[378] Wilson, *Religion in Sociological,* 190, 1-3; Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 'Neo-Liberalism and',497-520.
[379] 'consternation' is a quote from Wilfred Wood, discussed later in this chapter.
[380] Kristan Zigan, Alan Le Grys, 'Towards an Understanding of Social Responsibility Within the Church of England', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 149:3(2018), 541.
[381] Michael Curry, Bishop of the Episcopal Church quoted in: Catherine Pepinster, 'At Lambeth, Anglican Communion abandons vote on same-sex marriage', *Religion News Service*, 3/08/2022. Online: https://religionnews.com/2022/08/03/at-lambeth-anglican-communion-abandons-vote-on-same-sex-marriage/ [accessed 30/03/2023].
[382] France- Williams, *Ghost Ship,* xv.
[383] Archbishop Justin Welby's remarks during Windrush debate at General Synod, 11/02/2020. Online:https://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/speaking-writing/speeches/archbishop-justin-welbys-remarks-during-windrush-debate-general-synod [accessed:30/03/2023]

colonial migrants, like some kind of religious package exchange, rather the packages themselves are continuously reshaped.[384]

In this chapter, I argue that the Church's handling of sanctuary cases in particular offers a useful microscope under which to observe how humanitarianism, Christianity and the activist left collided in the 1980s behind and in front of the Church door. Across the country from Manchester to Truro, over a dozen families and individuals were putting their faith in the protection and sanctity of the British churches literally, by bedding down amongst draughty pews, confining themselves to dank vestry rooms, and placing themselves at the mercy of the parish for essential supplies of food and support (see appendix for cases). As these campaigns grew in strength and number, the Church as an institution, was also being brought, somewhat reluctantly, into direct opposition with the government and Home Office, who as we have seen in Chapter 1, had their own increasingly limited criteria of 'humanitarian' protection and 'fair' immigration policies. This chapter explores the way a complex web of power operated through the Anglican Church's dealings with these sanctuary campaigns, shedding light on some of the omissions and anomalies in the existing narratives of the British churches record on race. We find, above all, a High Church deeply ambiguous on questions of immigration and race.

The Church: independent or a partnership?

Much of the interdecadal handwringing within the Church of England is a direct result of its designed structure. After centuries of trial, error and bloody revolution, the Anglican Church resolved itself to a precarious positional purgatory, between politicism and impartial-ism. Historically the Anglican Church has long been seen as a political organisation first and a spiritual one second. It's worldwide communion, of course, is largely the consequence of nothing more spiritual than colonialism.[385] But it is now uniquely placed, as an institution both a part of the establishment, and outwardly, a step apart from the establishment. It is often keen to be seen as apolitical or at least non-partisan, yet is still deeply intertwined with parliament.[386]

Twenty-six seats in the House of Lords remain reserved for Anglican bishops.[387] All senior church appointments are made by the Crown on the advice of ministers. When it is time to elect a new

[384] David Lehmann, 'Religion and globalization', in Woodhead *et al*. *Religions in the,* 409.
[385] It should be noted that the history of Christianity is much bigger than the history of the British Empire and research has highlighted he complexity of its 'deeply ambiguous' transmission and evolution: Norman Etherington (ed.), *Missions and Empire* (Oxford UP, 2005); Anna Johnston, *The British Empire, colonialism, and missionary activity* (Cambridge UP, 2008).
[386] See: Gladys Ganiel and Peter Jones, 'Religion, politics, and law', in Woodhead *et al*., (eds.), *Religion and Change,* 299-321.
[387] There is no formal provision for the representation of other churches or faiths in the HoL.

Archbishop of Canterbury the Church's Crown Appointments Commission submits two names, from which the Prime Minister gets the final choice. Church laws still need to be approved by parliament. The majority of the Anglican Church funds now comes from donations and endowments, but taxpayer support for chaplaincy and educational work is substantial.[388] Approximately one quarter of all primary schools in England are Church of England schools.[389]And it remains a legal requirement for every state school to hold an act of daily worship that is 'broadly Christian in character', much like how Anglican prayers are read at the start of each day's parliamentary business.[390]

The internal structures of the established Church are also entwined with tradition. Its current governing body, the General Synod, is made up of four-hundred-and-eighty-three members, split between three groups: the Houses of Bishops, of Clergy and of Laity.[391] General Synod meets twice annually and passes measures which, if accepted by Parliament, have the effect of Acts of Parliament.[392] Congruent to these structures, for nearly a century there has also existed some significantly funded and influential Christian inter-church organisations which, to an extent, have been able to steer the national religious agenda and discussion. The British Council of Churches (BCC), and its worldwide counterpart the World Council of Churches (WCC) were borne out of the international ecumenical and peace movements in the 1940s, with the aim of providing a means of consultation between churches.[393] The Archbishop of Canterbury remained the sole President of the BCC, but the sixteen other denominations that also joined meant the Anglican Church potentially benefited from the ideas of more liberal denominations.

In particular, the nature of these inter-church unions evolved during the 1960s with the influx of many Orthodox churches from the global east and newly autonomous churches from formerly colonial regions in the global south to the WCC.[394] The WCC held 'Consultations on Racism' and established a Programme to Combat Racism's (PCR) Special Fund, which disbursed over $4 million directly to worldwide liberation movements in the 1970s.[395] Welch has argued the success of the PCR

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[388] Frank Cranmer, John Lucas, and Bob Morris, 'Church and state: a mapping exercise', (London: UCL, 2006), 6.
[389] Crammer *et al*., *Church and State,*11; David Feldman, 'Why the English like turbans: a history of multiculturalism in one country', in Feldman and Jon Lawrence (eds), *Structures and Transformations in Modern British History* (Cambridge UP, 2011), 302.
[390] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/collective-worship-in-schools.[accessed:26/08/2022] https://www.parliament.uk/about/how/business/prayers/.[accessed:26/08/2022]; Feldman, 'Why the English', 297.
[391] The House of Bishops comprises forty-two diocesan (senior) bishops and nine elected suffragan (junior) bishops. The House of Clergy comprises about two-hundred clerics. The House of Laity is also roughly two-hundred strong.
[392] Reports on issues are debated by the whole synod. A Measure must past in all three Houses: Laity, Clergy and Bishops, before it is sent to parliament. Some major issues of doctrine, such as women bishops, need a two-thirds majority in each House to pass.
[393] See: Johnathon Gorry, The British Council of Churches and just war: 1945-59, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 1998.
[394] See: https://www.oikoumene.org/about-the-wcc/history[accessed:11/4/2023].
[395] Welch, 'Mobilizing Morality', 866.

should also be measured by the wider 'mobilizing morality' it created.[396] It helped to create a self-scrutiny within the BCC, which in 1971 formed its own Community and Race Relations Unit (CRRU). The CRUU helped diverse organisations fight racism through its 'Projects Fund', and in 1976 published a report calling for affirmative action and positive discrimination.[397] After a four-hour debate of the report at General Synod, the motion that eventually passed called upon Christians to offer 'positive policies of help' as opposed to positive discrimination.[398] The latest 2021 report from the archbishops' Anti-racism Taskforce, which scrutinised twenty-five previous reports relating to racial justice presented to the General Synod during the past thirty-six years, underscores how inadequate these 'polices of help' have proven.[399]

As their personal testimonies attest, for many Commonwealth migrants attempting to relate to the mainstream churches in Britain proved a bitter experience.[400] Many found open hostility from white parishioners, or vicars telling them not to come again because the 'congregation wouldn't like it.'[401] However recent studies – Geiringer's intervention on the role of radical priests and parochial domesticity in 1980s inner-cities, Connell's discussion of Methodist and Pentecostal Churches in Birmingham, and Schofield and Jones's exploration of a 'motley group' of Methodist ministers and Christian Workers, who were pioneering radical forms of antiracism after the 1958 Notting Hill riots – point to a more complex narrative.[402] In at least some areas the Church was being reworked from below for the demands of a multicultural nation.

Grimley points out that some diversity in parochial experience might be expected, but also concludes his 'long-view' on the Church of England, race, and multiculturalism, by emphasising 'Above all,' the 'ambivalence' of its response to immigration.[403] Clifford Longley has argued that one reason the churches looked increasingly left-wing in the 1980s was that the Conservative Party 'had started to move steadily to the Right' after 1979: 'Without changing its outlook, therefore the Church leadership in Britain, gradually found itself in increasing opposition to the major direction of government policy.'[404] Malcom Brown and Paul Ballard similarly suggested, the Church 'almost by accident', and acting as it had always done, was 'ill-prepared for the emerging creed of Thatcherism'

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[396] Zalmanovich, "What is needed', 177.
[397] *The New Black.*
[398] The full debate in LPL *Report of Proceedings General Synod* 8, No.2(1977), 513- 564.
[399] *From Lament to Action* (The Report of the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce, 2021). Online: https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/FromLamentToAction-report.pdf [accessed 11/04/2023].
[400] See: Smith and Green, *An Ebony Cross,* 40-41; Mohabir, *Building Bridges*.
[401] Wilkinson, et al. *Inheritors Together*, 13; Barton*, Rejection, Resistance and.*
[402] Connell, *Black Handsworth*, 140-46; Welch, 'Mobilizing Morality', 863-910; Schofield and Jones, '"Whatever Community Is', 142–73.
[403] Grimley, 'The Church of', 192-201.
[404] Clifford Longley, *The Worlock Archive* (London: Geoffrey Chapman Publishers, 2000), 17; Andrew Bradstock, *David Sheppard: Batting for the Poor* (Cambridge UP, 2019), 235.

and 'almost inadvertently found [itself] articulating the anxieties and bewilderments of a society in turmoil.' [405]

There was an increasingly audible concern over the effects of Thatcherite policies and the neoliberal economy upon society emanating from elements of the Church.[406] This prompted reactive attempts from various elements to recentre themselves within the heart of communities, as front-line receptors and providers of care, concern, and practical pastoral action; offering 'ambulance work to a society which can be sacralised but not saved or transformed', as David Martin put it.[407] Yet Eliza Filby has observed how the Church and Christian agencies were not only offering "ambulance work", but were also deliberately developing a more critical and independent position in the 1980s, challenging the Conservative government's approach to welfare, voluntarism and charity.[408] Cynics might view such efforts as the desperate attempts of a dying Church to stay relevant and reach their increasingly detached parishioners. Yet Filby argues that the evangelical potential of Christian community work was 'seen as a beneficial by-product, rather than a definite aim, or indeed a measure of success.'[409] My findings in this chapter will support this. As a current Anglican education and anti-racism consultant, Karamat Iqbal, told me, the Church doesn't offer food banks and soup kitchens simply in the hope that a couple might attend future services – 'that's just not economic evangelicalism'.[410] Rather, the church also has a long history of social intervention from its own volition as an integral part of its mission, and this mission was further being shaped by the effects of decolonisation in the late twentieth-century.[411]

In this chapter then, I do not deny that there is some merit to Longley, Brown and Ballard's analyses on the one hand, nor Filby's on the other. But I seek to show how it was that both could be true at the same time. Through the microcosm of the Church's interactions to sanctuary campaigns, we can clarify how an embedded theological as well as tactical pluralism within its institutional structures enabled both views on the Church's stance to have remained plausible. Drawing upon David Feldman's work I argue that 'conservative pluralism' bred within the British state might also be applied to the Anglican Church here as well.[412] Sanctuary campaigns highlight how the Anglican Church had political purchase which could reach beyond the purely ceremonial, endowing campaigns

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[405] Malcom Brown and Paul Ballard*, Church and Economic Life: A documentary study: 1945 to the present* (Peterborough: Epworth, 2006), 182.
[406] K. DeYoung, 'Thatcher sparks religious debate: Speech equating Tory policies with Christian virtue criticized', *The Washington Post*, 25/05/1988.
[407] David Martin, 'Religious Vision and political Reality', in Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *The Canterbury Papers* (Bellew Publishing, 1990), 35.
[408] Filby, 'Faith, charity and', 135-157.
[409] Filby, 'Faith, charity and', 138.
[410] Karamat Iqbal, author interview, Birmingham, 23/8/2022.
[411] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity: The first three thousand years*, (London: Allen Lane, 2009); B. G. Worrall, *The making of the modern Church* (London: SPCK, 2004).
[412] Feldman, 'Why the English', 281-302.

with respectability, moral authority and national recognition. Ultimately, however they expose how the Church's own institutional conservatism, restrained it from straying into territories that could threaten its standing within the establishment.

Decolonising Anglicanism

The Anglican Church in the 1980s is famed for its attempted intervention into British society through its 1985 report *Faith in the City: A Call for Action by Church and Nation*, which saw over 20,000 copies sold by 1990.[413] The three-hundred-and-fifty-page report has been both branded as 'pure Marxist theology' by an anonymous cabinet minister (allegedly Norman Tebitt), and retrospectively described as 'one of the most incisive and important critiques of Thatcher's Britain' by historian Eliza Filby.[414] For our purposes, it is the lesser-known story behind *Faith in the City* that provides us with a useful context into the workings of the Anglican Church's power structures at this time, highlighting how the Church contained elements that wanted to address social concerns and rethink the role of the Church in the city, and how these radical ideas were not stopped by the Archbishop of Canterbury. And yet, ultimately, the Church as an overall entity remained elitist and institutionally racist, merely tinkering round its edges in the 1980s in ways that enabled race and immigration issues a higher priority on the agenda, but failing to fully enact the structural change required by those raising this agenda. This pattern of institutional behaviour enables us to better understand the Church's contemporaneous treatment of sanctuary campaigns, by outlining the wider dichotomy of power and attitudes at play.

Faith in the City was the culmination of two years' work from the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on the Urban Priority Areas (ACUPA). The Archbishop of Canterbury at the time, Robert Runcie, was by his own admission not particularly political: 'I just get moved by individual issues.'[415] But after receiving 'prompting' from the urban dioceses in the wake of the uprisings of 1981, the issues effecting these areas patently 'moved' him.[416] The assembled ACUPA included the then Archbishop of York, John Habgood, and Wilfred Wood, the first Black Anglican bishop in England. Much of what they identified in these 'forgotten areas of deprivation', in terms of

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[413] *Faith in the*; LPL, G637.A7, General Synod, Living Faith in the City: A Progress Report by the Archbishop of Canterbury's Advisory Group on Urban Priority Areas (1990), v.
[414] 'Church report is "Marxist", *Sunday Times*, 1/12/1985, 1; John Campbell, *Margaret Thatcher. Volume 2: The Iron Lady*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 2003). Tebbit has always denied being the source of this quote, as cited in Bradstock, *David Sheppard,* 233; Filby, *God and Mrs,* 125.
[415] Carpenter, *Robert Runcie,* 34.
[416] Filby, 'Faith, charity', 146; 'Runcie launches inner-city study', *The Times,* 7/07/1983, 2; On the origins of the report see: Sarah Thiem,''To stay, serve and witness' – church politics and British inner cities in the 1980s', *Urban History* (2022), 5.

'increasing inequality' with a 'lack of means and opportunity', particularly among ethnic minority groups, is now widely accepted, but was still then controversial. Indeed, the report stated that:

> No adequate response is being made by government, nation or Church. There is barely even widespread public discussion.[417]

It made sixty-one recommendations. Thirty-eight of them for the Church, and twenty-three to the government and nation. The latter proved particularly inflammatory to elements of the government. The Prime Minister herself voiced that she was 'absolutely shocked' that the report did not hold families and individuals accountable.[418] In this way, at least, the report succeeded in putting the situation back on the media and political agendas in the mid-1980s.

In terms of Church reform, *Faith in the City* has been praised for prompting the introduction of the Church Urban Fund (CUF), designed to partner faith organisations working at the local level with charitable causes in inner-city areas. By the early 1990s the CUF had generated over £18 million, providing much-needed resources to increasingly underfunded areas.[419] Indeed, it is notable that while there has been new studies exploring the impact of local municipal funding (which we will encounter in chapter 4), the funding of charitable and community organisation in the city was complex and coming from multiple channels.[420] However, another nearly forgotten recommendation aimed at the Church, was the establishment of a Commission for Black Anglican Concerns. In the words of France-Williams: 'this *would* have been ground-breaking'; a potential 'fork in the road' that *could* have led to the needs of Black communities being addressed by the Church, 'reformatting our colleges, our training, our theology, our teams, and therefore transforming our congregations.'[421] In reality, all of the report's recommendations were passed by the 1986 General Synod, *except* the recommendation for a Commission for Black Anglican Concerns.

Archbishop Runcie then called an 'emergency meeting' at Lambeth Palace between the deciding Standing Committee of Synod - who were asked to look at the matter again, with the members of the ACUPA.[422] Bishop Wilfred Wood described going to this meeting to face the Standing Committee in a letter to a fellow bishop:

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[417] *Faith in the*, 14.
[418] Margret Thatcher, interview for BBC Radio 3 on 17/06/1985. Online: https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105934 [10/04/2023].
[419] Graham Bowpitt, 'Faith in the City revisited: A review of the Church of England's impact on urban deprivation and urban policy since 1986', in Helen Jones and John Lansley (eds.) *Social Policy and the City* (London: Routledge, 1995), 90.
[420] Robert Furbey *et al*., 'Breaking with Tradition? The Church of England and Community Organising', *Community Development Journal*, 32:2 (1997), 141-150.
[421] My italics. France-Williams, *Ghost Ship*, 98; Geiringer interview with France-Williams, online, 15/05/2020 cited in Geiringer and Owens, 'Anglicanism, Race, and', 231.
[422] For more detail on this see: Clarence Hendrickse, 'General Synod's response to racism as a factor in the Church of England's maturation as a national Church', M.Phil. thesis, University of Nottingham, 1995.

> I told them I was not there to accept on behalf of the black community any crumbs that they had to offer, I just wanted to *see the faces* of a group of people who could be *so insensitive* … here was a group, without a single black person on it, who knew better what was good for the black community.[423]

The Standing Committee ultimately thwarted the idea of the Commission.[424] As one Standing Committee member explained to Synod they remained opposed to the Commission on the grounds that 'some felt that such a commission might lead to division, and the [Standing] Committee was committed to the path of integration.'[425] This overriding concern with division above equality denotes an underlying feeling within the Standing Committee that groups of Black people meeting together to officially, might become subversive or potentially destabilising to the establishment. The proposed commission was discarded in favour of a committee, with the status of a subcommittee.[426] The term 'Commission' seemed to implicate guilt, a guilt that, in spite of the spirit of self-reflection that *Faith in the City* claimed to embody, significant factions of the Church were not ready to confront.[427] No one was appointed to do the work in theological colleges to tackle racism within the church institution.[428] Instead Glynne Gordon-Carter was appointed to do the work of two people, to combat racism within the Church, and also the community – simultaneously, and with a minimal budget.[429]

The way the radicalism of *Faith in the City's* recommendations was so diluted, is reflective of the wider competing motivations and accompanying contrasting emotions contained within the Church at this time. Reflecting on that fateful 1986 Synod, Indian-born Canon Ivor Smith-Cameron, expressed his disappointment:

> This decision of an all-white Standing Committee not to recommend a Commission for Black Anglican Concerns has sent a wave of *bewilderment, distress, frustration and horror* throughout black constituencies, both in the Church and in society outside the Church.[430]

The words Smith-Cameron used, here, '*bewilderment, distress, frustration* and *horror*', matches the level of passion and hurt found in Wood's description of the need to just '*see the faces*' of all those who had been '*so insensitive'*.

Smith-Cameron's words also highlight a stark disconnect in emotion, when they are compared with Wood's description of the wider atmosphere within the Synod discussion:

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[423] My italics. Wood quoted in Buchannan*, long view,* 144.
[424] The Commission was championed by figures such as Bishop Hugh Montefiore, but Synod narrowly rejected it by 207 votes, to 197, and 17 abstentions. Standing Committee was asked to reconsider the matter further but remained resistant to the Commission. See: Gordon-Carter, *amazing journey*, 19; Buchannan*, Long View,* 144.
[425] Archdeacon Dawes, of the Standing Committee, in 'Second Key Debate', *Church Times*, 14/02/1986, 5.
[426] Gordon-Carter, *amazing journey*, 19.
[427] Geiringer and Owens, 'Anglicanism, Race', 231.
[428] In fact, it took until 2016, almost thirty years before that part of the *Faith in the City* report was actioned. See:https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2016/11-november/features/features/are-the-blinkers-still-on.[accessed:11/04/2023].
[429] Gordon-Carter, *amazing journey,* 50-52.
[430] My italics. Gordon-Carter, *amazing journey*, 18.

> When the matter was debated there was such *consternation* that, although Synod had accepted the Standing Committee's recommendations, Standing Committee was asked to look at the matter again.[431]

While 'consternation' might suggest a feeling of anxiety, it hardly reflects the same level of 'frustration' and 'horror' that Smith-Cameron described among Black constituents. Consternation might also be read as a duplicitous code-word that potentially covers a multitude of sins. Were the Synod consternated and confused by the fact that the resolution had not passed the Standing Committee? Or were they more consternated by the fact that some radical clerics were threatening to rock the boat? As seen, in our focus on the Home Office's reaction to sanctuary and anti-deportation campaigns in chapter 1, such restrained or feigned expressions of concern can easily hide prejudice, or at least in this case, a passionate resistance to change.

Geiringer and Owens argue that this 'disconnect' between the needs of Black Christians outlined in *Faith and the City* and the limited subsequent actions from the Church framing race as more of an intellectual subject reflects a deeper reticence within the Church to enact a robust and lasting interrogation of its relationship to questions of race.[432] In debates that followed, a theme of 'acceptance followed by inaction' was certainly perceivable.[433] Reports and debates took place with regularity, and 'motions were no longer defeated', instead, they were noted or accepted, 'but the accompanying recommendations or action plans were left largely unattended.'[434] As one priest who served in London during the 1980s described it: 'they were largely producing sticking plaster answers.'[435]According to Geiringer and Owens this disconnect could be subverted by the 'parochial domesticity' offered via the inner-city vicarage, enabling urban clergy to better engage with pressure from minority communities, activists, and lay people. Geiringer and Owens highlight the work of individuals such as Reverend Kenneth Leech, who dedicated himself to the priorities of the inner-city after falling in love with the East End as a prime example. Leech served as Race Relations Field Officer for the Church of England's Board of Social Responsibility, as well as becoming a prolific author of radical publications such as *Struggle in Babylon*, which combined an unusual emphasis on both spirituality and social justice to demand more from the Anglican Church.[436] As he put it: 'I am frankly appalled at the way in which "spirituality" is being promoted as a way of avoiding and evading the demands of justice and of struggle for a more equal world.'[437]

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[431] My italics. Wood quoted in Buchannan*, Long View,* 144.
[432] Geiringer and Owens, 'Anglicanism, Race', 232, 231.
[433] *From Lament to*, 15.
[434] *From Lament to*, Ibid.
[435] 'Rev. John' in interview with Geiringer, online, 24/03/2020 in 'Anglicanism, Race', 230-231.
[436] Kenneth Leech, *Struggle in Babylon* (London: Sheldon Press,1988).
[437] Kenneth Leech, *The Eye of the Storm*: *spiritual resources for the pursuit of justice* (London: DLT., 1992), ix.

This historiographical preoccupation with the local priests working in inner-city parishes and *Faith in the City* generally, does not reflect the extent or diverse origins of the radical anti-racist strands within the Anglican Church in this period. Indeed, individuals such as Leech were not simply parochial influences, but were part of a small but significant constellation of figures well-established within the hierarchy, who, long before *Faith in the City*, were working within the bounds of the Church to simultaneously push those bounds outwards. Many of these outspoken figures, did have strong ties to the inner-city. The Bishop of Southwark, Mervyn Stockwood, for example, could be found speaking and leading in anti-racist marches with his Bishop's staff in hand and microphone in the other (see **figure 14**).[438]

Figure 13: Stockwood leading the anti-racist procession in Lewisham on 13th of August 1977, which infamously descended into the 'Battle of Lewisham' after conflict with the National Front. Photography from 'Continued stand on race urged', *Church Times*, 19/08/1977, 1.

Stockwood was also instrumental in the promotion of other radicals such as David Sheppard to the Bishop of Liverpool. Before becoming pivotal to the initial formation of the ACUPA responsible for *Faith in the City,* Sheppard had contributed to the findings of the BCC's Working Group in its 1976 *New Black Presence* report. In which he called for the application of positive discrimination, citing that that the bible speaks of supporting the vulnerable not of some sort of neutral 'fairness'.[439] He also publicly defended the forceful language of the Group's Chairman, Grenadian-born inner-city community worker, Gus John, whose unapologetic description of the Black experience in Britain had

[438] 'Bishop to take part in anti-racist march', *Church Times,* 12/08/1977, 1.
[439] Sheppard, foreword in *The New Black.*

ironically laid him open to right-wing criticisms of being himself 'violently racist'.[440] Sheppard maintained 'we have had all sorts of reports, telling us in cold statistics about the blocks in the way for black people', but they 'haven't altered people's attitudes': 'For real change to happen, the emotional temperature is as significant as any systematic analysis.'[441]

However, this radicalism in response to the needs of Britain's urban areas, is in many ways only one piece of the story. Another increasingly influential source of radicalism within the Anglican Church had far more global roots embedded within the processes of decolonisation. The role of religion in decolonisation has only recently began to be fully explored.[442] Sarah Stockwell's work on Archbishop Fisher (1945-1961) has reinstated the Anglican Church hierarchy in our wider understanding of the political processes through which Britain divested itself from an Empire.[443] Caroline Elkins has remarked how at one key moment emerging news of abuses by security forces in Kenya first provoked criticism 'not from the Labour opposition but from the Anglican Church'.[444] And, Bocking-Welch has outlined how Christian Aid, which operated as a humanitarian arm of the BCC throughout the 1960s, was shaped by the decolonisation of missionary work. On a practical level, as many of the missionaries forced to leave their posts at the end of empire moved into the humanitarian sector and Christian Aid's network. And, at a more discursive level, as Christian Aid's connection to missionary infrastructures required it to engage with critiques about the imperial nature of the role of the Church overseas.[445] This same mixture of practical and discursive influences of decolonisation influences can still be found shaping the Anglican Church in the 1980s.

Leech, for example, partly attributed his religious inspiration to the proclamations of Bishop of Stepney (1968-1978), Trevor Huddleston.[446] Connecting liberal paternalism, anti-colonial and anti-racist politics, Huddleston became known as one of a small number of 'turbulent' Anglican priests who became some of the 'principal actors' in an international network of anti-apartheid activities.[447]

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[440] Bernard Smith 'Letter' *Church Times* 25/06/1976; Mary Duggan 'Letter' *Church Times* 27/08/1976, 11.
[441] Sheppard, *New Black Presence*, 3-6. Sheppard was also known for his crossing of denominational lines with his Catholic counterpart, Archbishop Derek Worlock, forming a working partnership to champion inner-city needs. See: Maria Power, 'Reconciling State and Society? The Practice of the Common Good in the Partnership of Bishop', *Journal of Religious History,* 40:4(2016), 545-564.
[442] Bocking-Welch, *British civic society,* 171.
[443] Sarah Stockwell, '"Splendidly leading the way"? Archbishop Fisher and decolonisation in British colonial Africa', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* 36:3(2008), 545-64.
[444] Caroline Elkin, *Britain's Gulag* (London: Johnathon Cape, 2005), 280.
[445] Bocking-Welch, *British civic society,* 173.
[446] Kenneth Leech, 'Why I became a socialist: Socialism, Christianity and east London', *Workers' Liberty*, 64:5 (2000). Online:http://archive.workersliberty.org/wlmags/wl64/kenleech.htm.[accessed:15/05/2023].
[447] Rob Skinner, 'Facing the Challenge of 'Young Africa': Apartheid South Africa and British Decolonisation', *South African Historical Journal*, 54:1(2005), 54-71.
Huddleston was part of a group of Christians (wider than just Anglicans) engaged in Southern Africa, influencing anti-racism in the UK: Anglican, Father Michael Lapsley, Chaplain of the ANC, was expelled from South Africa but continued to travel the world, mobilizing faith communities, in particular, to oppose apartheid and in 1990 lost both his hands and an eye through a postal bomb targeting for his part in the anti-apartheid

Huddlestone's anti-apartheid activism had him expelled from South Africa in 1955, but he continued to campaign as a 'Christian Witness', and become Enoch Powell's leading Church critic.[448]

Throughout his career Huddleston defiantly used his position within the establishment to oppose the state.[449] Speaking in the wake of the 1958 Notting Hill riots, on the TV programme *Tonight*, he said:

> We have no right to restrict immigration of coloured people into Britain. We are the last people on earth with a right to restrict the immigration of coloured people to Britain.[450]

Leech also regularly worked alongside the aforementioned Wilfred Wood. Migrating from Barbados in 1962 to serve as a parish priest in London, before becoming the Bishop of London's Race Relation Officer in 1966, Wood ultimately became the first ever Black bishop in the Church of England in 1985.[451] Fighting social and racial injustices throughout his career both in and outside the Church, he played a key role in establishing an independent prosecuting service (the Crown Prosecution Service), was the moderator of the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism, in addition to serving as President for the Institute of Race Relations. The 'boldness of [Wood's] challenge to the Church of England hierarchy', and his broader influential role within the Black community, has been 'nothing short of monumental', sums France-Williams.[452]

Yet as Wood described it he was also just one of many Black Anglicans in Britain 'born and bred' into the Church of England via the British colonies.[453] With schools, churches, the civil service, army and police all staffed by Christians: 'we were nurtured in societies that were overtly and unquestioningly Christian', and 'if it happened that those who wielded power were all white … we had no reason to fear because were all Christians' and 'Jesus taught that in order to please God, we should all love our neighbours as ourselves'.[454] The reality of the Black Anglican experience in Britain was disappointing, but, according to Wood many like him remained committed to the teachings of Christianity because of their understanding of 'true' Christianity as a universal faith:

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struggle; Anglican, Canon John Collins (1905-1982), founded 'Christian Action' raising funds for anti-apartheid activism and was a founder of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; Methodist Ministers Cedric Mayson and Brian Brown worked for the Christian Institute of Southern Africa, and after the Institute was banned in S. A, continued working for the BCC and Anti-Apartheid Movement; Quaker, Justin Ellis of Namibia. For more see: WCCs PCR Information: Reports and Background Papers, No.14(1982), 56-58.

[448] The Great Debate was consequentially shown on London Weekend Television (LWT) on 12/10/1969 with the topic being 'My Christian Duty'.

[449] Desmond Tutu describes Sheppard as having a great 'influence' on him. Online:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l9m_cR9quyI.[accessed:07/05/2023].

[450] 'No restrictions says Fr. Huddleston', *Church Times*, 5/09/1958, 1.

[451] Geiringer and Owens, 'Anglicanism, Race', 224.

[452] France-Williams, *Ghost Ship*, xvii.

[453] *Seeds of Hope: Report of a Survey by the Committee for Black Anglican Concern* (London: General Synod, 1991), v.

[454] Wilfred Wood, *Faith for a glad fool* (London: New Beacon Books, 2010), 39-40, 204.

> The hope that is in us derives from an unshakeable belief in the triumph of the good purposes of God. We are God's children, and we know that though ill-usage at the hands of others does cause us suffering, in the ends such acts and such suffering are made to serve His good purpose.[455]

Woods word's support the findings of John Wilkinson, and others, that Black Anglican Christianity has been adapted and infused with multiple inheritances in complex but important ways.[456] From the 'spirituality' of ancient African faiths, to the incorporation of social justice issues emerging out of post-emancipation Caribbean, to the 'Black radicalism' of Northern American theology: 'Black Christian faith is a 'liberation faith' arising out of responses to historical experience and 'The Jesus encountered in Black faith is the Jesus of history who took upon himself the fullness not only of humanity, but of oppressed humanity.[457]

Carving a path of greater acceptance for this more inclusive version of Christianity within the Church, was not a vocation which Wood found easy. And in fact, at one point, he allegedly 'very nearly called for a complete secession of black Anglicans from the Church of England.'[458] After the painful 'behaviour of General Synod's Standing Committee, I carried on as Chairman of the CBAC only because I was 'a man under authority'' and was 'appreciative of the late Archbishop Runcie's genuine concern', writes Wood. But, added that he was not alone in his journey. It was the arrival of fellow West Indian Glynne Gordon-Carter that 'more than anything encouraged me 'to gird up my loins and face the journey to Horeb'.[459] Gordon-Carter was appointed to the CBAC in 1987, and succeeded Leech as the Secretary of the Race and Community Relations Committee. She was told that one of the reasons she got the job was because she had recently arrived to Britain and was therefore 'new to the society and would have a fresh perspective.'[460] Wood affirmed that it was an attribute that Gordon-Carter was 'too recently arrived in Britain from the Caribbean not to be shocked by what she was seeing and hearing'.[461] Gordon-Carter seized on *Faith in the City* report to try to initiate further change and continue to head the Church's racial justice work for fourteen years. Eventually Wood's work as the Chairman of the CBAC was also succeeded by John Sentamu and then Rose Hudson-Wilkin. Sentamu would become Britain's first Black Archbishop in 2005, after fleeing persecution from Idi Amin's regime in Uganda in 1972. Jamaican born Rose Hudson-Wilkin became the first Black woman to become a Church of England bishop in 2019. This list of radicals working within the Church for anti-racist change is by no means exhaustive, and also does no justice to figures in other

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[455] Wood, *Faith for a*, 41.
[456] John Wilkinson, *Church in Black and White* (Edinburgh, Saint Andrew Press, 1993); Lehmann, 'Religion and globalization'.; Woodhead, 'Christianity', in *Religions in the,* 227-231; Kalilombe, 'Black Christianity in', 306-324.
[457] Wilkinson, *Church in Black,* 14.
[458] Buchannan, *long view*, 146.
[459] Wood, 'Foreword' in *amazing journey*, xi-xii.
[460] Gordon-Carter, 'Institutional racism still a flaw' *Ctbi.org*, 4/05/2021. Online:https://ctbi.org.uk/institutional-racism-still-a-flaw-glynne-gordon-carter/.[accessed: 29/04/2023].
[461] Wood, 'foreword' in *amazing journey*, xi.

denominations, who as we shall see in the next section of the chapter also threw themselves into campaigning through the BCC and corresponding councils.[462] However, these brief examples do highlight how significant contributories of radical anti-racist resistance within the Anglican Church has originated not just from the Church's connections to Britain's urban centres, but also via its international ties too. In particular, stemming from the efforts of a resilient Black minority who have remained dedicated to decolonising the Church's national structures, to better reflect the needs of the post-colonial British Anglican communion.

This same interplay between a progressivism, championed by individuals with diverse influences, but tempered by wider conservative laity and structures, which we will now explore with further nuance through sanctuary campaigns. Sanctuary campaigns inhabited an ambiguous political, social, religious space, carved out by such radicals and liberals. As we shall see, this space was somewhat protected by the liberal elements of the administration, but this protection was never fully reinforced by the Anglican Church hierarchy, which at its heart remained an establishment machine.

Sanctuary: 'when all else appears to have failed'.[463]

Ostensibly, the Church of England's action and inactions during the sanctuary campaigns of the 1980s follows the predictable pattern of grandiose proclamations with limited effort, largely dragged along by a select number of radical priests and likeminded rebels. Certainly, sanctuary campaigns were fundamentally an example of grassroots, bottom-up action. Methodist Minister, member of Community and Race Relations Unit of the British Council of Churches, and tireless anti-deportation campaigner, David Haslam, described the Anglican authority's acceptance of sanctuary campaigns to me as follows: 'it wasn't so much a case of *allowing* us, I mean, we were going to be doing it either way'.[464] Paul Weller, the Baptist minister who held the novel 'sanctuary fast' for Chauhan in 1984, recalled that it would have been easy for church higher-ups to say 'this isn't really church work', and yet, 'to some extent, I didn't have any concern about pushing the boundaries', and 'generally felt quite supported'.[465] The Anglican Bishop of Manchester at the time, Stanley Booth-Clibborn, being in Weller's words, 'very good on these issues.' Being 'generally supported' of course, is still a step away from outright Church endorsement, and reflects how it still came down to

[462] See also: Sehon Goodridge's work as the first Principal of the Simon of Cyrene Theological Institute, training black ordinands also deserves attention; for further examples see: Churches for Britain and Ireland, *Racial Justice Champions*, Vol. 1,.(London: CTBI, 2021).
[463] LPL BCC/DCA/CRUU/10/2/15, *Why Sanctuary?* (London, CRRU:BCC, 1989), 37.
[464] My italics. David Haslam, author interview, online, 22/01/2022.
[465] Weller, author interview.

individuals like Haslam and Weller to lead the way. So where exactly did the inspiration for these campaigns come from and what can they tell us about Anglican Church pluralism at this time?

Weller traces the roots of modern sanctuary in British churches back, 'in terms of public places of refuge', to Bishop Colin Winter's Namibia International Peace Centre in Cephas Avenue, East London. According to Weller, the Peace Centre was 'especially significant and sowed many of the early seeds of Sanctuary in Britain.'[466] Winter was an English Anglican bishop, who served as a diocese Bishop and in Southern Africa for several years, but became one of three 'Anglican Bishop-in-Exile', after being deported from Namibia by the South African Government for espousing views of white liberal dissent. He initially established his Peace Centre in 1977 by offering the shelter of a bishop's own home as a place of physical safety and security for refugees from apartheid. The Centre's involvement with its East End neighbourhood then led to this broadening to Chilean exiles, Filipino migrant workers and settled Bengalis under threat of deportation. Winter actively sought scholarships and other support for people facing deportation, with the result that many were able to remain in Britain.[467]

Winter was influenced by wider global Christian developments and his career offers an insight into the ongoing decolonisation of the Church, being driven by diverse international influences. In his own writings he repeatedly cited the journal of the WCC, the language of Latin American theologists Gustavo Gutierrez and Leonardo Buff, and Black Liberation theologists James Cone and Basil Moore.[468] He upheld the assassinated Archbishop of San Salvador, Oscar Romero – an outspoken critic of the military government – as a 'living example' of what he believed it meant to 'be a bishop in the modern world'.[469] However, it was Winter's experience in Namibia that reinforced to him that the Anglican Church needed to take a more proactive stance in world politics. From his position of exile in Britain, Winter wrote that he believed that when the church in Namibia 'stood with the poor, the exploited workers, the weak and those condemned to an endless life of poverty', they 'were then siding with those who were specially near and dear to God.' By contrast in England, he found that the:

> church is reluctant to take sides, or rather it has already taken sides. It tacitly sides with the rich, the powerful and the influential society… no matter how much it may claim impartiality.[470]

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[466] Weller, *Sanctuary: the beginning of,* 10.
[467] Ibid.
[468] Gustavo Gutierrez and Leonardo Buff, cited in Colin Winter, *The Breaking Process* (London: SCM, 1981), 24, 79; James Cone*, The Liberation of Theology*, (Gill and Macmillan, 1977), 33, as cited in *Breaking Process*, 23-24; Basil Moore, *Black Theology: The South African Voice,* as cited by Colin Winter in 'Safety First Christians', *Church Times*, 7/10/1977, 11.
[469] Winter *Breaking Process*, 81.
[470] Winter, *Breaking Process,* preface, 14, 11-12.

It was thus 'high time', argued Winter, that the Anglican Church undertook a 'breaking process' within itself, to achieve a closer position to God and relevancy in modern society, as opposed to just 'bringing them words of comfort, offering a sandwich here, a cup of tea there'.[471]

The Church of England did *tacitly* support Winter and his endeavours by allowing him to remain as a Bishop-in-exile. Behind the scenes, like-minded thinkers such as Bishop Sheppard were rallying support and funding for the Bishop's-in-exile via inter-bishopric correspondence.[472] However, Winter was pioneering a path which primarily left others in the High Church echelons alarmed, and himself isolated. His repeated requests to address General Synod on the issue of Namibia and apartheid South Africa after his exile, were rejected. He was instead told that Archbishop Coggan was 'proposing to pray for Namibia at the time of opening of the Synod', which Coggan's Secretary-General felt was 'by far and away the best way of showing our concern.'[473]

He again turned lucklessly to Coggan for help when searching for new accommodation for his Centre when their current location was in disrepair and a 'batch of refugee students will shortly be arriving from Lusaka'.[474] 'Is there any chance that the Church of England has a property or properties which could either be let or loaned to us', Winter enquired.[475] Coggan's reply was polite but clear: 'I sympathise with you in the difficulty which you are facing but I am afraid I can offer no suggestion' and 'I certainly have no such building as you ask for.'[476] He concluded that other channels of Anglican Church support were equally red-taped: 'It might be worth your consulting the Church Commissioners, but I must warn you they are bound to charge a realistic rent.'[477] Tellingly, in another note to Coggan from his secretary, Winter is referred to as 'a bad influence' with doubtful 'judgement': 'The Bishop (of Truro) *shares your doubts about Bishop Winter's judgement* – he told me that in his opinion Bishop Winter has been *a bad influence* on the Vicar of St. Paul's Truro.'[478] Evidently Winter's methods, if not his motivations, were branding him as a potentially destabilising figure within the Church establishment.

The next Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, was seemingly more supportive of Winter's unconventional ways, when Winter fell gravely ill, and took care to enquire about him and his Peace Centre. The Bishop of Stepney, confirmed to Runcie after visiting Winter, that he was

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[471] Winter, *Breaking Process,* preface, 14.
[472] LPL COGGAN PAPERS 1975 Vol.22, Letter from Bishop David Sheppard to Archbishop Donald Coggan, 25/07/1975.
[473] LPL COGGAN PAPERS 1975 Vol.22, Letter from W. D. Pattinson, Secretary-General, to Coggan, titled 'Namibia', 27/06/1975.
[474] LPL COGGAN PAPERS 1975 Vol.22, Letter from Colin Winter, Bishop of Damaarland-in-exile, to Coggan, 20/08/1975.
[475] Ibid.
[476] LPL COGGAN PAPERS 1975 Vol.22, Letter from Archbishop Coggan to Bishop Colin Winter, 11/09/1975.
[477] Ibid.
[478] LPL COGGAN PAPERS, Vol.90, 1979. 'B.L' Note for the Archbishop, 2/2/1979.

'definitely deteriorating' and that 'it must be a matter of months', yet he remained relentless in his activism:

> He still receives visitors from all over the world – the fire still burns in his belly – the centre is still financing more overseas students than H. M. Government – Cephas Street is still a source of hope in Namibia. Colin is still full of ideas, mental energy and passion and his heart will not stand up to it … In short, he is dying, he is suffering – but I still think he is one of the healthiest (though difficult) members of the Body of Christ.[479]

Winter died a few months later in November of 1981, his radical spirit lived on in many others. Indeed, Winter served as a direct inspiration, sowing 'many of the early seeds of sanctuary' for Minister Weller – who himself organized the first type of public sanctuary campaign in the 1980s for Vinod Chauhan (see **figure 14**).[480] This was to be the first in a succession of sanctuary type anti-deportation campaigns in the Manchester area (see introduction and chapter 5.)

Figure 14: Chauhan on his fast with Paul Weller, photograph from 'Hunger striker fights to stay here', *Manchester Evening News*, 9/11/1983.

This remains only a portion of the story towards the origins of sanctuary campaigns in 1980s Britain. Just as Winter had been influenced by strands of international theology and anti-colonial thought, Weller too had derived inspiration from multiple sources. He was already active in networks campaigning on issues such as anti-apartheid, Christian peace networks, nuclear disarmament, and

[479] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1981/292, Letter from Bishop of Stepney, Rev. Jim Thompson, to Runcie, 13/09/1981.
[480] Weller, *Sanctuary – the beginning*, 10.

described himself as having been 'heavily involved in anti-deportation campaigns generally', and with a number of family anti-deportation campaigns in the Tameside area in particular.[481] As he described it to me, he also had at least a 'sort of general awareness of the emerging sanctuary rail-road movement occurring in the USA from the early eighties'.[482] But he developed a further understanding of sanctuary campaigns shortly before his involvement in the Mendis sanctuary, when he attended an international conference of the World Council of Churches on 'Sanctuary: The Congregation as a Place of Refuge' in September of 1986.[483]

This conference was hosted in the Netherlands and drew together church-related sanctuary workers from across the USA and Western Europe.[484] Following this, the Refugee Desk at the WCC in Geneva set up an international network of sanctuary workers, which provided the basis for the gathering of international Church support for sanctuaries.[485] To Weller, this was 'quite a significant event in the trajectory of the sanctuary campaigns', as it was 'the first time I became aware, I guess, of the extent of different kinds of sanctuaries in other European countries' – such as convents in Sweden, and in Groningen, Germany, 'where they had a hundred-odd people living in the church'.[486] In 1987, a Charter of Groningen was signed by over seven-hundred religious communities in Europe, from Manchester to Cape Town, and an office with thirteen specialised staff was set up to assess the cases of asylum seekers – which still exists some thirty years later.[487] Here, then, through Weller we find an example of the ways in which both historical and contemporary international precedents within the wider structures of the Anglican Church could foster radical acts such as sanctuary.

A combination of historic and international influences also transpired when I interviewed Reverend David Haslam about his anti-deportation activism. 'Am I radical? You bet I am' Haslam noted, but he also explicitly situated his views within a longer 'stream of serious radicalism in Christianity in the UK':

> It really goes back to John Ball and the Peasant's Revolt in 1381 – they were fired by Christian principles, that people are created equal and therefore how is it, John Ball's little rhyme went: 'When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?'... And you know, those Christian values and principles of equality there's a whole long tradition of that.[488]

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[481] Weller, author interview.
[482] Weller, author interview.
[483] For the early history of the Arizona-based US movement see Ann Crittenden, *Sanctuary: A Story of American Conscience and Law in Collision* (Grove, 1988); Ignatius Bau, *This Ground is Holy: Church Sanctuary and Central American Refugees* (Paulist, 1985).
[484] Report by Dideri Mattijsen, available from the Ker ken Wereld Centre. As cited in Weller, *Sanctuary – the beginning,* 18.
[485] Weller, *Sanctuary – the beginning*, 18.
[486] 'Dutch Aid Refugees fight deportation', *Mennonite Weekly Review*, 29/01/1987, 6.
[487] See: https://www.inlia.nl/en/30-years-mission-statement.[accessed:11/04/2023].
[488] Haslam, author interview.

While it cannot be overlooked that the Anglican Church was invested in the espousal of racist colonialist ideas, it is also true that for centuries there has been an undercurrent of radical resistance driven by Christian principles of equality and charity.

Historians such as Christopher Brown have highlighted how the 'spiritual awakenings' of Christian evangelicals such as William Wilberforce and Hannah More guided their efforts to promote abolitionism as a part of their wider mission to promote the moral reform of the nation.[489] Stewart Brown has argued that a pluralism in Christian interpretation was particularly established as a guiding principle within the Church's encompassing framework from the 1830s, when crucial Parliament decisions determined that the Church would no longer rely on parliamentary grants and subsidies - much like how David Feldman argues that non-conformist schools are now a key example of conservative pluralism.[490] And Nigel Scotland has traced the considerable religious impact upon the emerging Labour movement and co-operative movement in the nineteenth century, through varieties of Methodism and their 'class meetings' in particular.[491] Such findings underline a strand of Christian radicalism present long before the emergence of urban Victorian priests provided parochial aid as part of their mission to cleanse and convert the 'urban wasteland'.[492]

Haslam also attributed his personal radical spiritual and political 'awakening' to his encounters with international religious networks. And, specifically, he attributed this to his experience working as a steward at the World Council of Churches Assembly of 1968 in Uppsala. Uppsala marked one of the first times that there had been a substantial amount of Black church leaders from Africa and the Caribbean assembled, precipitating the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism.[493] Martin Luther King had been scheduled to open the service and his assassination a few weeks earlier cast a strong pall over the gathering.[494] The speech from renowned African American author and civil rights activist, James Baldwin, in particular, left a lasting impression on contemporary Anglican leaders there, such as Trevor Huddleston.[495] As Haslam describes it, the conference's conversation 'opened a whole new understanding, of what Christianity thought it was and what we thought it was in white Europe, and what African and Caribbean people thought it was'. It was a moment used to

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[489] Christopher Brown, 'Evangelicals and the origins of anti-slavery in England', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Online: https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-96075 [accessed: 11/04/2023].
[490] Stewart Brown, The National Churches of England, Ireland, and Scotland, 1801–1846 (Oxford UP, 2001), 405; Feldman, 'Why the English', 291.
[491] Nigel Scotland, 'Methodism and the English Labour Movement 1800-1906', *ANVIL* 14:1(1997), 36-48.
[492] Geiringer, and Owens, 'Anglicanism, Race', 22.
[493] Green notes that: the WCC had gone from 29% of member churches based in the global south in 1948, to 41% by the Uppsala Assembly of 1968: Green, 'Digging at roots', 250.
[494] Welch, 'Mobilizing Morality', 873.
[495] Huddleston, recited this speech in his sermons and writing: Huddleston, 'The Christian Churches in Independent Africa', *African Affairs,* 68:270(1969), 42-48; See also: Kenneth Sansbury, *Combatting Racism: The British Churches and the WCC Programme to Combat Racism* (London: BCC, 1978), 8; Ans J. van der Bent, 'Logs in Our Eyes: The Struggle of the Ecumenical Movement Against Racism', *The Ecumenical Review*, 32(1980), 166–272, 166–167.

statement: ‘that when the Europeans came to Africa they brought us the bible and got us to pray and when we opened our eyes, we had the bible, but they [the Christian colonisers] had Africa.’[496] For receptive Christian witnesses such as Haslam, true Christianity and racial socio-political justice thus became inherently entwined. According to him, ‘The churches did shift after that’, the WCC ‘through its programme to combat racism… did become quite a radical influence in the world really.’[497]

Haslam’s story thus supports, but also widens, Tank Green’s findings of the ecumenical movements of the late 1960s providing a powerful theology for some white Christians to engage with the politics of 'race relations', and 'immigration' throughout the 1960s to varying degrees.[498] Green particularly highlighted how Reverend Ainger and the ministry at the Notting Hill Methodist Church translated the theology derived from the WCC's ecumenical conversation into an ‘applied ecumenicity’ at a parochial level through works of community action. The ministry creating an Ecumenical Centre which expanded outreach to groups across politics and churches and hosted the WCC during its Notting Hill Consultation on Racism in London in 1969, for example. Haslam’s story highlights how these radical theological movements not only had an impact well beyond the 1960s, and into the long 1980s, but through sanctuary campaigns specifically, had an impact far beyond just the parochial level.

We can see how this radical theology infiltrated the wider networks of the British Churches to support sanctuary campaigns directly through Weller’s individual involvement. According to Weller, he used his role in the British Council of Churches’ Community (BCC) and its Community Race Relations Unit (CRRU) to ‘work on a broader sense, to engage the churches in the area with anti-deportation campaigns that were going on in Manchester’ and to ‘draw them in’.[499] He partly attributes his confidence in doing this to the fact ‘it was in the international ecumenical movement’ and the ‘era of liberation theology’. Weller was already involved in wider Christian peace, anti-missiles, and anti-apartheid groups.[500] He lived at the Firs Christian Community, an ‘intentional Christian community’ based in a house in Ashton-under-Lyne, wherein they shared possessions as well as ideas. According to Weller, Firs provided ‘a base’ for organising locally such as the ‘Tameside Against the Missiles’ group, while internationally he was also involved in the International Christian Peace Conference and anti-apartheid Barclays disinvestment campaign, in particular.[501] He also credits the church structures of the time for providing practical support. ‘Bodies such as the World Council of Churches’, meant there ‘were networks of people who were linked into national

[496] Haslam, author interview.
[497] Haslam, author interview.
[498] Green, ‘Digging at roots’.
[499] Weller, author interview.
[500] Weller, ‘A Baptist Minister on The Nuclear Weapons’, *Mainstream*, 13/14(1980), 14.
[501] Ibid.; See the WCCs PCR Information: Reports and Background Papers, No. 14, 1982, 56-58.

leaderships who understood these things, and understood them also in a global perspective'.[502] He emphasized that CRUU's access to its 'own funds to deploy', in conjunction with its membership to the BCC, was important to giving it its 'own sort of frisson around it'.[503] This mix of frisson and funds catalysed the network of support for sanctuary campaigns:

> Within that [CRRU], we developed a Sanctuary Working Group, who tried to think through and give guidance to local congregations that were then starting to think you know "do we? don't we?" So, I think that that ecumenical structure, the Community Race Relations Unit, was very, very, important. And created a kind of umbrella under which a lot of the church work on sanctuary was done.[504]

This Sanctuary Working Group, supported by CRUU, issued a 'Statement on Sanctuary' in 1988 which concluded with a bold critique, and rejection of, state authority:

> if unjust law is no law and if indeed immigration law and practice have become unjust, and if human rights are being diminished, it may be a requirement of contemporary Christian discipleship to grant sanctuary when it is sought.[505]

This statement was followed by a booklet published by CRRU in 1989 entitled *Why Sanctuary?* – 'A Document offered for study, action and comment'.[506] *Why Sanctuary?* also included a 'policy statement' by the Executive Committee of the British Council of Churches. In contrast to the Working Group's assertion that offering sanctuary may be 'a requirement' of Christian discipleship, the Executive Committee was clear 'it is *not* appropriate for the Council to give support to evasions of the immigration laws of the UK' and carefully caveated that it:

> *fully understands* the dilemmas involved and *respects the courage and integrity* of those who stand with and support vulnerable and fearful people and their families.[507]

Evidently the Executive Committee was not prepared to invoke a full-scale institutional crisis by wholly advocating the flouting of the law. *Why Sanctuary?* also stipulated that 'a positive outcome' for a sanctuary is most likely 'if at least one' of the following criteria applied:

> i.) It is a last resort when all else appears to have failed.
>
> ii). The local congregation has given its support.[508]

Here then we can see in black and white how the higher echelons of the Anglian Church were not leading the charge when it came to promoting sanctuary, in their eyes it remained a last resort to be undertaken by local congregations or reverends at their own risk and judgement.

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[502] Weller, author interview.
[503] Weller, author interview.
[504] Weller, author interview.
[505] LPL BCC/DCA/CRRU/10/2/90, *A Statement on Sanctuary* (CRRU, 1988), 6.
[506] LPL BCC/DCA/CRUU/10/2/15, *Why Sanctuary?* (CRRU:1989).
[507] My italics. Ibid., 33, 36.
[508] Ibid., 37.

Yet the fact that the Executive Committee did not directly condemn those who felt compelled to enact sanctuary and actually acknowledged their 'courage and integrity' can be regarded as a significant admission from the upper echelons of the Church leadership. Indeed, the Executive Committee's statement further noted that the opportunity offered by sanctuaries in previous centuries to re-examine cases of perceived injustice no longer existed 'to a sufficient extent'.[509] The Committee therefore: 'Urges CRUU to seek further discussion with the Home Office about present policy'; calls for a 'fundamental review of UK immigration law and practice' and a 'well-publicised amnesty for illegal immigrants'.[510] These words could be dismissed as just another incidence of cheap talk over actions from the Anglican Church. However, through the narrative of Weller we can also see how this tacit support for the actions of CRUU could empower individuals. By navigating the boundaries of toleration found within the wider structures of the Anglican Church, Weller was able to successfully raise the profile, and funds, for grassroots sanctuary campaigns to the extent that the Church was sponsoring one-off local campaigns, and divisive publications promoting 'guidance' for future local churches and religious communities considering hosting a sanctuary. Ultimately, putting sanctuary campaigns on the Anglican Church's agenda to the point that it forced the Executive Committee of the BCC – presided by Archbishop of Canterbury – to make significant admissions of toleration towards the tactic, and to sanction highly political statements about UK immigration law.

The BCC did not include Roman Catholics at the time, but in January 1988 a Working Party of the Community Relations Committee of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales similarly issued a report entitled *Towards a Statement of the Rights of Migrants and Settlers*.[511] The report concluded:

> Because the right of free movement and other rights are not sufficiently recognised in the immigration policies of states, illegal immigrants may often be victims of unjust law. They may be *morally justified* in evading the repercussions of their illegality and others may be *morally justified, or even obliged,* to assist them.[512]

At the parochial level different denominations were able to efficiently work together in support of sanctuary. Roman Catholic Priest, Father Sumner, is now best known as the "go to" priest for race relations in Moss Side and for servicing the funerals of dozens of those killed in gang warfare.[513] But he also presided over three Catholic parishes in the Moss Side and Hulme area, at the time that neighbouring Anglican rector, Father Methuen was hosting the Viraj Mendis sanctuary at the Church

[509] Ibid. 33-36.
[510] Ibid.
[511] *Towards a Statement of the Rights of Migrants and Settlers* (London, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 1988).
[512] My italics. Ibid.
[513] *Manchester Evening News,* 'Priest who pumped iron is now building bridges', 26/05/2011. Online:https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/priest-who-pumped-iron-is-now-861617.[accessed:11/04/2023].

of Ascension. By this time, Sumner had already become heavily involved in the Moss Side and Hulme Community Forum, campaigning against police harassment, chairing efforts to provide jobs through the Churches Work Scheme, and founding the subsidiary *Firm Start Manchester Limited*. As he put it to me: 'eighty percent of my work was outside the church'.[514] Sumner's recollections of his work at this time strongly correlates to Weller's account of the ecumenical structures of collaboration providing him with crucial support. He explained cross-denominational work, in particular, was as an important factor to the church's radical achievements in the area:

> We always worked together, there were about forty different denominations within two square miles and we tried together, in a sort of churches together sort of way… John Methuen, was the vicar at the Ascension Church in Hulme, I was the priest at St. Wilfred's, so we were closest in terms in geography, but also probably in the way we worked together.
>
> He would work on the housing issues in Hulme, on the development trust, and I would relate to him anything I had to do about housing. Anything to do with Moss Side he would relate to me… Often on a morning, we'd have Alec Balfe-Mitchell [the Reverend of Moss Side Baptist Church] and John Methuen and myself, all doing the morning prayer together in an Anglican church.[515]

According to Sumner, this support extended during the Viraj Mendis sanctuary too:

> John [Methuen] spoke to me, before he made his decision and then the sanctuary movement began… And I often – if John was away – I would have to do the speaking to the press about what was going on with the Viraj Mendis situation, because we worked together all the time.[516]

Sumner stressed that this atmosphere of ecumenical support gave them momentum to push the boundaries:

> I think it was the personalities involved at the time. Alec [Balfe-Mitchell] was an intelligent minister, he and John Methuen would fall out and have rages and then give each other a great big hug and get on with it again.

When I asked if he felt this support from higher up in the Church leadership Sumner explained, he never felt reprimanded, but assumed he should not bother his superiors, 'I didn't know until much later' that the Catholic Bishop Patrick Kelly 'wanted to be so supportive'. Recalling a later encounter discussing their work in Manchester he recited Bishop Kelly:

> No, he said, 'the characters around – I was scared stiff about what you were doing!' 'But', he said, 'there were two priests', that he thought: 'Oh gosh I'm frightened of this! – What are they going to do next?', but he appreciated what we were doing. So, I didn't know it at the time, but he was so grateful. It would be a different story if it had been a different bishop.'[517]

[514] Phil Sumner, author interview, Manchester, 7/11/2019.
[515] Sumner, author interview.
[516] Sumner, author interview.
[517] Sumner, author interview.

Collectively Sumner and Weller's personal accounts underscore how there was an acceptance of support for anti-racist activities such as sanctuary, within the broader umbrella structures of the Anglican Church – and within the Catholic fold too – accompanied by an underlying caution. The Anglican Church's overall approach to sanctuary heavily depended on the individualised drive of radicals such as Sumner and Methuen, or Weller and Haslam, often drawing from diverse anti-colonial and historical influences, as opposed to a co-ordinated or systematic overhaul of its priorities. This is a pattern in keeping with Feldman's theory of a conservative pluralism, traceable within British establishments, whereby toleration preserves the privileges of its establishment position: 'as a strategy of incorporation and governance; designed to preserve English dominance within the United Kingdom, to govern subject peoples within the empire, and to preserve the privileges of the established Church.' Such solutions are 'meant to reform but also to preserve vestiges of the English ancien regime'.[518]

This acceptance of pluralism within the Church allowed wider movements such as ecumenism and liberation theology to drive pockets of radicalism within institutional networks such as the BCC and CRRU. These networks were vital towards initiating and developing sanctuary campaigns. In the next section we will explore to what extent this toleration of acts of Christian radicalism actually perforated the higher echelons of the Anglian Church, by focusing on their private papers pertaining to sanctuary.

Archbishop Runcie, the High Church and sanctuary: 'in other words I smell danger'.[519]

Despite immense criticism and censure, sanctuary was still partially accepted by the Anglican Church as legitimate form of protest. Allowing sanctuary was an inherently political if not radical act from the Church at this time. The archives of the British Council of Churches and the Church Race Relations Unit attest to just what the 1980s Church was up against. Amongst hundreds of pages of research into the political climate and public feeling regarding the Church's work, stacks of pamphlets, letters, and articles can be found bemoaning 'MORE MULTIRACIAL MADNESS! & THE RELIGION RACKET' and unashamedly raging that 'pastoral care has become coloured care'.[520] One telling flyer addressed from the 'Enfield Christian Nationalist' asked readers whether their pastor had partaken in any (apparently reprehensible) actions, such as asking them to attend "Multi-faith" services with 'members of other false and alien faiths', distributing 'propaganda

[518] Feldman, 'Why the English', 293.
[519] Eve Keatley quoted in LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Notes on 'SANCTUARY' from Keatley to Runcie, 13/05/1988.
[520] LPL BSR/RACE/T/1/1, 'CHOICE FIGHTBACK', leaflet.

material' from the GLC, or about "Third- World theology"?' If, so the author warned, 'your church or parish is in danger'.[521] The fyler's complaints about multi-faith-ness demonstrate how the Church causing ripples amongst xenophobic waters at least.[522] Lambeth Palace was evidently aware that some of these views, were also held by members of Government and the Home Office. One memorandum amongst Archbishop Runcie's secretaries, for example, briefs members of the General Synod's Board of Social Responsibility ahead of meetings with the Home Office that:

> it is advisable to keep the issue of immigrants and refugees separate as there is a drift towards seeing refugees as bogus immigrants. This line is very popular with the tabloids some of whose readership appears to be in the Home Office![523]

Tellingly, the assistant priest at the church hosting Mendis's sanctuary, Reverend Henry West, said in a press conference at the time that:

> One gets the impression that [politicians] are putting pressure on the church leaders to persuade us to stop what we are doing. What we have seen and heard seems to indicate they would be very happy if bishops were to put strong pressure on us.[524]

We find evidence of letters from the Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, writing to fellow Etonian the Bishop of York, John Habgood, hoping that he 'might seek to use his influence with Mr Mendis's supporters to prevail upon Mr Mendis to leave the church.'[525] Habgood privately sympathised with Hurd about 'this wretched affair' and the 'unsubstantiated allegations of racialism' he was facing. Habgood's concerns regarding sanctuary were then reported in the press: 'I am very dubious about the whole thing'; 'The Church must obey the law. To do otherwise is not a proper Christian attitude in a law-abiding country.'[526] Clearly, this was a far more cautionary stance than the Sanctuary Working Group's declaration that 'if unjust law is no law' it may be 'a requirement of contemporary Christian discipleship to grant sanctuary'.[527] However, it appears Hagbood's sentiments were intended to be private. 'When we last corresponded about this man', Habgood follows up with Hurd, 'when I expressed my sympathy to you for the difficult decision you had to make about [Mendis], and my general agreement', it:

> was meant to be *a friendly letter of concern*, but I am afraid the fact that it was made *public* had laid me open to a great deal more correspondence from Mr Mendis supporters.[528]

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[521] LPL BSR/RACE/T/1/1, 'Enfield Christian Nationalist', flyer. 1.
[522] Ibid., 2.
[523] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Briefing notes from Pamela Gruber, Board of Social Responsibility (BSR), to John Gladwin, secretary of the BSR, 24/03/1987.
[524] Quoted in Michael Morris, 'Priests 'pressed to end sanctuary', *The Guardian* 10/06/1987.
[525] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Special Adviser, Edward Bickham to John Lyttle, 10/08/1987.
[526] 'Sanctuary Under Siege', *Sunday Observer*, 22/01/1989, 13.
[527] LPL BCC/DCA/CRRU/10/2/90 *A Statement on Sanctuary*, 6.
[528] My italics. LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from the Bishop Habgood to Hurd, 18/02/1987, 1.

Revealingly, Habgood then turns the tables on Hurd by attempting to use this channel of informal influence and camaraderie in reverse, encouraging Hurd to opt for 'a *statesmanlike withdrawal* of the deportation order.'[529] He writes that while he initially agreed with the Home Office's stance, 'it has become apparent that there are other factors to be taken into consideration', namely the increasing potential threat to Mendis's life in concordance with his high-profile. 'I realise that his will not be easy … but I wonder if a face-saving formular might be found', he offered. He then suggested that Hurd 'heeded to the very strong representations from the churches' in this instance.[530]

Other outspoken figures such as the Bishop of Manchester, Stanley Booth-Clibborn, did not hold back in the press about the Home Office's failures, as he put it: 'Against all reason and humanity, the Home Office have ignored all pleas to delay deportation.'[531] As Haslam recalled to me, this public show of support was significant: 'We had some sympathy from the senior levels of the church, there were some Bishops, and others like Methodist Presidents who would speak up and support us'.[532] Such statements were important not only for keeping up morale within sanctuary campaigns, but for being taken seriously by the government: 'So the State and the Home Office were also aware that actually you know, they're not on their own. There are sympathisers in the establishment, so we have to be a bit careful.'[533]

There is archival evidence of senior clergy attempting to calculatedly use their informal channels of establishment influence when they felt that Home Office policy was looking 'extreme'.[534] In the lead up to the passing of the Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act 1987, for example, the briefing minutes of a meeting at Lambeth Palace state:

> The Archbishop of Canterbury may/will write a letter to Douglas Hurd expressing his awareness of the "illegal" dealings regarding the proposed immediate deportation of the Tamils … The Bishop of Coventry went to school with Douglas Hurd and has volunteered to go and see him. We are working on this.[535]

On occasion we even find evidence of the Archbishop of Canterbury directly challenging politicians in deportation cases himself. In January 1990, Mr Williams, a Police Sergeant, 'confirmed by the Bishop of Rochester', wrote to Runcie for help because his wife was facing deportation.[536] The Home Office Minister of Immigration dealing with the case, Timothy Renton, had said:

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[529] Ibid.
[530] Ibid.
[531] *The Daily Telegraph*, 21/01/1989, 3.
[532] Haslam, author interview.
[533] Haslam, author interview.
[534] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Briefing minute notes from Pamela Gruber to John Gladwin, 24/03/1987.
[535] Ibid.
[536] Ibid.

> In any event … the couple have only known each other for a little over a year and I am not convinced that Sergeant Williams would face undue hardship if he was to accompany his wife to the Philippines.[537]

After reading over this case Runcie wrote directly to the secretary of state, David Waddington, stating that, the 'fact that [they] have known each other for more than a year really has no relevance to the application'.[538] And, he found it 'hard to see how Tim Renton can assert the Sergeant would not face "undue hardship" if he was to accompany his wife.'[539] He concluded his letter with an admonishing "not angry but disappointed" flourish, and by again using the Home Office's own rhetoric against it:

> I entirely understand the need to maintain a fair and effective immigration control. The deportation of Mrs Williams might well make for an effective control but I find it hard to think of it as being fair. I very much hope that you will examine the circumstances of this case and consider whether the decision could not be reversed.[540]

As we have seen in chapter 1 'fairness' was a frequently mentioned but infrequently explained or consistently applied concept within the Home Office's rhetoric and policies.

The archbishop's words had some affect. His letter was swiftly responded to with an update informing him that the woman in question had been granted the right to remain in the country. Attached to this reply was a hand-written prefacing note from the archbishop's secretary which tellingly reads:

> Whatever the darling Mr Waddington may say, it is plain that Mr Williams is right and the Home Sec. *is being a weasel*: it was your sharply-worded letter of 4 Jan that caused Peter Lloyd, the Junior Minister, to backtrack from Tim Renton's preposterous stance. The solicitors provided no 'new information'.[541]

Whether it was the Archbishop's influence which swayed the Home Office or not, it remains significant that the inner circle of the archbishop evidently believed that his words still held some political currency – even if the Home Secretary was "weasel-ing" out of admitting it.

However, even if Runcie's intervention *did* make the crucial difference here, his private protestations into the low-profile case of a wife of a respectable, church attending, Police Sergeant, can hardly be seen as evidence of him raising his head above the parapet of potential controversy. There were certainly contemporaries who felt that the archbishop could do more. The committee of Christians Against Racism And Fascism (CARAF), for example, wrote to Runcie in 1989 expressing their 'concern that the plight of refugees in this country has not been given a high enough profile

[537] My italics. LPL BSR/ RACE/T/4/4, Letter from Runcie to David Waddington, Secretary of State, 4/01/1990.
[538] Ibid.
[539] Ibid.
[540] Ibid.
[541] My italics. LPL BSR/ RACE/T/4/4, Memorandum from John Lyttle to the Runcie, 16/01/1990.

within the churches'.[542] It is 'vital that church leaders such as yourself … take a more visibly public role on behalf of refugees seeking asylum in this county.'[543] Yet at the same time, others were writing to him to express their outrage that he would even vicariously allow the Anglican Church to support anti-deportation campaigns, through his role as the President of the BCC which was known to give grants to campaigns. Treading a path which pleased both of these sides was always going to be, as Hugh Montefiore put it, 'a thankless task'.[544] Runcie's own contemporary writings attest, this was a task he was also acutely aware of:

> My postbag testifies … that many who write to me already have a clear picture of what they expect from this Archbishop and, usually of where he is going wrong. Very often this is gleaned from the broadcasting media, which has given world coverage to certain dominant images.[545]

Lambeth Palace's reaction to the sanctuary campaign of Mendis, in particular, is revealing of how far or not, the High Church was prepared to venture into the realms of the political, and above all, how this decision was affected by concerns over public perceptions and its wider establishment reputation. Mendis' high-profile story became a symbolic *cause celebre* for both sides of the argument. Of the forty-four letters which survive in Runcie's postbag regarding Mendis: twenty-six wrote against Mendis and his supporters; eighteen wrote against the government's actions.[546] Both sides of the fence express heightened sensibilities. From those who felt 'deeply concerned' that the sanctuary was setting a dangerous precedent of the Church becoming embroiled in divisive politics to those 'greatly disturbed' that the raiding of the sanctuary set a precedent that would 'lead to further arrests in churches, temples and mosques.'[547] The polite stoicism found within letters to the archbishop on other topics was frequently shed in favour of statements such as 'I am *horrified*', or 'want to put on record my *utter abhorrence'*, and 'Yours in *disgust*'.[548]

In some of the more incensed letters it is difficult to pin-down whether the root of the writer's anger stems from Mendis being an atheist, a Marxist, or an immigrant, or perhaps a combination of them all:

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[542] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Rev. Robert Kenway, on behalf of CARAF, to Runcie, 29/05/1989.
[543] Ibid.
[544] Bishop Hugh Montefiore quoted in Carpenter, *Robert Runcie*, 142.
[545] Robert Runcie, 'Religious Broadcasting Today', in *The Canterbury Papers*, 2.
[546] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386.
[547] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter Revd. Michael Futers, Derby, to Runcie 19/01/1989.
[548] My italics. 'horrified' in LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Alan Williams, Member of PCC, St. Chads, Birmingham, to Runcie, 18/01/1989; 'Utter abhorrence' in LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Peter Hayley-Dunne 19/01/1989; 'Yours in disgust' in LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Peter Mewes to Runcie, 20/01/1989.

> My wife and I are exceedingly pleased that that piece of Marxist scum – Viraj Mendis had been booted out of our country.
>
> It is a diabolical disgrace that your sick "church" should support hooligans, gangsters and terrorists. I can assure you that Our Lord will sweep you all away on His Return.[549]

A common theme which incited particular passion from Runcie's correspondents was the belief Mendis was in some way deceitful. That 'slippery con-man Mendis', a 'trickster' who was 'never in danger', a 'Bogus or a Fraud', whose 'supporters have, by their antics been the cause of considerable sums of public money being diverted', are some typical sentiments.[550] Here the influence of the inflammatory contemporary news reporting is discernible. 'Don't fall for this conman', 'Viraj Mendis is no martyr', and 'Public money wasted on Mendis case', are some examples of contemporary headlines about Mendis from the tabloid press.[551]

There were also more covert criticisms against the sanctuary coming from within the Church. In one notable letter to Runcie, the Anglican priest, social activist, and founder of the Samaritans, Reverend Chad Varah CH CBE, outlined his fears associated with supporting sanctuary. Parts of his argument, while perhaps a little shocking from a cleric, were not dissimilar in sentiment from those sceptical of Mendis's credibility:

> This trickster was never in danger unless his own deliberate creation of notoriety should tempt his supposed supporters to bump him off lest they be shown to be gullible. I hope Mendis will suffer the fact of having to work for his living.[552]

However, the way in which he then attempts to qualify his views is more revealing of lingering traces an implicit, yet a deeply rooted, prejudicial mindset. In a line painfully resonant of the infamous disclaimer "I'm not racist; I have black friends", Verah continues: 'As you know any friend of Nadir is sympathetic to refugees especially dark-skinned ones'.[553] 'But,' he adds: 'actively helping some to break the law does a disservice to the cause of those who are here legally' and 'the idea of a chain of "safe-churches" for illegal immigrants can only bring conflict with the Govt. and a divisive cause.' He sympathised that Runcie may have been 'hard pressed by muddle-headed clerics like the Bishop of Manchester', but was 'saddened' that Runcie had told Synod that the Home Secretary's actions were 'too hasty'.[554]

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[549] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Mr and Mrs D L Edwards.
[550] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Dr. Chad Varah, OBE, MA St. Stephen's Church to Runcie, 2/02/1989; LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Robert Baker, of Lovedown Farm, Hockley, Essex, to Runcie, 26/01/1989.
[551] *Daily Star*, 'Don't fall for this conman', 9/02/1989; 'Viraj Mendis is no martyr', *Daily Mail*, 19/01/1989; Nigel Bunyan, 'Public money wasted on Mendis case, say Tories' *The Daily Telegraph*, 19/01/1989, 6.
[552] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Chad Varah, OBE, St. Stephen's Church to Runcie, 2/02/1989.
[553] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Varah, Ibid.; see:https://www.theguardian.com/news/2003/jan/02/guardianobituaries.obituaries[accessed:01/04/2023]
[554] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Varah, Ibid.

Significantly, the Nadir whom Verah was referring to was not a refugee, or just any 'dark-skinned' friend, but rather Nadir Dinshaw, born to the distinguished Dinshaw landowning family of Karachi, who made their initial fortune as contractors to the British Colonial Army.[555] Nadir was a Harrow-educated, rich, philanthropist, businessman, and Christian convert, who sat on the board of Christian Aid, and was described by Runcie as being 'blessed with this most precious charisma of the spirit' and for having 'a particular gift of friendship'.[556] The comparison of the infamously generous and amenable Nadir, to the sometimes unemployed and communist Mendis, whose 'divisive cause' by comparison, threatened to bring 'conflict with the Govt.', thus smacks of what Feldman identifies as a 'strategy of incorporation' traceable within conservative pluralist institutions as they ostensibly adapt to the requirements of multiculturalism. In other words, limited acts of progression used to 'shore up the established disposition of power – English, Anglican and imperial'.[557]

Runcie replied to Varah sympathetically: 'I understand your feelings in this matter and in fact my views are not far away from yours.' He clarified that his criticism of the Home Secretary 'was *limited to* the fact that he felt it necessary to deport Mr Mendis just 53 hours after he was arrested and when there seemed substantial prospect that a third country would be prepared to take him.'[558] This exchange between Runcie and Varah is perhaps unsurprising. Championing the desirability of a "third country solution" was the most middle-ground approach available to Runcie. Mendis's protracted case was not the most clear-cut narrative for lending to ministerial discretion under compassionate circumstances. His complex legal appeals had become befuddling to many onlookers and did not fit the profile of an idealised 'innocent' refugee.[559] John Lyttle, Runcie's public affair secretary, and often his first source of guidance on potentially controversial issues such as this, took a cautious view of the Mendis sanctuary. In a confidential note to Runcie, he wrote:

> I remain … that Mendis was an unworthy twerp and that people campaigning on his behalf and giving him "sanctuary" were misled on the merits of the case. It was, as the lawyers say, matter of fact and degree; the campaigners flew in the face of evidence and in campaigning for a twerp seriously damaged other worthy cases that undoubtedly occur with increasing frequency as Western Europe pulls up the drawbridge.[560]

Unsurprisingly then, Runcie made a public statement of only polite disquiet following the forcible eviction and deportation of Mendis. He stated that he found it 'regrettable' that Mendis was forcibly removed from the church and acknowledged the 'sense of unease in many church circles about the

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[555] For more on Nadir Dinshaw see: John Holloway, 'Obituary', *The Guardian,* 2/01/2003. Online:https://www.theguardian.com/news/2003/jan/02/guardianobituaries.obituaries.[accessed:25/04/2023].
[556] Richard Harries, 'Anthology', *Church Times*, 31/03/1983, 6.
[557] Feldman, 'Why the English', 300.
[558] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Runcie to Chad Verah, 2/02/1989.
[559] Malkki, 'Speechless Emissaries', 377–404.
[560] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Note marked confidential on 'VIRAJ MENDIS' from John Lyttle, 29/01/1989.

Government's immigration policy and practice'.[561] But balanced that 'churches are not above the law', and focused his criticism on the fact that Mendis wasn't allowed a 'little' longer to find a "third country" solution.[562] He concluded, 'I am bound to say that many people of common sense find it hard to accept the need to such speed once he was in custody. With great regret, I have to say that I share that feeling.'[563]

Focusing on the speed and violence of Mendis's forcible eviction was also a logical publicity strategy considering that the one common complaint both sides of the Mendis argument expressed in Runcie's postbag was their unhappiness at the 'violation of the consecrated ground' of the church.[564] Some who wrote felt strongly that 'the church should be upholding the law not publicly encouraging and aiding people to flout it'.[565] Others wrote to 'express my distress at the recent storming of a church by the police'.[566] Some seem more preoccupied with the damage done to the property than why it was done:

> I as a clergyman, cannot go smashing down church doors without a faculty and I do not believe that anyone should be allowed to do so.[567]

In fact, some letter writers explicitly stated that 'without wishing to make any comment on the legal case concerning the Sri Lankan refugee', they just wanted 'to put on record' their 'utter abhorrence of the measures which have just been taken':[568]

> I am not saying anything about the individual case … because I feel discussion of it is clouding the issue which should be absolutely clear, which is *that under no circumstances should a church be stormed by the police.*[569]

Runcie and his advisers thus gauged that the public's main concern was the explicitly public, undignified, and violent nature of Mendis's removal, rather than his removal in principle. Indeed, the hundreds of other similar cases of individuals and families being deported monthly and attracting far less attention were arguably testament to a tacit public acceptance or willing ignorance.

The complex and controversial nature of Mendis's case only partly explains the mixed and reserved responses towards sanctuary from elements of the Anglican Church, however. It was also the general precedent that this high-profile case might set, by dragging the church across lines of law and order which worried Runcie's advisors. From early on, the issue of sanctuary was treated with kid

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[561] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Statement by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, on the Deportation of Viraj Mendis.
[562] Ibid.
[563] Ibid.
[564] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Alan Williams to Runcie, 18/01/1989.
[565] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Peter Mewes to Runcie, 20/01/1989.
[566] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Peter Hayley Dunne to Runcie, 19/01/1989.
[567] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Rev. Michael Thompson, to Runcie, 21/01/1989.
[568] My italics. LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Peter Hayley Dunne to Runice, 19/01/1989.
[569] Ibid.

gloves by Runcie's close administrative protectorate. Eve Keatley, one of Runcie's Press Secretary's, sent him a 'briefing note' to 'alert' him of sanctuary's 'gathering momentum'.[570] She warned:

> I suspect it could grow into one of those significant topics which provoke all the heavies, as well as the tabloids, into pontificating on the church position. *In other words, I smell danger.*[571]

Fellow Press Secretary John Lyttle also warned Runcie 'The issue of sanctuary is a minefield', urging a cautious approach:

> Like many other people, I think the immigration laws are unjust and repressive, and it is perfectly proper for people to campaign against them. But *Sanctuary* – which does not exist in law – is essentially a matter of assisting fugitives from the law.[572]

What is particularly revealing is the level of calculated damage limitation that was being enacted amongst the upper echelons of the Anglican Church bureaucracy around the issue of sanctuary. When campaigns wrote asking for Runcie's support the official line of response was that the Archbishop of Canterbury 'does not sign petitions and suchlike. He makes his own statements.'[573] Or that: 'The Archbishop is closely associated with a number of bodies concerned with refugees, but he does not believe it making public his intervention in particular situations.'[574] Such a hands-off stance ostensibly prevented Runcie from becoming bogged down in too many cases, but also deliberately served to protect his own position from controversy. As sanctuary was increasingly being foisted into the Church's public agenda, multiple memorandums were circulating between Runcie's secretaries with notes such as 'I presume that this is a sensitive matter on which we do not wish to be too closely involved' and cautionary addendums such as: 'in case the ABC [Archbishop of Canterbury] is *dragged into it* by reason of his being president of the BCC.'[575]

Of particular concern to Runcie's bureaucratic protectorate in this respect was the 'Statement on Sanctuary' issued by the Sanctuary Working Group, of the Community and Race Relations Unit (CRRU) of the BCC.[576] Or as Press Secretary Keatley dubbed it, the 'unfortunate document'.[577] As previously discussed, this statement declared that the present immigration laws were unjust and

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[570] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Notes on 'SANCTUARY' from Eve Keatley to Runcie, 13/05/1988.
[571] My italics. LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Notes on 'SANCTUARY' from Eve Keatley to Runcie, 13/05/1988.
[572] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1988/462, Note from John Lyttle to Runcie, on 'CANTERBURY STAFF MEETING', 23/09/1988.
[573] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Memorandum from Andrea Mulkeen to John Lyttle on 'VIRAJ MENDIS', 16/09/1988.
[574] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Reply written by John Lyttle in Runcie's absence, to Rev. Robert Kenway, of CARAF, 22/06/1989.
[575] My italics. LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Memorandum from Andrea Mulkeen to John Lyttle on 'VIRAJ MENDIS', 16/09/1988; and Memorandum from John Lyttle 16/03/1987.
[576] LPL BCC/DCA/CRRU/10/2/90, *A Statement on Sanctuary*, 6.
[577] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Note from Keatley titled 'Archbishop/Sanctuary', 13/05/1988.

therefore condoned their evasion. This was bad enough for Keatley, who pointed out that it 'opens the way for considerable numbers to claim sanctuary on very dubious grounds.'[578] But it was the potential ramifications of the way the document was labelled that was her real concern. Although the document was called 'A statement on Sanctuary' on its front page, on its back page it clarified that it was actually a 'statement by the Community and Race Relations Unit *offered for discussion* by the Division of Community Affairs of the BCC, who will welcome comments.'[579] This gave the impression that it was an official church statement from all denominations, and sanctioned by the Archbishop. Worse still, Haslam, Executive Secretary of the Community Affairs Unit of the BCC, had apparently failed to make this distinction clear enough when speaking to the press, because Keatley subsequently reports having 'spoken with' Haslam, and 'he assures me that he has made this clarification but has been ignored.'[580] Fellow Press Secretary, Lyttle, further bemoaned that:

> Haslam's assurances that the sentiments attributed to him by the *Observer* were not a true reflection of what he said will not carry much clout with anyone who saw or heard any of his *endless babblings on TV and radio.*[581]

This flurry of correspondence provoked by the mistitling of a single document is indicative of just how seriously the Anglican Church took its public positioning on migrant issues – perfectly poised on the fence – with a slight left leaning tilt, as opposed to weighing in on a side of potential justice. The episode also fits with Haslam's recollections to me of how the Anglican authorities viewed sanctuary campaigner's actions in general:

> There was a battle that went on really between, what we could get away with, in terms of our public positions and the cautiousness and conservatism of the establishment saying, 'Ooh no, we don't want to rock the boat, too much, you can a bit but not too much.[582]

This same preoccupation with maintaining the Church's image of steady balance above all else, also took precedence throughout the Church's dealing with the Mendis case. Notably, amongst the Home Office files on Mendis, Runcie's Press Secretary, Lyttle, can be found in repeated correspondence with Home Office staff, making bargains such as: 'If I can be of any help in trying to bring about a relatively quiet result, I shall be very happy to do so, though I remain determined to keep our Archbishop out of it!'[583] Moreover, in the wake of Mendis's eventual deportation, what is most striking is how focused Lambeth palace's reaction was on the potential ramifications it would have at the upcoming synod. In a confidential note to Runcie, Lyttle admits to remaining 'of the view that

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[578] Ibid.
[579] My italics. LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Notes on 'SANCTUARY' from Eve Keatley to Runcie, 13/05/1988.
[580] Ibid.
[581] My italics. LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Memorandum on 'Asylum Seekers, Sanctuary etc and The British Council of Churches' by John Lyttle to Runcie, 24/01/1989.
[582] Haslam, author interview.
[583] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from John Lyttle to Philip C Mawer, Home Office, 19/07/1988.

Mendis was an unworthy twerp' but was nonetheless 'bemused' by the Home Office's final actions.[584] He felt it could only be 'mendacity or incompetence' which explained why the Home Office had not granted Mendis more time.[585] Lyttle exasperatedly concluded: '*Alas, all this is precious little help in dealing with Synod Questions tomorrow!*'[586]

Runcie expressed similar concerns at the time in a letter to the Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd. Runcie reminds Hurd that he had thus far 'made no criticism, publicly or privately' of the way he had 'handled this matter up to the point of deportation', drawing attention to his recent press statement as evidence.[587] However in an uncharacteristically critical tone, Runcie then notes that:

> That statement was issued before I knew the contents of your letter of 20th January. Now that I have seen that the Home Office knew of the West German decision before the plane took off from Gatwick, I am more than a little surprised that steps were not taken to stay the deportation to Sri Lanka.[588]

Then, like Lyttle, Runcie concludes by rather scathingly mentioning the upcoming synod:

> John Habgood told you in his letter of 19th January of the efforts to ensure that the churches behave sensibly in this field. The failure to stay the deportation to Sri Lanka after the West Germans had said they were willing to grant a visa will not make our task any easier either in the General Synod next week or in the Assembly of the British Council of Churches to which John Habgood referred.[589]

In other words, you had been warned.

The significance of these repeated references to the upcoming Synod, and specifically, '*our* task' to '*ensure that the churches behave sensibly*' at Synod, becomes plain when viewed in conjunction with the references Runcie made in his public statement on Mendis's deportation regarding the *'sense of unease in many church circles* about the Government's immigration policy and practice'.[590] Viewed in this context, the nature of this private correspondence between government and Anglican officials is revealed to be more than simple fact sharing, but an attempted collaborative effort, between these two establishment forces, to calm the more radical elements of the General Synod threatening to rock the boat. It thus becomes apparent that Lambeth Palace was not so on the fence as it outwardly presented.[591]

Runcie was consistently criticised for fence-sitting throughout his archiepiscopate from both sides. As Graham James, Runcie's last chaplain, noted: 'His public image was particularly bad on

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[584] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Note marked 'CONFIDENTIAL' on 'VIRAJ MENDIS' from John Lyttle, 29/01/1989.
[585] Ibid.
[586] My italics. Ibid.
[587] LPL RUNCIE/MAIN/1989/386, Letter from Runcie to Douglas Hurd, 23/01/1989.
[588] Ibid.
[589] Ibid.
[590] Ibid.
[591] Ibid.

television, where he came across as weak and unsure.'[592] A trait we have seen for ourselves in the interview discussed at the beginning of this chapter. In James's view this was not so much a sign of weakness as it was evidence of Runcie's 'very high sense of public office of Archbishop' and concern to deliver 'a message that people would recognise as expressing the mind of the church'.[593] But Runcie evidently understood this 'mind of the church' to be essentially still conservative. His response to his biographer on whether he regretted not presiding over the final synod vote in favour of the ordination of women before his retirement – 'the boil we had not lanced' – as Runcie put it, was characteristic: 'I felt it was important to hold on board as many people as we could. And I'm sure that we'd have lost more and better if we had gone for it too precipitately.'[594] It is this attachment to holding 'on board' as many people as opposed to throwing overboard the dead weight, which underscored his identification of the Archbishop's public office. When difficult decisions had to be made, he said he often fell back on the phrase: "A bishop brings his diocese with him."[595] When asked to consider what he thought was needed for the future of the Church he elaborated:

> The Church should be more conservative in its spiritual roots and liturgical expression, but more capable of the risks necessary in translating the doctrines into the new world. *The new must grow out of the old and not replace the old*, that's very important.[596]

As James candidly summed of Runcie:

> He's a traditionalist, not a reformer; he's on the side of established institutions, and he tries to make them work without always seeking to reform them … he used to say that the natural place for the Church of England and the Archbishop was to be in "critical solidarity"…
>
> That's the reason (he said) why the bishops always sit on the Government side of the House of Lords, which ever party it is. [597]

He also thought Runcie 'veered much more towards solidarity than the criticism', and that left-wing initiatives as *Faith in the City* and the setting up of the Church Urban Fund 'weren't natural things for him at all'. They reflected, rather, his habit of 'wanting to take whatever line these people felt the church as a whole ought to be taking, even it was not personally attractive to him.'[598]

The Church's interactions with sanctuary campaigns thus provides an insight into the institutional mindset and workings of the Anglican Church in the long 1980s, which can be reasonably extrapolated to offer further nuance into the wider 'disconnect' found between the raw reality experienced by racial minorities, and the Church's limited response. Geiringer and Owens

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[592] Bishop Graham James, as cited in Carpenter, *Robert Runcie,* 372.
[593] Bishop Graham James, as cited in Carpenter, *Robert Runcie,* 372-375.
[594] Runcie, in Carpenter, *Robert Runcie*, 370.
[595] Carpenter, *Robert Runcie*, 366.
[596] My italics. Runcie, in Carpenter, *Robert Runcie,* 371.
[597] Graham James quoted in Carpenter, *Robert Runcie*, 375.
[598] Ibid.

findings of how the 'parochial domesticity' of radical urban clergy enabled some to better understand the needs of their flocks, led them to suggest that this disconnect 'should not be viewed as a straight-forward consequence of 'moderates' compromising the integrity of the mission, nor of anonymous bureaucrats stifling action', but as a 'reflection of the deeper disconnect between the Anglican hierarchy's framing of race as an intellectual subject and everyday experience in the inner city.'[599] Our observations on the interactions of High Church figures with sanctuary campaigns certainly supports their findings that this disconnect 'should not be viewed as straightforward'.[600] However, it further exposes how this disconnected distance was as much the result of calculated hierarchical design as geographical proximity. It also demonstrates how on at least one issue, the Church's potential radicalism was not only compromised by the 'anonymous bureaucrats stifling action' who understood their role as being to protect the inner Anglican Church from potential rupture and scandal, but was compromised by the "moderacy" of figures such as Runcie, who understood his role as being to sustain an image of Church harmony and thus steer it from possible dissolution.

From our focus on sanctuary, in conjunction with the Anglican Church's other contemporaneous actions at this time, we can observe that the perspective and guiding policies of the upper echelons of the Anglican Church were in a structural sense conservative. They were happy to set up a committee on race issues, but not a full commission. They were willing to allow sanctuaries to form under local initiatives, to make a general statement of toleration towards them, and to publicly accept CRRU's autonomous right to form a radical Working Group on sanctuary. But they were *not* happy to be associated with the more radical statements of that Working Group. They were not willing to fully embroil themselves in the wider political debates on underlying sanctuary. And, above all, they were not prepared to risk disrupting Church harmony at Synod and thereby threatening the Church's wider ties to the establishment – by allowing radical issues to take over. The Church, after all, depends not only on its image as the nation's majority faith to justify its continued status, but also upon the Prime Minister's discretion to make senior episcopal appointments, and upon parliament to pass church laws.

Understanding how the Anglian Church authorities remained concerned with steadying itself in this way – as opposed to battening down the hatches and weathering the storms necessary to rock its conservative underpinnings – perhaps goes some way to explaining why it has taken, and continues to take, the Anglican Church such a long time to re-route to a less white-centric and anti-racist one. But, of course, in no way morally justifies it. As France-Williams, described when reflecting upon the General Synod's actions over the last fifty years:

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[599] Geiringer and Owens, 'Anglicanism, Race, and', 232.
[600] Ibid.

> It is much more about subtraction of support than addition of suffering, but it amounts to the same experience for people of colour. They are on their own.[601]

Chapter conclusion:

Figure 15: Photograph of Lambeth Palace, 2022, authors own.

Emerging from the gates of Lambeth Palace Archives and onto the Albert Embankment to be greeted by hurtling traffic and imposing views of Westminster can be disorientating. You realise that inside the hushed sanctum of ancient walls, secluded gardens, and chiming bells, in which you were just enveloped was something of a mirage. You feel privileged for having been somewhere it feels as if not many others have, and simultaneously struck by how many others must have at least looked upon its gates from the outside. Lambeth Palace has served as the residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury since around 1200, following the assassination of Thomas Becket, when it was thought a relocation nearer Westminster was politically and defensively prudent. Since then, the institutional bulwark has stood fast over plagues, civil wars, world wars; from Cromwell to Thatcherism; from famine to consumerism; from Beowulf to Stormzy. Significant changes have been made. Just last year the Palace Library made use of the COVID-19 closures to transform its damp, creaking, cupboard-like interior into a masterpiece of sleek glass and zen architecture. Yet the texts held within and the overwhelming mission to preserve them remains the same.

[601] France-Williams, *Ghost Ship,* 90.

It struck me that this was also an appropriate analogy for the Anglican Church's overall stance when it came to issues related to race and migration. It may look towards its outside environment, across to a turbulent tidal river of change, or the looming shadow of Westminster, then turn inward to refocus its appointed mission. It may even shed *some* of its outdated ways, dispensing with what no longer fits, to make room for *some* more modern treasures. But, ultimately, its instinctual desire to carry on standing at the heart of nation by clinging on to old heirlooms remains the same. It therefore attempts to straddle the relationship between hierarchical institutionalism and sanctified pluralism for survival.

This precarious stance not only explains the Church's multifaceted position on sanctuary campaigns in the 1980s, but also goes some way to explaining disparities found within the wider existing historiography on the Church's position on race and migration – disparities between progressivism in some areas and inadequate reactionism overall. Longley has argued that one reason the churches looked increasingly left-wing in the 1980s was that the Conservative Party 'had started to move steadily to the Right' after 1979. 'Without changing its outlook, therefore the Church … gradually found itself in increasing opposition to the major direction of government policy.'[602] The begrudging way high-ranking Anglican figures described finding it '*regrettable*' to be brought into increasing conflict with the government over '*wretched affairs'* such as sanctuary campaigns supports Longley's assertion.[603] But this cannot be taken so far as to align with Brown and Ballard's suggestion that the Church slipped into this oppositional role 'almost by accident'.[604]

Certainly, the Church might not have been prepared for Thatcherism, but through the microcosm of sanctuary campaigns it becomes apparent that it did not become embroiled in controversial social issues simply 'by accident'. Rather, it was often by the deliberate design of key radical priests and campaigners, who, motivated by theological inspiration and legitimated by historical and international precedence, were forwarding an inheritance of decolonisation influences, by manipulating the Church's protection, clout, and resources to their agendas. The Church accepted its responsibility to allow, if not wholly support, such actions as a key part of its pluralistic heritage developed for survival. Yet there remained a firm, if shrouded, line in the sand, delineating to what extent Anglican Church authorities such as the Archbishop chose to become involved in 'divisive' political issues such as race and migration. Ultimately, the Church's reaction to sanctuary, thus highlights how it is institutionally structured towards tolerating, while simultaneously limiting, such radicalism. As Haslam, reflected:

> It's always been there, and the establishment has always been embarrassed by it. Partly thinking, you know there's a bit of us that approves of this, but overall we don't want our

[602] Longley, *Worlock Archive*, 17.
[603] Runcie as before; Hagbood as before.
[604] Brown and Ballard*, Church and Economic,* 182.

> reputation to be too trashed, as it were. So that always been their problem and we had that same issue …[605]

The future of the Anglican Church's survival today, perhaps depends upon how it chooses to steer this path between pluralism and inherent conservatism as much as it did throughout the long 1980s.

[605] Haslam, author interview.

CHAPTER 3:

Grassroots faith: Sanctuary as a means of rescripting religiosity

As an honoured passenger in Shafaq Hussain's car while he navigated through the backstreets of Small Heath, Birmingham, with an ease befitting of his former cabdriver experience, I perhaps should have been thinking more about my research risk assessment forms, and whether it was all that wise to get into the car of a – at that point – complete stranger in a city I did not know. Instead, I was too busy noting all the signs of what Jane Garnett and Alana Harris *et al.* have dubbed 'religious rescripting' that surrounded me, and, how this very experience seemed to be a manifestation of said rescripting prevalent throughout sanctuary campaigns.[606]

Hussain pointed out to me the different mosques on every other street corner, some small and discrete in what looked like converted garages, others large and unmissable complete with hypostyle domical roofing. He explained to me how a typical Islamic Brummie family need not attend the mosque closest to their home anymore, instead it is common to travel to a neighbouring one that suits their particular beliefs and affiliations.[607] Down one street I glimpsed a bustling crowd of music, stalls, and high-vised young people, Hussain told me it was common to see this kind of charity community outreach now, *Zakat* is the third pillar of Islam after all. In another layby I spotted a coach of travellers disembarking with sizeable wheelie shopping trolleys. Visitors now travel from all across the country to visit this neighbourhood's vibrant promenades of popular Asian fabric, fashion, and foods shops.[608] It is a far cry from when Hussain first arrived in Small Heath in the early 1970s as a seven year old boy, when there were far fewer choices of mosques in the area and the local park was still a "no-go" area on account of loitering white skin-heads. It was a personal encounter with a gang of whom, that first prompted Hussain's involvement in the Asian Youth Movements of the 1970s, which then evolved into various forms of wider antiracist resistance, and, ultimately informed a lifetime of community work and his current occupation as a youth worker.[609]

Now, Hussain was donating days of his limited time off towards hosting me – an "outsider" to the community, as a feckless, young-ish, Christian-ish, white, researcher – and sharing with me his experiences of acting as an anti-deportation campaigner in the long 1980s and as a key co-ordinator of

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[606] Garnett, J., and Harris, A., (eds.), *Rescripting Religion,* 16- 24.
[607] The number of officially registered mosques in the city has increased steadily since the early 1970s, from only 2 in 1970 to 13 in 1980, 47 in 1990 and 73 in 1998: Office for National Statistics, Register of officially certified places of worship in England and Wales. As cited in Richard Gale, 'Representing the City: Mosques and the Planning Process in Birmingham'*, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31:6(2005), 1163.
[608]'Why we love Alum Rock!' Residents reveal what makes their neighbourhood the best in Birmingham', *Birmingham Mail,* 5/05/2019; Zoe Chamberlain, 'This is one of Birmingham's most popular shopping destinations and you wouldn't even know it', *Birmingham Mail*, 11/08/2018.
[609] Shafaq Hussain, interview with author, Birmingham, 23/09/2022.

a sanctuary campaign in Birmingham Central Mosque in 1989. All because he feels driven by a spirit of hospitality, principles of equality, and a conviction in the importance of stories of community-based resistance being heard and known to future generations. In doing so, Hussain consciously inhibits and exhibits his values – rescripting and encouraging the future rescripting – of religious and political precedents within multicultural and multifaith Britain.

It is this tangible religious rescripting that we shall further explore in this chapter. In chapter 2 we explored how religious convictions were tempered by pragmatic considerations as sanctuary campaigns played out within the upper echelons and bureaucratic hemispheres of the Anglican Church. In this chapter, we turn our focus to how religion and spirituality effected sanctuary campaigns at the grassroot level; how faith could inspire, support, strengthen, and intersect with, individual sanctuary campaigns.

For decades, discussions regarding Britain's contemporary religiosity have been dominated by the secularisation and then subsequent competing desecularisation and post-secular theories.[610] The overwhelming weight of statistics prove that in unprecedented numbers since the 1960s the British people have stopped going to church, have allowed their church membership to lapse, have eschewed marrying in a church and declined to baptise their children.[611] All of which engendered historians such as Callum Brown to declare the 'Death of Christian Britain', the 'demise of the nation's core moral identity' and the destruction of the nation's 'core religious culture' by the year 2000.[612] Yet by 2012 David Goodhew was describing its 'resurrection'.[613] The shouting matches between increasingly emboldened atheists and apparently increasingly endangered believers looks set to continue, perhaps best illustrated by the London bus advertisement wars that saw Richard Dawkins sponsor "supersides" pronouncing: 'THERE PROBABLY IS NO GOD. NOW STOP WORRYING ABOUT IT AND ENJOY LIFE.', only for Christian groups to swiftly sponsor their own advertisements rebuking that: 'THERE DEFINITELY IS A GOD. SO JOIN THE CHRISTIAN PARTY AND ENJOY LIFE.'[614]

Nonetheless, others have been making more nuanced observations, such as the visible disjunction between the loud campaigns on the *outside* of the bus, and the apparently unphased

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[610] As Woodhead puts it: 'Secularization is now so established that it has shaped the entire field: how agendas are set, research questions asked, survey questions framed, data collected and analysed. Even theories of desecularization are framed in its image.': Woodhead and Rebecca Catto, *Religion and Change*, 3; See also, Robert Piggott's 'Book review: David Goodhew and Anthony-Paul Cooper (eds.), The Desecularisation of the City', *Urban History*, 47:2(2020), 364-366.
[611] Wilson, *Religion in Sociological;* Brown, *The Death of*, 190.
[612] Brown, *The Death*, 1-3.
[613] David Goodhew, 'Conclusion: The Death and Resurrection of Christianity in Contemporary Britain', in Goodhew (ed.) *Church Growth in Britain: 1980 to the present* (London, Routledge, 2012), 253.
[614] Sarah Johnson, 'Three Christian groups mount ad campaigns in response to atheists', *Campaign UK*, 5 February 2009. Online:https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/three-christian-groups-mount-ad-campaigns-response-atheists/878794.[accessed:12/04/2023].

migrant worker sat *on* the bus, quietly reading their age-battered bible on their commute.[615] Their relationship to God was a personal, but also intensely communal, one. As Jane Garnett and Alana Harris *et al*., and Linda Woodhead and Rebecca Catto *et al*., alongside others, have highlighted, over the past forty years Britain, and its cities in particular, have seen significant changes in forms of religious practice being adopted, driven largely by in-migration from a range of countries.[616] There has been an obvious growth and 'settlement' of non-Christian communities, a dramatic rise in 'Pentecostalization', megachurches, Black and ethnic minority led churches, multi-faith spaces, and self-described 'spirituality'.[617] Much of the dominating hysteria surrounding secularisation theories in British historiography has thus been exposed as an inherently white narrative, preoccupied by the decline in "traditional" forms of "British" religion – white posteriors on linear church pews. All of which begs the question, are we really now witnessing a revival of religiosity and desecularisation, or are we only now acknowledging previously overlooked faith spaces with a less blinkered gaze than before? [618] A more balanced description of 'deregulation' is provided by Woodhead, who argues that although religion may have seemed to have gone away in the 1960s-1990s, 'the religious field was in fact *transforming* outside of the control of the state and church and in relation to new opportunities, market and media.'[619]

Certainly, my examination of sanctuary campaigns in the long 1980s here does not befit Brown's narrative of Britain's churches becoming 'increasingly irrelevant in the cultural and ethical landscape' since the 1960s.[620] Rather, I explore if the actions of my protagonist's and their focus on the politics of social justice points more readily to continuities with what Brewitt-Taylor has

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[615] The *Guardian's* correspondent, Madeleine Bunting, contrasts the poor immigrant Bible readers on her London bus with the middle-class movement to place anti-Christian advertisements on the same bus fleet: Bunting, 'Religions have the power to bring a passion for social justice to politics', *The Guardian,* 2 January 2009. As cited in David Ley & Justin Tse, 'Homo religiosus? Religion and immigrant subjectivities', in Peter Hopkins, *et al*., *Religion and place: Landscape, politics and piety* (New York, Springer, 2013), 149-165.
[616] Garnett and Harris, *Rescripting Religion*; Woodhead and Catto, *Religion and Change*; David Goodhew and Antony Paul Cooper (eds.), *The Desecularisation of the City: London's Churches 1980 to the Present* (London, Routledge, 2018).
[617] Figures for religious affiliation are notoriously difficult to accurately capture, but overall trends can be gauged via Census surveys: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021 [accessed 12/04/2023]. For the effects of such changes see for example: Daniel Nilsson DeHanas, *London Youth, Religion, and Politics* (Oxford UP, 2016); I am grateful to Piggott for the term 'Pentecostalization', Piggott 'Book review', Ibid., 365; On megachurches see: Mark Cartledge and Andrew Davies, 'Megachurches and Social Engagement in London: Policy Options and Opportunities', University of Birmingham, Arts & Humanities Research Council, 2016. Online:https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/documents/college-artslaw/ptr/theology/news/megachurches-policy-options.pdf [accessed:12/04/2023]; On 'reverse missiology' see Israel Oluwole Olofinjana (ed), in *African Voices: Towards African British Theologies*, (Cumbria, Langham Global Library, 2017). For 'spiritualities' see Mark Chapman, Shuruq Naguib, Linda Woodhead, 'God Change' in Woodhead & Catto, *Religion and Change*, 173-196.
[618] Taylor highlighted this potential 'subtraction' fallacy: Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Press of Harvard UP, 2007), 571-575.
[619] My italics. Woodhead, 'Introduction', in Woodhead and Catto, *Religion and Change*, 1.
[620] Brown, *The Death*, 190.

described as 'Christian radicalism' visible in the Church of England from the 1960s.[621] And, whether the evident passion and determination required of these individuals to act so radically, often – as outlined in chapter 2 – against the boundaries of their institutional limits, further suggests that these 'meta-narratives' of radicalism were perhaps much more driven by grassroot actions than Brewitt-Taylor accredits.[622] In doing so, this chapter does not dispute the extensively evidenced regressive social impact of religions, but it does consider how these regressive impacts might sit alongside and intertwine with potentially progressive effects.[623] Overall, thereby invoking recent attempts to offer a more nuanced historiography, or as David Ley put it, a narrative that:

> is not satisfied with seeing the activism of faith-based organizations and their members as mere agents of a shadow state manipulated by impecunious but surveillance politicians, or playing out roles prescribe by some grand theory.[624]

The fact that British sanctuary campaigns in the long 1980s were inherently grassroot endeavours, makes them an ideal window into how organic activism operated across multiple faiths and places of worship. Building upon Chris Baker's insightful framework outlining the modalities of 'belonging', 'becoming' and 'participating' amongst religious diasporic communities, this chapter thus explores the grassroot activism of sanctuary campaigns through the lens of potential religious rescripting.[625] This is a framework influenced by Durkheimian notions of 'sacred contagion' – that feelings of consolation and dependence on the part of the individual, generates a moral response out of gratitude for the security of the collective, which in turn supports 'a visionary idea' of society.[626] Employing this framework highlights the ways key activists were being moulded by their religious principles and communities, at the same time that they were reshaping aspects of this mould. Drawing on the findings of Willis *et al*. and Garnett and Harris, that churches can provide support 'without walls', we find clear evidence that this kind of religious based activism engendered bonds of 'belonging' in

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[621] Brewitt-Taylor*, Christian Radicalism in*.
[622] 'meta-narratives' termed by David Geiringer, 'Christian radicalism in the Church of England and the invention of the British sixties 1957–1970', *Contemporary British History*, 33:1(2019), 157.
[623] See: Valentina Alexander, ''A mouse in a jungle': the Black Christian woman's experience in the church and society in Britain', in Delia Jarrett-Macauley (ed.), *Reconstructing Womanhood, Reconstructing Feminism* (Taylor & Francis e-library: 2005), 87-111; Deborah Hall, *et al*. 'Why Don't We Practice What We Preach? A Meta-Analytic Review of Religious Racism', *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 14:1(2009), 126-139; Orit Avishai '"Doing Religion" In a Secular World: Women in Conservative Religions and the Question of Agency', *Gender & Society*, 22:4(2008), 409-435.
[624] David Ley, 'Preface', in Justin Beaumont and Christopher Baker (eds.)*, Postsecular Cities: Space, Theory and Practice* (London, Continuum, 2011), 15.
[625] Baker, 'The Contagion of', 99-100.
[626] Durkheim's notion is that sacredness is contagious because it is generated by feelings of consolation and dependence on the part of the individual out of gratitude for the security of the collective. This sense of sacredness alights on whatever comes into its path and generates a moral response that in turn supports 'the idea of society – a visionary idea – that is superimposed over the tangible, external and material forms of communal life': Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* trans. C. Cosman (Oxford UP, 2001), 240, 315. As cited in Baker, 'The Contagion of', 99-100.

terms of emotional support and familial like nurturing.[627] But, we also find that it could empower forms of 'becoming' by aiding people to develop existing or foster new identities through forms of allegiance or embodied practice, often providing those involved with a greater sense of purpose. And, ultimately, this chapter shows how this led into practices of 'participating', by providing those involved with a means of rescripting expectations from their religious and wider communities.

Sanctuary across faiths

First, it must be acknowledged that some places of worship were more affected or publicly supportive of sanctuary campaigns than others. Catholic priest, Phil Sumner, explained to me how he believed that Anglican churches were the primary port of call for sanctuary campaigns, as being the established church, they 'are still very often more of the *community* church' than the Catholic Church:

> When somebody dies in the community it's to the Anglican church that you go – so there's more of a link to the wider community.[628]

This expectation of openness to the wider community was certainly echoed by Bridget Methuen, wife of the late rector of Church of Ascension, John Methuen. As she recalled to me:

> John felt very strongly. That the Church of England, because it's the established church, didn't just look after their own, but anybody who lived in the parish of whatever faith, or creed, or whatever, or none - was his concern ... He was very much: "the parish is the whole people."[629]

It was this perceived openness of the established Church that directly affected the location of the Nicola's sanctuary at St. Mary's too. As Father Dyson, the then reverend of St. Mary's explained to me, the couple had actually been regular members of the local Orthodox church, but had turned to him for help, because the Orthodox church was afraid of the potential repercussions from the Home Office if they were to become involved:

> We knew - we worked locally with people - what they were worried about, they would've done it in their church, but because they were not … they felt some of their priests, their clergy, might have to be sent back because they were here on permits and that sort of thing.[630]

As we shall see, this perception of vulnerability in comparison to the privileged position of the established church, was a factor that also effected the decisions of other faith sites such as mosques to become involved, or not, with sanctuary campaigns.

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[627] Jane Willis, Kavita Datta, Yara Evans, Joanna Herbert, Jon May, Cathy McIlwaine, 'Religion at work: the role of faith-based organizations in the London living wage campaign', *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 2:3(2009), 443–461; Garnett and Harris, 'Church without Walls: Mapping the Sacred in East London' in *Rescripting Religion*, 114-127.
[628] My italics. Sumner, author interview.
[629] Bridget Methuen, author interview, online, 29/06/2022.
[630] Dyson, author interview; *Right to Be*, 60.

The particular ethos emphasised within certain Baptist denominations upon structural democracy also allowed progressively socio-politically minded ministers such as Paul Weller and Steve Latham to suggest hosting sanctuary to their congregations with relative ease. Minister Latham explained to me that he made the initial decision to accept the Ogunwobi's for two weeks, simply by phoning round 'key leaders'. He was then required by Baptist practice and structure to call a church members meeting. Here:

> The members will meet together, pray, and try and discern what God might be calling them to do. Sometimes there is a vote, in a sense theocracy via democracy …'*Vox Populi, Vox Dei'*, that's the Latin. So, we try and operate on that basis, although leaders are important.[631]

By contrast, when the late Father Henry West, a prelate at the Church of Ascension, and himself a German Jewish refugee who had been evacuated just a few days after Kristallnacht, turned to Manchester's Jewish synagogues for support of the Mendis sanctuary, he reported a less receptive environment. As Bridget Methuen recalled to me:

> [West] went up to speak to - I can't remember which synagogue it was - and they were totally anti-it. 'There are too many people here already...'; 'No, no, no, no, no.' He said, 'Hang on! I wouldn't be here if-,' you know… and so he found that quite hard.[632]

Considering multiple synagogues in the US sanctuary movement were already providing material help to Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees, this reaction might have been unexpected to West. But as one Jewish activist explained at the time, 'The Jewish community in the UK is far less politically and socially secure than in the US. It is therefore more timid.'[633] Moreover, the fact that it was also not Jewish people being particularly affected by the changing immigration laws in this period, likely made synagogues not a natural establishment to whom those under threat would turn.

It should be noted though, that many Jews in Britain were active in anti-deportation campaigns, with figures such as immigration lawyer, Steve Cohen, proving central to dozens of campaign's legal and public avenues of appeal via the Manchester Law Centre.[634] According to Cohen, Judaism stresses the concept of help for the stranger (in Hebrew, *gere*) and Jewish religious texts provide many justifications for sanctuary:

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[631] Steve Latham, author interview, online 13/11/2020.
[632] Methuen, author interview.
[633] See for example the statements of Rabbi Yoel Kahn of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav in San Francisco, and Rabbi Burt Jacobson of Kehilla Community Synagogue in Berkely, in *Providing Sanctuary*, the Jewish role (The Union of American Hebrew Congregations) as cited by Steve Cohen, 'Place of safety', *Jewish Socialist,* August, No.14, (1988), 14.
[634] Cohen also advocated for Jewish communities in Britain to 'take a lead from their USA counterparts in support of sanctuary'. See: AIURC SCC GB3228.28/01/297, Letter to Steve Cohen from Leah Sudran, San Francisco Jewish Coalition, 23/081989; and Letter to Steve Cohen from Michael McConnel, Chicago Religious Task Force on Central America, 1988.

> In Exodus: "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress them for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." In Deuteronomy "Love you therefore the stranger." Leviticus: "You shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbour" – a *mitzvah* (good deed) that takes precedence even over the observance of the Sabbath.[635]

Such public statements of support, underlined by the importance of belief, were also voiced, to varying degrees, by spokespeople of the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh faiths. The National Council of Hindu Temples, for instance, went on the record to promote the reestablishment of sanctuary as an increasingly imperative option:

> In former times, both in India and England, a place of God was considered to be beyond the laws of state… *We strongly feel* that religious places should be recognised, as in the past, for *sanctuary.* Steps should be taken jointly by religious leaders *to re-establish this* so that religious centres can give shelter to just cases … *one should be able, as a last resort, to turn to God for shelter.*[636]

Although tempered by the final qualification of sanctuary being 'a last resort', this statement's appeal to universally reinstate the religious values of past times, undoubtedly promoted a potentially radical response to the contemporaneously tightening immigration laws: to put the claims of God above citizenship.

An agreed statement from the presidents of leading London Sikh gurdwaras, again, tempers its support with a caveat against 'criminal actions' – an arguably subjective term in itself, considering overstayers like Mendis were frequently labelled as "illegal" immigrants, despite entering the UK legally, and could still be legally appealing their deportation orders. Nonetheless, this statement drew upon strong principles of religious 'duty' to not only support sanctuary but to potentially implore its growth as a movement:

> Sikhs are *duty bound* to assist in all possible ways those denied the basic human right of freedom of expression and those fleeing persecution, providing they are innocent of criminal actions. It is clear duty of every Sikh home and every Sikh institution to provide such people with food, shelter and sanctuary.[637]

At the same time, several leading Muslims, including the senior Iman of the Regent's Park Mosque in London, also offered a statement support for sanctuary, albeit a more cautious one in line with the Anglican Church's stance outlined in chapter 2:

> All places of worship – Mosques, Churches, Synagogues etc. – all Houses of God, are sanctuaries. The sanctuary of God must *never, under any circumstances* be explored or

[635] Cohen, 'Place of Safety', 14.
[636] My italics. *Why Sanctuary?*, 30-31.
[637] My italics. Statement agreed by Indarjit Singh, Editor, *Sikh Messenge*r and G. S. Sanhi, President, Central Gurdwara, London, W11. As cited in *Why Sanctuary?*, 31-32.

> abused for individual or selfish ends. But where there has been no evasion of the law, where there is a *clear* case of injustice – either the law on immigration has been misconstrued or mis-applied – *then, as a last and final step, sanctuary may be sought.* And in such cases of *clear* innocence it would be justified to offer temporary refuge in a place of worship so that efforts to secure justice might be continued.[638]

Their support was evidently limited by the three-fold pre-requisites of: only where there was a 'clear case of injustice'; 'as a last and final step'; and as a 'temporary refuge'. As we shall see later in this chapter, this cautionary tone was undoubtedly influenced by the added layers of prejudice that faced institutions of faiths outside of Christianity whenever raising their heads above the parapet of public opinion. It should be noted that in 1979, the same Regent's Park Mosque were nonetheless among the pioneers of the sanctuary movement when they quietly gave sanctuary to two Moroccan refugees.[639]

Sanctuary campaigns were physically hosted across a spectrum of faiths and religious institutes: the sanctuary fast for Vinod Chauhan was held at the Welbeck Street Baptist Church in 1984; Katerina and Vasilis Nicola's sanctuary was held at the Anglican Church of St Mary's, Eversholt Street, London in 1985; Pina Manuel and her son Arman's sanctuary was held at the St Aloysius Roman Catholic Church, London, in 1985; Rajwinder Singh's was hosted at the Sikh Guru Nanak temple, Bradford in 1987; Renouka Lakhani's at the Hindu Shree Santan Mandir Temple, Leicester, in 1987; and the Amir Kabul Khan sanctuary campaign was held at the Birmingham Central Mosque in 1989. We will now turn our focus to how such campaigns played out across different faiths at a grassroots level through Baker's modalities of belonging, becoming, and participating – thereby enhancing our understanding of how such campaigns were propelling and reflecting overlooked sites of religious rescripting in Britain during the late twentieth-century in doing so.

Belonging: 'So we became that family for them.'

Many religious worshippers across all faiths report associating their practices with a sense of belonging, with many using the language of family to describe their relationship with their church or institution. Through their study of faith organisations engaged with political campaigns for low-paid migrant workers in modern London, Jane Willis *et al.* have illustrated how the religious networks of individuals involved aided each other with everything from housing, employment, to health and loneliness – like a family might.[640] In Robert Putnam's terms, these respondents were rich in 'bonding

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[638] Ibid*.,* 30.
[639] *Why Sanctuary?,*10: See also Paul Weller, *The Multi-Faith Dimensions of Sanctuary in the United Kingdom* (Canterbury: University of Kent, 1989).
[640] Jane Willis*, et al*. 'Religion at work', 455.

social capital.'[641] Garnett and Harris's oral history study 'Mapping the Sacred' in East London parishes characterized by a wide range of transnationally dispersed families, also highlighted how their interviewees relationship between family and church was commonly captured in different spatial and spiritual registers. Tina, for example, a Catholic living in East London and separated from her family still in Ghana, described the church as her second family. She had an 'adoptive mother' in the church community, who took her to prayer-groups in different houses in the neighbourhood and found comfort in viewing the Virgin Mary as 'the mother that you don't have' but 'is there in spirit'.[642] This was a message she then passed on to the children she taught in church. For Tina, this encapsulated the ways in which a church makes connections, draws in people of different backgrounds, and passes the hospitality on to others.[643]

These familial sentiments are echoed within descriptions of places of worship involved in sanctuary campaigns. At the Hindu Shree Ghanapathy Temple, which offered sanctuary and aided the shelter of hundreds of refugees in the 1980s, a strong emphasis on social bonds was present (see **figure 16**). Geetha Maheshwaran, who's late father, Sinnathurai Ratnasingham, founded the temple and opened its doors to the refugees in need, described how a familial culture was a conscious and integral aspect to their religious space:

> In India and Sri Lanka, the temples are purely for worship and the ritualistic aspect of devotion. Here, we have tried to develop the temples into a part of our lives in the Western world. Many devotees fled the war in Sri Lanka, some came here on their own without any family, so we became that family for them.[644]

[641] Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2007).
[642] 'Tina (b. Ghana, 1950s), Interview 30/03/2009', as cited in Garnett and Harris, 'Church without Walls', 120.
[643] Ibid.
[644] Maheshwaran, interview with *Hinduism Today* 'Saivites of London Interviews', 1/10/2015. Online:https://www.hinduismtoday.com/magazine/october-november-december-2015/2015-10-saivites-of-london-interviews/.[accessed:12/04/2023].

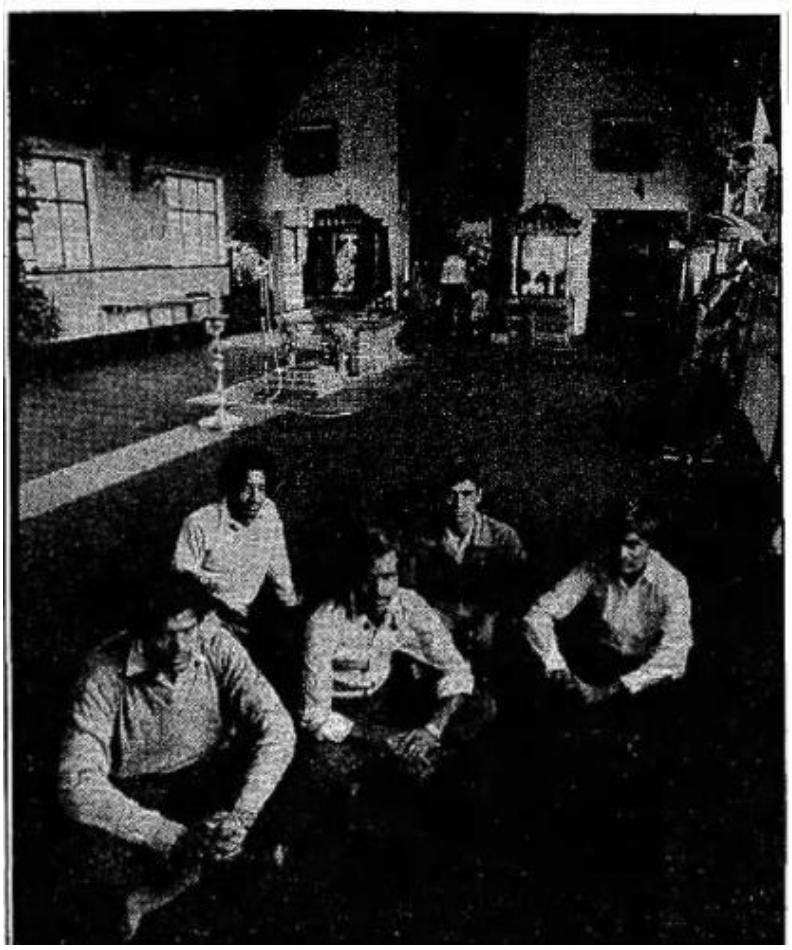

Figure 16: 'In search of safety: Karunakaran, Surendra, Ahila and Ranjan.', John Reardon, photography. Image cutting, from *The Observer*, 14/07/1985, 5.

Maheshwaran explained that the temple's very origins were rooted within community bonds and needs, growing from her parent's front room into Europe's first consecrated temple, after her father re-mortgaged their house to help secure the purchase of a separate property:

> We held Sivaratri [a Hindu festival for the God Shiva] each year at our house for about twenty years, because we had one of the bigger houses. One of my earliest memories is enjoying Sivaratri with ladies downstairs doing prayers, men on the second floor and the kids playing upstairs. We loved that we could stay up all night. *We didn't know much about the actual festival, but it was the beginning of the community coming together*.[645]

Even the physical process of building the temple became an act of bonding and belonging (see **figure 17**), partly due to her father's insistence that he 'really wanted to make sure the next generation was involved':

> And within a year we built this temple. Of course, there were official contractors who got all of the walls done. But we came every day... My father did that with every single thing that we

[645] Maheshwaran interview with *Hinduism Today* 'Saivites of London'.

did. With every building that we did, every new building part, he got the kids involved in it. So they really felt that this was *their* temple.[646]

Figure 17: Shree Ghanapathy Temple in construction, image from their website. Online: https://ghanapathy.co.uk/history/.[accessed: 22/04/2023].

Maheshwaran took over as the temple co-ordinator after her father's passing, and the temple's community outreach continues to expand, with projects such as feeding the homeless, meals on wheels, and educational classes for all ages remaining at the heart of its mission.[647] Yet many of the devotees who first started coming to the temple after fleeing the war in Sri Lanka and moving to Britain have also not only continued coming for the past thirty years, but now also bring their children. According to Maheshwaran: 'That's the best example, the most classic example, of the community we have built.' [648]

Garnett and Harris also noted how regular worship offered members opportunities to stay behind, talking or 'just waiting' in case someone wants to talk; 'just as a family meal should be a focus for such open-ended interaction: the extraordinary and the everyday as an interleaving of sacrifice and healing.'[649] Many such open-ended opportunities for 'belonging' can be identified at the places of worship involved in sanctuary campaigns too. Contemporaneously to hosting the Mendis

[646] My italics. Maheshwaran, quoted in 'Voices—London Movers and Shakers', *Hinduism Today*, December, 2015, 65. Online:https://www.hinduismtoday.com/wp-content/uploads/pdfs-and-ebooks/Hinduism-Today_Oct-Nov-Dec_2015.pdf.[accessed 13/04/2023].
[647] For more information see: https://ghanapathy.co.uk/community/.[accessed 03/12/ 2022]
[648] Maheshwaran interview, with *Hinduism Today*: 'Saivites of London Interviews'.
[649] Jane Garnett and Alana Harris, 'Wounding and Healing: dealing with difference in Christian narratives of migrant women in East London since the 1980s', *Women's History Review*, 22:5(2013), 745.

sanctuary, for example, the Church of Ascension offered potential support and community through worship, and various statutory and informal groups: the P.C.C (Parochial Church Council); the servers group; a monthly Mothers' Union meeting; weekly Friday Club and Sunday Club hosting children in the church Hall; while a prayer and bible study group named after its leader, 'Edith's house-group', met fortnightly in the convenor's home.[650] Each Sunday morning service was also followed by coffee in the hall attended by approximately fifteen to twenty people, and a small mixed sex group of four to ten then met after coffee informally in a nearby public house, self-described as 'the pub group'.[651]Attendees described:

> Gordon: Sometimes the pub is used to discuss Church business, um, but usually not. That's been my perception anyway. It's not 'Let's go down to the pub and sort the Church out.' It sometimes just happens…
>
> Frances: There's a lot of conversation goes on there really in a nice informal sort of way.
>
> Audrey: That's right and very often things get discussed at the pub and then get brought up at the P.C.C after.[652]

Belonging to the Ascension did not equate to bonds free of all outside world differences or internal church politics. Members also recounted sensitivities over details such as who sat on which pews, who said what at the P.C.C, or who was elected to be the next sub-deacon, quibbles which perhaps reflected deeper underlying tensions within their competing visions of how the multicultural church should be run:

> Possibly the Ascension has kidded itself a little bit that people get on with each other and there isn't any tension there. I think there is, and they've come up a couple of times. They're not lasting, but they are there nevertheless…[653]

Yet evidently members shared a belief system and a subscription to the church's greater values and concern for social justice issues which overpowered such temporary tensions, because all of those interviewed remained regular attendees. Above all, the Ascension's identification with social justice issues, and reputation for having 'always been involved, sometimes at the forefront of community affairs', was discernible as an attractive bonding factor for the congregation members.[654] 'Naomi', said in response to the question, 'What do you particularly value about the Ascension, what do you think it stands for?':

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[650] Methuen, author interview.
[651] Frances Ward, Writing the body of Christ: a study of an Anglican congregation, unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Manchester, 2000., 45.
[652] 'Audrey',as interviewed 25/10/1995 and quoted in Ward, *Writing the Body*, 45.
[653] 'Stephen',[aged 31-40],as interviewed 22/11/1995 and quoted in Ward, *Writing the Body*, 51.
[654]'Jonathan',[from Ghana aged 41-50],as interviewed 12/12/1996 and quoted in Ward, *Writing the Body*, 49.

> I think it's the involvement in so many things you know, they try to help people in trouble, you know like the campaign for the 'Alice O' family, and a few years back now when the Ascension became famous for giving sanctuary to Viraj Mendis, you know.[655]

It was this involvement in community affairs and issues of social justice that attracted some members in the first place. 'Greg', a gay congregation member, first came because he knew of the Church's stand on liberation issues:

> The Church had a reputation for offering sanctuary to an atheistic Marxist from Sri Lanka, and because of my personal details [...] I felt I needed to go somewhere where they accepted me. I didn't know for certain that I would be accepted, not by the congregation, but I did know [Father Methuen] very well and I knew that as far as he was concerned I'd be welcomed.[656]

Judith Watkins was actually a member of a neighbouring church when Mendis's sanctuary began but was quickly drawn to the sanctuary:

> I first became involved in the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign last Christmas morning when our erstwhile minister said that he was very much against Father John in the Church down the road giving sanctuary to Viraj Mendis because Viraj Mendis, in his view, was here illegally – against the law, and also he was a communist. It seemed to me that it was blasphemy to say that from the pulpit of the Christian Church, and I walked out.[657]

Watkins became a regular member at the Ascension, serving as a dedicated deaconess for several years.

Viewed in this context, the repeated contemporary descriptions of the different organisations of faith involved in social actions like sanctuary "being like a family" might be read to convey further meaning. The family – can evoke varying connotations: 'blood is thicker than water', but 'you cannot choose your family'. As well as mutual aid and protection, the family can also represent conflict and grievances, both aspects are expected, but mediated by notions of compromise, love, and forgiveness. The consistent physical proximity, sometimes obligated attendance, shared intimacy, and deeply invested interests, inherent within families and places of worship alike – may naturally lend themselves to heightened emotions. Such factors were conceivably only heightened when members were compelled to work together in situations of potential stress over prolonged periods, such as during sanctuary campaigns. Yet the overall harmony and greater good of the family – be that biological or spiritual – are prioritised to prevail.

Certainly, this process of coming together and overcoming differences towards a sense of belonging, inspired by, if not required by, religious beliefs are acutely captured in the campaign video from the sanctuary of the Nicholas at St Marys. Parishioners tell the camera how they feel about the

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[655] 'Naomi' [from Sierra Leone aged 31-40],as interviewed 18/01/1996 and quoted in Ward, *Writing the Body,* 49.

[656]'Greg',[aged 41-50],as interviewed 29/11/1996 and quoted Ward, *Writing the Body*, 49.

[657] Judith Watkins, 'Opening Remarks' in *Sanctuary- Manchester Perspectives*, (V.M.D.C Religious Support Group, June 1988), 16.

campaign that has taken over their church for the past three months. Some express their support in biblical verse:

> Parishioner 1. [a white middle aged woman]: As a Christian we should be helping other people [shrugs], erm ,'love your brother' after all, you can't, if you turn your back on them *can you*?[658]

Others conveyed a sense of allegiance on a purely humane level:

> Parishioner 2. [another middle-aged white woman]: Now we've met Vasil and Katerina, I mean they *really are* innocent! And they just seem to have done everything that other people have done – other Cypriots have done, and they were able to get away with, they just seem to pick on these two![659]

Reading between the lines of these parishioner's sentiments, some initial doubts over the sanctuary may be perceived. Was the first parishioner's rhetorical question that a Christian cannot turn their back on the Nicola's – '*can you*?' – an attempt to convince the campaign cameras or herself? Likewise, the latter's qualification that '*now* we've met' the Nicola's and feel sure '*they really are* innocent*',* and doing only what others 'were able to *get away with',* cogently betrays a sense of surprise that the Nicolas were not, in fact, 'a scheming pair'.[660] Yet the congregation's overriding support for the Nicola's sanctuary, was also evident from those interviewed, and supported by the fact that the Nicola's sanctuary lasted five months. During which time many offered food or prayers in support, or attempted to keep the couples morale up by sitting, chatting and playing games with them. As Father Dyson recalled to me: 'Our congregation and the Greek Cypriot community they were very supportive… we were doing all that we could'.[661]

This support was visibly encapsulated in the testimony of Laud Dieah, in the campaign's video (see **figure 18**). Here, Dieah, the elderly churchwarden of St. Mary's, cuts a fine figure for the campaign cameras, poised in his Sunday best before the altar and clutching a bone china teapot. He said his piece with dignified defiance. His nerves only slightly betrayed by the gradually audible rattle of his teapot, synchronised to the crescendo of his speech's sentiment:

> Katerina and Vasilis have taken sanctuary in this church. The church which *I* am the warden. I do not think that the police will walk in here wilfully and take them away. If they do that, they will have to take *me* with them![662]

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[658] My italics. Quoted in'Sanctuary Challenge',[13.41].
[659] 'Sanctuary Challenge',[13:54].
[660] Ibid.
[661] Dyson, author interview.
[662] My italics. Laud Dieah, in'Sanctuary Challenge',[13:30].

Figure 18: Still of Mr Laud Dineah taken from 'Sanctuary: A challenge', Theatro Technis Film.

Despite Dieah only knowing the Nicolas for a matter of weeks, he had clearly pledged allegiance with the couple's plight. His reference to the fact that this was happening at the church where *he* was warden, is indicative of a sense of spiritual kinship and belonging he now felt towards the couple, and a shared faith-based duty he now felt to protect them. His belief that the church would not be raided was never fully tested – the couple left of their own accord after Katerina fell ill. Yet his impassioned declaration that if it was to be raided 'they would have to take me with them!' stands as a testimony to the potential power of religious belonging when harnessed in campaigns for social action. Indeed, within Dieah's statement, we also see how a sense of religious belonging can transcend into a process of becoming. Within a matter of weeks, Dieah was transformed from your ostensibly "traditional" Sunday-best-wearing, elderly, Church Warden, to a radical anti-deportation campaigner, willing to publicise his views on camera, and to apparently even be arrested for the cause. It is this process, of becoming, which we will now explore further.

Becoming: 'This is the most biblical thing we've ever done.'

The study of Willis *et al.* into the role of faith-based organizations in more recent migrant work-placed campaigns further highlighted how many migrants found the collectivity of faith organisations inherently strengthening, both practically and emotionally, and therefore catalysing activism.[663] They

[663] Willis, *et al*. 'Religion at work', 443–461.

found that what looked like a straight-forward secular mission to win improved pay, conditions and respect at work, was often driven by the faith of workplace leader's and their corresponding organizations, providing: 'reserves of religiously generated social capital' for immigrant workers and their allies.[664] As one interviewee put it: 'Once you come to church, it's like everybody is your family. They're happy and *then* you can go to people and *do all sorts of things*.'[665] Baker identifies such a process as modalities of becoming: gaining confidence, finding increased meaning, sharpening priorities.[666] As we shall see in chapter 5, such processes are intimately connected to spaces of belonging, for regular "open" spaces can provide a safe and encouraging space in which to integrate or develop a 'new or existing identity forged out of different and sometimes competing identities'.[667] However, this concept of becoming also lies at the heart of most religious and spiritual beliefs; the idea that one's life is transformed or converted for the better and aligned towards more compassionate, altruistic and often self-sacrificing or renouncing aims. For many of those who became involved in a sanctuary campaign via their place of worship this process of 'becoming' was thus potentially dually enacted.

Sanctuary offered believers a ready opportunity to experience a faith-based becoming by enabling them to manifest their theological beliefs into action. The sanctuary fast for Chauhan at the Welbeck Street Baptist Church only went ahead after a vote of 'consensus' was established from its members.[668] In their campaign literature Welbeck Street members described how their faith system had inspired this decision, which they described as an act of 'obedience' to the will of God: 'Christians trying to be true to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as they understood it'. Mrs Gwen Bardsley, one of the deacons enthused that it was 'the most Biblical thing we've ever done.'[669]

Key members involved in sanctuaries in other faiths also expressed sentiments of finding such acts as being a faith affirming action. Mr Ratnasingham, the late founder of the Shree Ghanapathy Temple, hosted dozens of Tamil refugees at a time in the Temple throughout 1985. Ratnasingham personally made repeated trips to Heathrow to collect stranded and vulnerable Tamils who faced being remanded in detention centres, having fled to Britain following political disturbances and terrorist attacks. Maheshwaran, recalled going along with her father to collect those stranded. As she described it, the need to help others like this, is at the core of their religious values and actions:

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[664] Of the 21 workplace leaders interviewed, only 3 European-born workers were not active Christians or Muslims. The other 18—the vast majority of them from African countries—all practised their faith and many cited this as a key motivation to act: Willis, *et al*., 'Religion at work',456.
[665] My italics. 'Christina, a Nigerian care worker' describing attending her Pentecostal church, in Willis *et al*., 'Religion at work', 454, 444.
[666] Baker, 'The Contagion of ', 96.
[667] Baker, 'The Contagion of ', 91.
[668] *Right to Be,* 59.
[669] TLSA DD287/3, Vinod Chauhan, 'Report on the Vinod Chauhan Sanctuary Fast', 4-7/11/1983.

> Being Hindu is an essential part of my life just like breathing. We believe in the law of Karma. We follow the teachings of Satya Sai Baba and he teaches us that our thoughts, words, and deeds are an expression of our Hindu nature ... Selfless service to humanity is a major part of Sai Baba's teachings.[670]

According to Maheswaran, the temple's sanctuary campaigns, not only offered her and her father a spiritually rewarding opportunity to put their faith into action, it also offered the potential for a spiritually contagious becoming effect as more and more people involved in the sanctuary via the temple, also had the chance to find their 'true self', even if only temporarily:

> In the temple, you draw the people in through music and through actual action. But along that way you can, in Hinduism we say that there are many different paths to God, one is Karma Yoga, where you … will realise your true self through helping humanity, through selfless service.[671]

Maheswaran also reflected on how choosing to enact such a pioneering path at the temple, meant facing many obstacles, sometimes requiring them to find 'courage' to 'stand up' to others. But she expressed that the higher power and bonding agent of Swami 'always guides us':

> I know that if we follow his teachings, if I follow his teachings, he will tell me inside, you listen to that voice inside, and you know. Whatever anyone else will say, if something is right, it is the right thing. If something is wrong, we have to have the courage to stand up and say it's wrong … if you know that something is wrong, you have to say it, and that courage is there but he [Swami] is the one who gives that.[672]

Here then we can perceive how sanctuary campaigning could trigger a religious becoming effect in terms of an engendered sense of courage required and acquired through faith.

Again, this is a sentiment echoed by sanctuary campaigners across multiple faiths. Talking to the cameras during the sanctuary for the Nicolas at St Mary's, campaign leader, Eugeniou, for example, spoke of a faith-based sense of courage guiding their actions:

> I mean I'm sure Jesus Christ would've done the same thing; this is a just cause and we must have courage of the justice of our cause and the will to fight it.[673]

Viewed cynically, Eugeniou's messianic choice of reference here, could just be interpreted as a campaigning tactic employed to invoke the Christian conscience. However, Eugeniou did also attend services at St. Mary's, and we cannot rule out that some sanctuary campaigners were driven by a dually religious and poltical sentiments.

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[670] Maheshwaran interview with *Hinduism Today* 'Saivites of London'.
[671] Maheshwaran, interview with 'Souljourns',[6:40].
[672] Maheswaran, interview with 'Souljourns',[15:30].
[673] Eugeniou, 'Sanctuary Challenge',[22].

Sanctuary certainly gave cause for some involved to become more theologically as well as politically enlightened. Campaign chairman to the 1994-1997 Ogunwobi sanctuary, Ian Rathbone, was not a Baptist member of the church where the Ogunwobi's sanctuary occurred, but nonetheless described becoming 'sharpened up' on his theological knowledge as a result of the Ogunwobi sanctuary: 'I had to go away and think and learn myself.' Indeed, nearly two decades later he was still able to recite relevant passages pertaining to sanctuary, to me at length:

> I mean in the Old Testament, when all the rules are being laid down [Deuteronomy], it was that you leave a strip, on you your field, of wheat or whatever it is, that you leave an area of your orchard which is just for strangers to come and take: welcome the stranger![674]

His perception of what he learnt after "going away and thinking", reinforced to him that sanctuary was a godly cause:

> When you stand back and look at the bible overall, the message is, 'Are you actually following Gods' lines?' You know, 'Are you being loving to your neighbour?', because that's what the Ten Commandments say. You know, 'love God, worship God, love your neighbour as yourself.'[675]

Rathbone came to see the 'stranger' and the 'neighbour' as emblematic of migrants and those under protection of sanctuary. He had already been involved in local politics and activism, but the sanctuary campaign offered him a religious becoming by equipping with a theological grounding that only strengthened his convictions.

> Understanding Revelation verse ten says that in heaven *all* tribes, *all* nations, *all* races, *all* tongues stand before the throne of God and worship him.' It was 'very clear', he explained to me, that: 'However you look at it, what it means is you've got to measure your authority by the rule of God and in the case of the John Major government they didn't measure up.[676]

Evidence of the contagious effects of a spiritual becoming on those involved in sanctuary campaigns also became particularly pronounced at the Mendis sanctuary, as it grew in vocality and popularity. On the two hundredth day of hosting Mendis's sanctuary at the Ascension, Father Methuen declared to the press that 'The Church's resolve is as strong as it ever was.' In fact:

> Support for the sanctuary has *grown*. I have been very heartened by the groundswell of encouragement, good wishes, donations and prayers that continues to flow in from individual Christians and whole churches up and down the country.[677]

The Ascension's church deacon, Judith Watkins, concurred:

> During the last months we have heard so many echoes of Gospel and so many signs of Kingdom here. We have seen people finding purpose and meaning where they had none; we have seen people flinging away discarded depressions and anxieties; we have seen people

[674] Rathbone, author interview.
[675] Ibid.
[676] My italics. Ibid.
[677] My italics. *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* RCG Issue 70, August 1987, 7.

> coming into faith; and we have seen commitment like we've never seen it before; we've seen new and exciting truths dawning on both lay people and clergy; we've seen barriers broken down.[678]

Methuen and Watkin's words of course might contain some religious hyperbole, but it does not disqualify their core claim that people found meaning via the campaign, and, for some, this came in religious or spiritual forms. We can directly observe this process of becoming in action on an individual level through the example of Watkins. After leaving her neighbouring church because of its leader's anti-Mendis stance, Watkins not only became a deaconess at the Ascension, but also joined the VMDC's 'Religious Support Group'. This group met every Monday to discuss and organise support, and in 1987 helped to organise the further meeting of over one-hundred-and-eighty 'mainly religious people representing most denominations and many faiths' at the Church of Ascension. This was the first national conference on the issue of sanctuary. They even published two editions of a subsequent pamphlet of the conference highlights.[679] Watkins wrote in the foreword, of how she believed it was religiously imperative to embrace the sanctuary:

> The knockers of religious buildings are beginning to rattle, and the cries for help and pleas for sanctuary from threatened families and individuals are already sounding and will become louder and more urgent. If religious people turn a deaf ear, then of what use and how authentic is their religion?[680]

Through Watkins we thus find an exemplar of sanctuary not only providing those involved with a means to foster a personal sense of belonging and spiritually heightened becoming, but also further equipping them with an urgent religious and proselytising purpose. In Watkins case, evidently prompting her to encourage others to solidify their religious convictions by supporting sanctuary too.

At times, in the eyes of others involved in sanctuary campaigns, these effervescent religious convictions were even seen to be bubbling over into strategic hindrances. 'I was told not to write so many religious letters to the Home Office [laughs] - so I got carried away!' Steve Latham, the minister at Hackney Down Baptist Church where the Ogunwobi family sanctuary was held, told me.[681] But more often the religious principles and practices invoked were integral to sanctuary campaign's tactics as well as ideology. The Ogunwobis' campaign chairman, Rathbone, described another one of Latham's 'adventurous ideas' in case 'the authorities should ever try and break into the church':

> We all agreed we would be having a prayer meeting and they would have to break up our prayer meeting to take the family. It never happened but we had a lot of prayer meetings, including surrounding a car which contained immigration officers, parked in the road outside

[678] Judith Watkins, 'Foreword' in *Sanctuary – Manchester Perspectives*, 4.
[679] Ibid., 3.
[680] Ibid., 3.
[681] Latham, author interview.

> the church, early on in the campaign with a very loud prayer meeting - they were just sitting in the car doing we don't know what. We never saw any immigration officers again![682]

Invoking group prayer in these instances thus facilitated a potentially dual religious and political becoming for those involved, lending the everyday ritual of prayer added meaning and collective value. The use of hand holding, and group prayer also nods to the increasing neuroscientific research surrounding embodied rituals as significant yet undervalued points of connection – highlighting how change sometimes begins 'not on the mental level, but on the cellular level: with movement, action, physical touch, and embodiment.'[683]

Varied embodied practices of religiously symbolic actions were certainly a predominant feature across sanctuary campaigns. Following the initial sanctuary fast for Chauhan during which congregations members also undertook the fast with Weller and Chauhan, a 'deportation shrine' was inaugurated in Manchester Cathedral during the season of Lent, a traditional time for self-examination and repentance, as 'an affirmation that human rights belong at the heart of Christian spirituality'.[684] The shrine highlighted different anti-deportation campaigns in the area with candles in front of pictures and stories from those affected, those who prayed before it were also asked to sign a 'Book of Solidarity', to be presented to the Home Office as part of a future delegation 'to express Church concern on these matters'.[685] In London, during the campaign for the Nicolas, processions following an effigy of the virgin Mary took to the streets, an overnight candlelit vigil was held outside the Home Office, and a delegation of Cypriot women dressed in tradtional black presented a symbolic cross of flowers and letter to 10 Downing Street, on the Greek Good Friday. A similar repertoire of religiously coded rituals was enacted throughout the Mendis campaign: forty-eight-hour then thirty-day-and-night candlelit vigils outside the Ascension; plastering paper doves to the windows of the Home Office building; and trailing Manchester's Easter remembrance procession with a large wooden cross, poignantly symbolising, in the groups words, an 'instrument of torture and death', and 'placards that silently asked "Viraj – Life or Death?" (see **figure 19**).

According to Watkins partaking in such acts, 'strengthened our belief as well as hurt us a lot' and 'when Easter day dawned we were on the overnight rota at Ascension having our hope rekindled and our joy revamped'.[686] Clearly, the embodied practices of religion were intimately tied to a political becoming for many involved in these campaigns, giving prayer and procession heightened meanings of humanitarian solidarity when rethought in the context of protest.

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[682] Ian Rathbone, cited in 'Obituary: The Revd Dr Steve Latham: 1957-2022', Online:https://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/634481/The_Revd_Dr.aspx.[accessed:03/01/2023].
[683] Mary L. Vega, 'Living ritual: How the Lord's Prayer shapes liturgy and lives', *Review & Expositor,* 118:4(2021), 513–518.
[684] TLSA DD289, Press release: 'VINODS COURAGE', 11/3/1984.
[685] AIURC SCC GB3228.02/01/65, Paul Weller, 'Prayer and Protest', 11.
[686] *Sanctuary – Manchester perspectives*, 4.

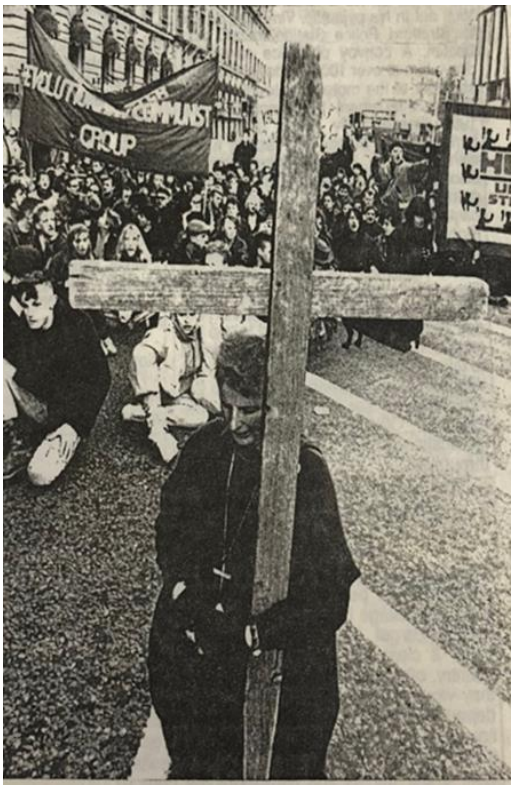

Figure 19: Deaconess of the Ascension, Judith Watkins from AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/46 Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign Bulletin, 24/01/1989, 1.

It was not just campaigners and religious supporters of sanctuaries who evidence a religious 'becoming' during these campaigns, for many of those *seeking* sanctuary, religiosity underpinned their actions also. Further building upon the insights of Jane Willis *et al*. analysis of the role of faith-based organizations which highlighted the important institutional 'reserves of religiously generated social capital' for immigrant workers and their allies during their workplace campaigns, we find that belief-systems likewise offered a unique kind of concentrated 'psychological ballast' for sanctuary seekers.[687]

Sunday and Bumni Ogunwobi and their two young children spent three-and-a-quarter years in sanctuary at the Hackney Downs Baptist Church. During this time, the family's living area was confined to cramped, cold, and damp vestry rooms upstairs, and funding their maintenance was a continual worry**.** Yet their unwavering religious faith supplied them with a powerful resource of hope. Latham, the Minister of Hackney Downs at the time, explained to me how:

> Bunmi used to have dreams, spiritual dreams, fight demons in her dream, and have prophetic dreams about the future. And, they felt, that they had been given a verse from Isaiah that when they left Britain they wouldn't leave in a hurry.[688]

[687] Willis, *et al*. 'Religion at work', 444.
[688] Latham, author interview.

Indeed, Bunmi related to a reporter for the *Observer* at the time that 'It took ages for Pharaoh to let the Israelites go,' but he likewise trusted that, eventually, 'God will say to the Home Office, 'Let My People Go.''[689] The spiritual comfort this interpretation offered the Ogunwobi's also provided them with a practical coping mechanism to compartmentalise their situation. As campaign chairman, Ian Rathbone, recalled:

> Sunny was Nigerian and he had a really great faith. In a way, I felt it was greater faith than I had. And so, I can remember several times, I used to meet him on a Sunday night, for a general discussion you know about the following week … And a number of times I said, 'There's no money left in the kitty Sunny. You best go home.' And he just said, 'Don't worry – God will provide!'. And I said, 'Yeah, but we need to be realistic here.' But you know, next day – hundred pounds turned up – donation! And we had donations from everywhere, out of the blue, you know, people knock on the door – envelope with a few hundred pounds in it. You know, it just came, the money just came.[690]

By ascribing their individual suffering with a greater purpose, the Ogunwobi's faith thus enabled them to reframe their desperate situation in a way which revalorised themselves and those around them. Sunday and Bunmi trusted in God's will and divine intervention because they believed their campaign and plight to be morally and religiously just. This was a conviction which proved to be self-fulfilling. After three years in sanctuary, thought to be the longest to date, the couple were finally granted permission to stay in Britain in early July 1997 (see **figure 20**).

[689] Martin Wroe, 'Sunday's only hope rests in his room with a pew', *Sunday Observer*, 26/02/1995.
[690] Rathbone, author interview.

Figure 20: Sunday and Bunmi Ogunwobi and family outside the Downs Baptist Church. Screenshot image from Catherine Bassindale and Gill Martin, 'Sweet taste of freedom', *Evening Standard*, 8/07/1987, 19.

Just as Christians used the bible to reinforce their beliefs, other faiths drew on their separate traditions to come to a similar conclusion, as is evident in the case of Renouka Ben Lakhani who in 1987 took sanctuary at Leicester's biggest Hindu temple, the Shree Sanatan Mandir (see **figure 21**). Lakhani was facing deportation after falling in love, getting married, and giving birth, in the time it took for the Home Office to consider her case. Fighting back tears, she told a press conference held at her local community centre that she would die without her husband and child: 'I am very upset at the Home Office's decision. I love my baby and family very much, and don't want to be separated from them.'[691] As she explained: 'I will have to leave behind my little daughter, Riya, if I go. My mother and father are in India, but it would be a matter of shame for me to return.'[692] The Home Office's stonewall response was that: 'The deportation order remains,' but, 'We are not separating the mother and child. They can leave together.'[693] They later offered to pay for their airfare.[694]

Lakhani turned to her temple for support. Rantilal Ganatra, the chair of the temple's trustees, quickly became the temple's 'spokesman' of the campaign. He said of their agreement to provide sanctuary that: 'Ms Lakhani came here to pray and begged us to let her stay. It was felt that we must do so on humanitarian and compassionate grounds'. He added, 'this is a house of worship. She has not

[691] 'Battle on to let new mum stay in Britain', *Leicester Mercury,* 6/08/1987, 7.
[692] 'Deportation grief of city mother', *Leicester Mercury*, 18/07/1987, 3.
[693] Paul Hoyland, 'Flight to temple thwarts expulsion', *The Guardian,* 10/08/1987.
[694] 'Air fares offer', *The Daily Telegraph*, 12/08/1987, 2.

committed any crime.'[695] The President of the Shree Sanatan, Mr Nathubai Jagjivan, voiced that 'This is a free country, if people fall in love you can't stop them marrying', and as he saw it Leicester's temples 'play an important role' in retaining values of 'caring and sharing' and 'close-knit' communities, [696] Notably, marriage is regarded to be a sacrament by Hindus, rather than a form of social contract, a sacred institution devised by the Gods for the welfare of human beings, with Vedas ordaining that all men and women are created to be parents to bear *praja* (progeny), and practice *dharma* (duty) together.

Lakhani ended up seeking sanctuary at the temple for two months with her four-month-old daughter Riya. Prayer and faith appeared to be one of the family's only comforts during this time. Lakhani's, husband, Vipin, described, the imminent deportation 'as a nightmare which was becoming reality.'[697] 'We have had a hard time over the past month – every day takes an age to pass. For the moment, I am hoping and praying that everything turns out all right,' he said.[698] Lakhani also described suffering 'trauma and upset over the threat of being sent back to India'.[699] But she spent her evenings at the temple praying, alongside increasing numbers of members 'meeting to pray for a successful outcome'.[700]

By the time Lakhani was taking press calls in the temple she was no longer visibly fighting back tears, but posing for photographs while feeding her baby, sat before the idols of Radha Krishna – collectively known within Hinduism as the combined forms of feminine as well as the masculine realities of God, the Goddess and God of love. Lakhani clearly gained a sense of strength from her surroundings. 'This is a safe place for me because it is God's home, a place of protection. I do not want to separate from my family' she told reporters, before declaring: 'I intend to stay inside the temple until I can be reunited permanently with my husband.'[701] The resulting imagery of Lakhani nurturing her baby, piously praying while stoically enduring for the good of her marriage and family, embodied the very values of Hinduisms universal supreme being, Krishna – the god of protection, compassion, tenderness, and love. It also encapsulated a religiously guided but tangibly political becoming. After two months of sanctuary, escalating campaigning, and the intervention of their local MP, Keith Vaz, who personally met with Home Office minister Renton, before accompanying her to see immigration officers. The Home Office granted Lakhani indefinite leave on compassionate grounds.[702]

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[695] Weller, *Sanctuary – the beginning,* 8.
[696] 'Muslim leader raps coroner', *Leicester Mercury,* 12/06/86, 1; 'Deaths Spark Leader's Call, *Leicester Mercury: Asia Edition*, 13/04/1994, 1.
[697] 'Battle on to let new mum stay in Britain', *Leicester Mercury*, 6/08/1987, 7.
[698] 'Ordeal' of temple woman's husband, *Leicester Mercury,* 7/09/1987, 2.
[699] 'Deportation grief of city mother', *Leicester Mercury*, 18/07/1987, 3.
[700] 'Mother flees to temple refuge', *Leicester Mercury*, 8/08/1987, 1.
[701] Louisa Bayley and Updesh Kapur, 'Mother flees to temple refuge', *Leicester Mercury*, 8/08/1987, 1.
[702] See: https://www.macearchive.org/films/central-news-east-10081987-deportation.[accessed:20/06/2023].

Figure 21: Lakhani sheltering in the Shree Sanata Mandir Temple, Leicester. Rex Features, Jeremy Nicholls image taken from *Third Way,* 11:2, February 1988, 10.

Participating: 'God will say to the Home Office: 'Let My People Go.'[703]

The final modality in Baker's framework of sacred contagion surrounding religious communities is the transcendence from belonging and becoming, into participating. According to Baker, this is the process wherein a religious community provides members with 'the confidence and endorsement' to participate 'beyond existing communal and cultural boundaries': shaping the way they personally participated 'in public life and the contributions' they made to it.[704] Willis *et al*. have similarly observed how faith provided important institutional 'reserves of religiously generated social capital' for migrant workers and their allies, who 'repeatedly used the language and practice of faith to defend their self-respect and to find a home in the city'.[705]As we shall see, religious resources not only frequently enabled sanctuary campaigners to make this transcendence from purely religious action

[703] Sunday Ogunwobi, in Martin Wroe, 'Sunday's only hope rests in his room with a pew', *Sunday Observer*, 26/02/1995.
[704] Baker, 'The contagion of', 91, 97.
[705] Willis, *et al.,* 444.

into wider civic action, but empowered participants to encourage a wider reimagining of the societally separated borders between these realms.

The act of taking sanctuary and in doing so defying a deportation order was of course an inherently political *and* religiously coded act, and campaigners and those involved perceived and presented their cause as such. The Ogunwobi's, for example, may have expressed their determination in their cause through a belief in a higher power, but they also projected that this divine intervention would occur in an explicitly practical and political form: 'God will say to the Home Office: 'Let My People Go.' [706] Similarly, when Lakhani made public statements invoking the safety of a house of God, she also declared: 'I will continue to stay at this place of worship and make a firm stand against this government's unjust laws.'[707] Explicitly presenting her case not just as a familial or religiously moral cause, but as part of a greater ambition to change national laws and public life. Moreover, while her efforts to build the campaigns momentum were contained by the perimeters of the temple, her husband simultaneously drew attention to the problems faced by other immigration prisoners in Leicester, by leading demonstrators to Welford Road Prison. As he argued at one Leicester Anti-Deportation Campaign meeting: 'We need all the hope we can get to work together and stand firm because if we do that then we have strong power against the 'racist' laws'.[708]

For the grassroots faith leaders responsible for opening the doors of their respective institutions to sanctuary, this interrelation of faith and politics often appears to have been already integral to their occupational outlook. As we discussed in chapter 1, the Sanctuary Working Group of the British Council of Churches, was comprised of individuals such as Weller and Haslam, who were personally spearheading sanctuary as a tactic, and collectively wrote publications which explicitly presented sanctuary not just as a 'holy respite', but as a means 'to inform and persuade public opinion that the effects of immigration law have now become unjust', and to prompt, 'more flexibility in our immigration law'; 'Christian charity, not to mention Christian justice, demands nothing less.'[709] The use of the word 'demands' here – more indicative of an innate faith-based compulsion than any real choice – reflects a strength of belief found within many of the grassroot faith leaders involved in sanctuary. The Catholic priest, Father Joe Ryan, for instance, who gave sanctuary to the Manuels at St Aloysius Church in 1985, vocally embraced social activism and bold acts such as sanctuary as part and parcel of his calling, 'Justice issues are at the heart of Jesus' Gospel message – not some optional extra we will engage in when we have "saved our souls"': 'We need to support one another and share expertise even more. *We need to be a voice for the voiceless!'*[710] Maheshwaran similarly described

[706] Wroe, 'Sunday's only hope'..
[707] 'Renoukaben's sanctuary in Leicester', in *Sanctuary - Manchester perspectives*, 33.
[708] Caroline Fuchs, 'Jail demo over deportations', *Leicester Mercury*, 31/08/1987, 15; 'Ordeal' of temple woman's husband, *Leicester Mercury,* 7/09/1987, 2.
[709] *Why Sanctuary?* 27.
[710] Father Joe Ryan, Interview with National Justice & Peace Network, 'Speaking Personally: Joe Ryan'

living the Hindu teachings of karma and 'selfless service' to be 'an essential part of my life just like breathing'. And Bridget Methuen described her husband's vision of a 'social ministry' and concern with broad social justice issues, as being 'utterly' entwined with his Christianity; 'they went hand in hand'.[711]

These grassroot leader's core navigational beliefs were not only conducive to nurturing environments of belonging, but in sanctuary campaigns readily translated into defiant forms of participating with wider civil society. When Father Methuen was asked whether he was considering conceding to the Home Office demands after several months of hosting the Mendis sanctuary, and an onslaught of negative press and political attention, he replied resolutely:

> That is an option that, please God, no Christian, no human being could accept: certainly not this Christian, this human being and the members of this church.[712]

Evidently Methuen's strength of conviction in the need for acts of wider civic-religious participation and intervention had only been escalated through his involvement in sanctuary campaigns.

Likewise, even after Merton Council issued a ban against the Shree Ghanapathy Temple's temporary sanctuary, citing housing health and safety regulations, Ratnasingham defied the council and faced a fine daily one-hundred pound fine for keeping the doors open to those in need.[713] He translated his beliefs into direct action by paying the material fees, and publicly defended his actions by drawing comparisons with what the council might have deemed a more palatably Christian scenario:

> All we have done is act humanely. Suppose seven houses burned down in the street and the church offered to accommodate the distressed families. Would the council offer a similar order on the church?[714]

The evident passion and determination required by these individuals to work for social justice against the boundaries of the state, and, as outlined in chapter 2, often against the boundaries of their own institutional limits, conceivably shows continuities with what Brewitt-Taylor has presented as a trickle-down effected 'Christian radicalism', authoritatively spoken into existence by an influential cultural elite in the 1960s.[715] The fact such faith-based beliefs in social justice can be found propelling radical grassroot religious actions long after his identified peak period for revolutionary social justice from 1968 to 1969, on a pragmatic and practical level, and in Maheshwaran's case, clearly outside the

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Online: https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/speaking-personally/speaking-personally-joe-ryan/ [accessed 13/04/2023].

[711] Methuen, author interview.

[712] John Methuen quoted in *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* RCG, Iss.70, August 1987, 7.

[713] Shyam Bhatia, 'Priests defy a ban on Tamil sanctuary', *The Observer,* 14/06/1985, 5.

[714] Ratnasingham, as cited in *The Observer*.

[715] Brewitt-Taylor, *Christian radicalism;* See Geiringer on 'Christian Radicalism', 159.

bounds of just a radical Christianity, suggests we might broaden our understandings of how such meta-narratives manifest and evolved. It suggests these meta-narratives of radicalism may have been driven, or at least perpetuated, by grassroot actions and reactions more than Brewitt-Taylor accredits. Both Ratnasingham's and Methuen's instinctual invocation of the will of their respective religious congregations, respectively citing 'all *we* have done' and 'members of *this* church', is not only indicative of how they felt compelled to guide their flocks along their trajectories of wider civil participation but is also demonstrative of how the process of radical religious belonging-to-becoming-to-participating could escalate and permeate via sanctuary campaigns. By simply attending the establishments under Ratnasignham's and Methuen's management, religious members ostensibly became publicly co-opted into a wider political participatory stand.

This potentially contagious escalation from belonging, to becoming, to participating, triggered by sanctuary is perhaps best epitomized via Hilda Carr, who we met in the introduction, and her 'dramatic intervention' at the Welbeck Street Baptist Church sanctuary for Chauhan. When elderly parishioner Carr, who was described as 'a very typical straight-forward Lancashire woman', started to connect with the sanctuary we can patently see the modalities of belonging at work. She was not thought to be politically active prior to the sanctuary, nor to have had 'people of Indian backgrounds particularly within her experience'.[716] Through her faith and connections to the church she came to align herself with Chauhan's cause on a personal level: 'He hadn't done anything wrong in the five years he's been here to any of our knowledge – it would have been proven by now', she told one interviewer.[717] Later expanding:

> We presume things. Because we want to think the things we want to think. We only presume that God is white. We don't see him in a colour, but we don't know that he is.[718]

Evidently Carr gained confidence in expressing her religiously inspired beliefs in equality through getting to know Chauhan personally at the church and forming a sense of belonging with him.

When Carr then 'bustled' into the sanctuary armed with a needle one morning, in order to collect a blood sacrifice from her and Chauhan, before raising it above the crowds and declaring: 'BLOOD FROM VINOD CHUAHAN AND FROM A WHITE WOMEN MEMBER OF WELBECK STREET BAPTIST CHURCH: WHICH IS WHICH?', she also evidently displayed the modalities of a becoming.[719] It was a symbolic performance designed to publicly undermine the racism of contemporary immigration laws, but it was also an intensely religiously motivated and inspired act. In her own words:

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[716] Weller, author interview.
[717] Carr, as quoted in *Legalised Abduction*, 8.
[718] Carr on Radio Manchester broadcast (BBC) as cited in *Legalised Abduction*, 9.
[719] My emphasis. Weller, author interview.

> I remembered a part of the Bible that said we are of the same blood. Something … a little voice behind me said 'Prove it.' I just got up … I didn't get up myself, I'm sure I didn't. I was guided or I was led, and I went straight and got a needle out of the needle case, sterilised the needle, wrapped it up, and put me coat on and went straight across to the church.[720]

The teachings Carr had absorbed thus transcended from a spiritual awareness into a physical embodiment, 'guiding' her by divine will and engendering her with the courage to march 'straight' into the church and make her piece before the congregation.

When Carr then went on to repeat her views on the radio and newspapers, posing for photographs at the altar while insisting that 'the blood-stained tissue be sent to the Home Office along with the petition', she was actively displaying Baker's markers of participating: actively reshaping local public life via the language and practices of faith.[721] A recording of her speaking was even collected as part of the pack of materials created by the British council of Churches to educate future would-be sanctuaries, with the intention of inspiring a national movement.[722]

Collectively, Carr's actions also support recent historiographical calls to reconsider the voluntary action of women in faith organisations.[723] Women's voluntary action has of course been extensively researched, but within that, the interrelation to faith has been somewhat overlooked. Anne O'Brien, however, has observed how women from the early twentieth-century came to envision and expand a greater role for themselves in the church, as 'a strand of resistance to being 'used' as fund-raisers emerged.'[724] Abby Day's modern ethnographic monograph has highlighted the significant but institutionally undervalued contributions made by older Anglican laywoman: from dusting pews and polishing silver, to opening the church on weekdays and offering company and tea to those in need.[725] According to Day these women's 'strength, fortitude, and *joie de vivre'* shine through 'as does their Christian faith': voluntary action become an act of communion, meditation, and belonging.[726] Emma-Dawn Farra and Francis Loftus' follow-up microstudy in York, similarly found a group of elderly lay women passionately committed to keeping the church doors open: 'there was nothing that these women would not undertake.'[727] Moreover, Valentina Alexander has highlighted the need for the actions of politically conscious senior Black women in the church to be acknowledged. Alexander asserts that such women not only significantly shaped the structure of the 'Black Church' by continuously asserting their values, but have also made important contributions to the Establishment

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[720] Carr in *Legalised Abduction*, 8.
[721] *Ashton Reporter,* 10/11/1983.
[722] Wellller, author interview.
[723] Wellller, author interview.
[724] Anne O'Brien, 'Faith, Fetes and Domesticity in Australia', *Women's History Review*, 15:5 (2006), 719-735.
[725] Abby Day, *The Religious Lives of Older Laywomen: The Last Active Anglican Generation* (Oxford UP, 2017).
[726] Rebecca Catto, 'Book review: The Religious Lives of Older Laywomen: The Last Active Anglican Generation, by Abby Day', *Sociology of Religion*, 79:1 (2018), 139.
[727] Emma-Dawn Farra and Francis Loftus, 'Older Laywomen in the Church: Not the End of the Road', *Rural Theology*, 19:1 (2021), 25.

Church, in the areas revolving around the spiritual growth and well-being of believers especially. Often while having 'a dreadful time' persevering against the effects of institutionalised white bigotry.[728]

Carr's passionate and creative actions thus not only support these findings, but highlight the importance of how such overlooked individuals contribute to civil society. By creating a sense of community and reception at their religious institutions – sometimes through tea and biscuits – or in Carr's case, via making dramatic gestures of service and inclusivity – these women were using the resources available to them to consciously embody and enact scripture, in order to participate in, and change public life. Such an interpretation does not dispute the extensively evidenced regressive social impact of religion. Yet it does demonstrate how when the faith systems drawn upon offer individual interpretation and participation, over purely dogmatic doctrine, these regressive impacts sit alongside, or intertwine with, potentially progressive effects.

Carr's personal transcendence into acts of wider civic participation and religious rescripting, was particularly supported by her congregation and minister. This was not always the case, as campaigners involved in the Amir Kabul Khan sanctuary campaign made plain to me. After hearing about other successful sanctuaries in churches, the Amir Khan Defence Campaign (AKDC) decided to enact a sanctuary at the Birmingham Central Mosque in 1989. The use of the mosque proved integral to Khan's campaign, but from its initiation it was not without its critics from both outside and inside the religious community. The Khan family, however, were practicing and pious Muslims and were able to rescript the expected boundaries of religious-political participation by persuasively making their case for sanctuary through religious principle.

'The committee did not like it!' AKDC campaign spokesman 'Unes' told me, referring to the committee of the Birmingham Central Mosque at the time.[729] In fact, the campaign's awareness of the committee's likely reservations against hosting a sanctuary had prompted them to inform the committee of their intentions only after the fact:

> Once we took Amir Kabul inside, and asked him to sit down there [gestures], to get everything done. *Then* we told them that he is here to stay in the mosque. They did not like it![730]

Shafaq Hussain, my local guide, and brother-in-law of Khan, expanded that the committee were also 'very anti' because 'they didn't want to revolt against the so-called system; they were worried about reputation', held by 'the establishment: the authorities, the police, the council'.[731] Committee members had cogent reason to be cautious of the repercussions that enflaming prejudice stoked up

[728] Valentina Alexander, ''A mouse in a jungle'', 87-111, 104.
[729]'Unes', anonymised, author interview, Birmingham, 24/09/2022.
[730]'Unes', author interview.
[731] Shafaq Hussain, author interview.

from "the establishment" could incur. Henry Hodgin's research into the effects of planning procedure on Muslims attempting to establish mosques and education centres in Birmingham, highlighted 'a shameful record of planning refusals and enforcement notices' throughout the 1970s, which amounted to a 'prima facie case of racial discrimination'.[732] By the late 1980s, the situation had somewhat improved. From a survey of British local authority responses to Muslims needs, Jørgen Nielsen found Birmingham to be among the handful cities where planning authorities had adopted a 'much more flexible approach'.[733] However, lengthy disputes continued to attract national press coverage (**see image 22**) over applications from the Mosque's committee to broadcast the call to prayer (*azan*). The sound was disparagingly compared to 'Concorde taking off' by one local vicar, and described as 'an insult to English people' by the areas postman, indicating that this improvement in relations was an ongoing process.[734]

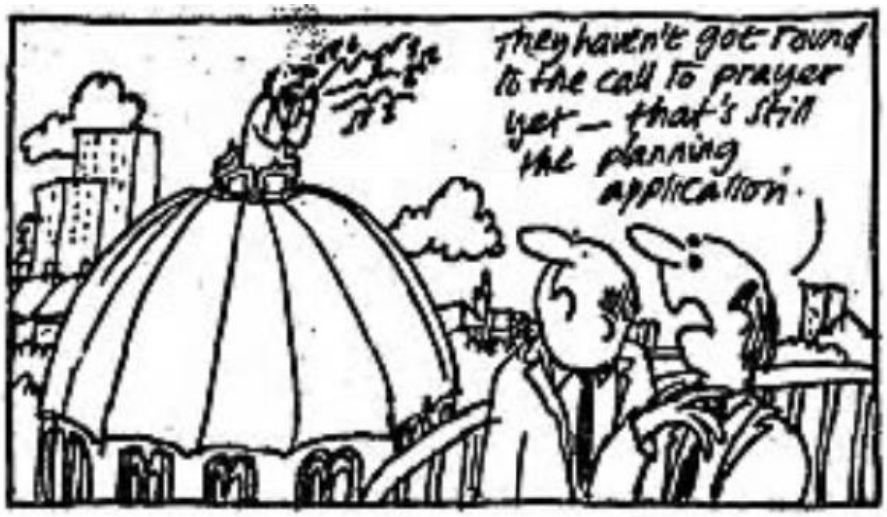

Figure 22: 'Oranges, lemons and the filtering of sounds from a minaret', cartoon screenshotted from *The Guardian*, 18/01/1986, 14.

The mosque committee's fears about hosting a sanctuary effecting their reputation were also heightened due to the disastrous recent precedent of police entering a Birmingham mosque. The police had been called to intervene in a tense factional dispute over who should be the next Iman.[735] The problem was not so much that police had entered the mosque, but the fact that they had done so with their shoes on. The episode therefore became an act of significant religious disrespect, 'which

[732] Henry Hodgins, 'Planning permission for mosques: the Birmingham experience', *Research Papers: Muslims in Europe*, 9(1981), 24.
[733]Jørgen Nielsen 'Muslims in Britain and local authority responses', in Gerholm, T. and Lithman, Y. G. (eds.), *The New Islamic Presence in Western Europe* (London: Mensell,1988), 60.
[734] Reverend David Butt as quoted in David Moffat, 'Moslem call to prayer worries vicar', *Sandwell Evening Mail,* 9/12/1985, 4; Mr John Gough, postman as quoted in 'Two weeks for verdict on mosque', *Birmingham Daily News*, 13/02/1986, 9.
[735] Hussain, author interview.

irritated the community and Muslims at large.'[736] Birmingham Central Mosque thus faced significantly higher stakes, both politically and spiritually, than the average British church might incur by hosting sanctuary. For a police raid to forcibly remove Khan from the mosque, held the potential to spark an irrevocable wider dispute between the community and authorities.

It was religious scripture, however, that shifted the argument and enabled the sanctuary to continue:

> But they could not answer the question – that it's not your mosque – it's a House of God! So you can't kick him out, you have no authority in a house of God, yeah? So they had no answer to this question, and they were, I think, forced by the situation to cooperate with us.[737]

Hussain agreed:

> We said, you're only there as administrators to run and lock the doors – but you can't make that final decision. So that's what swayed it.[738]

In accordance with Islam mosques are not owned by anyone but are instead protected as a *waqf* (an endowment), solely for the cause of Allah. The concept of a *waqf* has been limited in Britain, but the legal instruments of some Muslim organisations make reference to it and register as a trust – a non-profit organisation.[739] In this case, a trust was formed specifically to oversee its construction, which had only been completed in 1969 with the help of local community donations. By invoking this moral and religious principle we thus see faith here being used by sanctuary campaigners to prompt a religious rescripting from within religious institutions. Encouraging its committee to put scripture into action by supporting sanctuary in this way, directly pioneered new forms of civic participation, by co-opting the mosque into lending spiritual support for sanctuary campaigns, and by providing them with significant practical protection, shelter and publicity.

It is important to acknowledge that Khan's defence campaigners were consciously combining their religious stand with a wider publicity-minded strategy. Even their initial choice to take sanctuary at the Birmingham Central Mosque, as opposed to the local mosque that Khan's family attended, was a calculated one. Birmingham Central's three storey building, featuring a striking white-dome and minaret, was the first mosque purposely constructed in the city. It had thus come to stand as a landmark of Birmingham's multicultural politics.[740] Its grand size, structure and established public profile, exuded markers of visual sanctity. 'We thought the authorities would be more reluctant to enter a mosque that looked more like a mosque; in photographs and press and with its presence in the

[736]'Unes', author interview.
[737] 'Unes', author interview.
[738] Hussain, author interview.
[739] Norman Doe, *Comparative Religious Law* (Cambridge UP, 2018), 323.
[740] Richard Gale, 'The Multicultural City and the Politics of Religious Architecture: Urban Planning, Mosques and Meaning-making in Birmingham, UK', *Built Environment* 30:1(2004), 40.

community, that would have looked very bad, nationally,' Hussain explained.[741] Thus, while Unes was negotiating with the mosque's committee, Hussain had already called the press, a move which he believed further 'swayed' the committee:

> Then the committee were in two minds … do they now throw somebody from their community out of the mosque - because there'd be uproar! That they were going along with the immigration authorities.[742]

This strategy paid off, Khan's sanctuary quickly reaching national press headlines (**see image 23**). And as the biggest of Birmingham's fifty-five mosques, with more than two thousand people attending Friday prayers, it offered a valuable source of supporters and potential physical defence: 'We were prepared; we were getting, organising, youth to resist police entering the mosque', Unes added.[743]

This combination of publicity and community minded manoeuvres was indicative of how Khan's campaigners fundamentally perceived and presented his case as a religious community wide concern. 'In "third world" countries, in our countries, religion is used for political purposes', Unes told me, but he saw Khan's sanctuary as 'a last resort', which should not have been necessary 'because it means that the society and the state are not equal. So … it shows the level of oppression from the state.'[744] He explained:

> I felt, I still feel, that it's very difficult to grasp, to digest, the idea that when we are living in a society with human rights and you know-, but you have no alternative outside the religious institution, to save your life and to protect your life. So, if we are forced in a country like Britain, to take refuge in religious institutions, what is wrong with us not to take that view in religion in the practical, the practical human life?[745]

Hussain nodded: 'it was setting up a new challenge, for the Muslim or the wider Muslim community'.[746] From this perspective, the campaign was not only using the religious resources of Islamic concepts, institutions, and communities to sustain the campaign, but was further motivated by a principle to use the collective power of religion to hold secular authorities to account. By invoking sanctuary, after having tried all the legal avenues of appeal and appeasement in Khan's case for two years, religion was serving as their public barometer, displaying how far the state had fallen from its alleged "civilised" secular values and demanding a rescripting of these values.

Once the sanctuary was established inside the mosque the religious community quickly rose to that challenge. Khan evidenced the beneficial modalities of belonging, becoming, and ultimately participating via religious resources as witnessed in other sanctuary campaigns. He told me in an

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[741] Hussain, author interview.
[742] Hussain, author interview.
[743] Geoff Ellis, 'Will city hear the call to prayer?' *Leicester Mercury*, 22/01/1986, 14; 'Unes' author interview.
[744] 'Unes', author interview.
[745] 'Unes', author interview.
[746] Hussain, author interview.

interview translated by his family, that he was experiencing symptoms of anxiety and insomnia, worried that at any moment the mosque could be raided by authorities, but prayer offered him a resource with which to negotiate his worries and feel 'less helpless'.[747] The Home Office had ruled that Khan's marriage to a British citizen was one of convenience, despite them having been married with a child, and his wife, Zahtoon, being pregnant at the time of the sanctuary. She prayed to fight the 'constant worry' that her children would have to 'grow up without a father'.[748] Worshippers at Birmingham mosques also held a special day of prayer in support of his campaign, which encouraged him to persevere.[749] Through an interpreter, he told press, at the time:

> We have the backing of the Central Mosque and lots of friends and families are gathering round to support us. The next step is to build up enough sympathy to convince the Home Office that they have no choice but to let us stay.[750]

After over a month in sanctuary, Khan was offered a deal from the Home Office informing him that he his right to remain would be considered under the compassionate circumstances criteria, *if* he left the sanctuary and effectively "came quietly".[751] Khan refused. Instead alerting the press and choosing to co-opt the high-profile support of Birmingham East's Member of European Parliament, Christine Crawley. Crawley chaperoned him to his sit-down meeting with immigration officers at Birmingham Airport – along with a convoy made up of dozens of supporters, members of Birmingham Trades Union council, and local Asian taxi drivers honking their horns in support.[752]After a forty-minute interview Khan was given permission to stay, making national news under headlines such as 'Mosque refugee wins a reprieve' and 'Mosque man aid pledge'.[753]

Khan told the waiting press through an interpreter, that while he was personally overjoyed, they would continue to fight for others in his situation: 'We will write to anyone who has been refused permission to stay and advise them what to do' and 'Mr Khan or one of his supporters will also speak at rallies and demonstrations over the immigration issue.'[754] The campaign fulfilled this pledge by aiding other campaigns both publicly and privately.[755] His campaign thus not only shifted the topography of the religious-civic landscape in Birmingham, by combining religiously inspired and resourced actions with practical and political tactics, but also offered to build on its successful profile

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[747] Amir Kabal Khan, author interview, 24/09/2022.
[748] Patrick Griffin, 'Mosque is refuge for man on run', *Birmingham News*, 4/01/1989, 11.
[749] Khan, author interview.
[750] Cyril Dixon, ''Written pledge' demand', *Birmingham Evening Mail*, 19/01/1989, 2; Kevin Booth, 'Family hides in city mosque', *Birmingham Evening Mail*, 3/01/1989, 14.
[751] 'No move by Kashmiri', *Sandwell Evening Mail*, 18/01/1989, 2.
[752] Mark Gough, 'Euro MP aids mosque man', *Birmingham Evening Mail*, 21/01/1989, 7; Chris Thomond, 'Mosque fugitive pleads for leave to stay', *Daily News,* 9/02/1989, 9.
[753]'Mosque refugee wins a reprieve' *Birmingham Evening Mail*, 10/02/1989, 24.
[754] Cyril Dixon, 'Mosque man aid pledge', *Birmingham Evening Mail*, 3/03/1989, 5.
[755] Hussain, author interview.

and experience, to further expand the realms of religious-civic participation nationally. Some thirty years later, Khan, his network of supporters, and growing Brummie-based-family, continue to speak about their experiences to researchers, such as myself, in the hope that it will continue to inspire and support others. In doing so, the process of religious rescripting lives on (**see figure 23**).

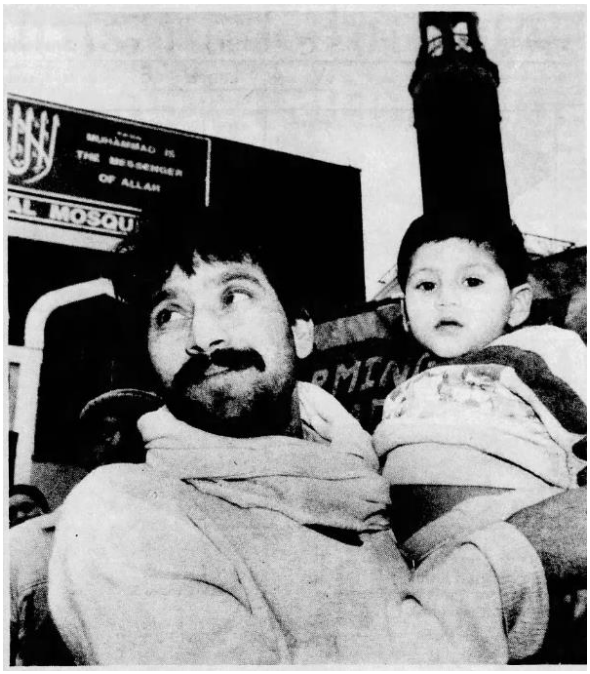

Figure 23: Amir Kabul Khan, with his son Ramiz pictured leaving the Central Mosque sanctuary. Photograph by Chris Thomond as cited in 'Mosque fugitive pleads for leave to stay', *Birmingham Daily News*, 9/02/1989, 9.

Chapter conclusion:

At the beginning of this chapter, I set out to probe the predominant binary and white-centric historiographical narratives of secularisation and desecularisation. Our findings highlight how microstudies involving places of worship situated during the long 1980s offer plentiful avenues for researchers, who, in Ley's terms, are 'not satisfied with seeing the activism of faith-based organisations and their members as mere agents of a shadow state' or 'playing out roles prescribed by some grand theory'.[756] This chapter's findings better befit Woodhead's alternative conception of a religious 'deregulation' in the 1960s-1990s, wherein: 'the religious field was in fact transforming *outside* of the control of the state and church and in relation to new opportunities, market and media.'[757] Sanctuary campaigns are a prime example of such overlooked deregulation and transformation of religious activity, beyond the established bounds of religious concern, and specifically into the realms of radical contemporary politics.

[756] Ley, 'Preface', 15.
[757] My italics. Woodhead, 'Introduction', 1.

By examining the grassroot level activism of sanctuary campaigns it becomes apparent that it was not by accident that sanctuary campaigns were enacted and sustained in places of religious worship, rather it was an integral feature. Faith not only inspired this initial method of contestation, but further effected the language and actions which became infused in its articulation, strengthened people's commitment to the cause and fellow campaigners, but helped establish and re-establish the parameters for this type of contestation within wider civic life. In direct contradiction to theories of religious abandonment, or wholesale disenfranchisement, as suggested by Brown's narrative of Britain's churches becoming 'increasingly irrelevant in the cultural and ethical landscape' since the 1960s, sanctuary campaigns highlight how religious based activism was still producing and reproducing the processes identified by Baker as belonging, becoming, and participating, with magnetic effect well into the long 1980s.[758]

We see how bonds of 'belonging' in terms of the emotional support and familial like nurturing in faith-based environments, directly encouraged and sustained the collective defiance behind sanctuary campaigns. The campaigns then further catalysed radical forms of 'becoming' by aiding participants to develop existing or foster new identities through forms of spiritual allegiance or embodied practice, often providing those involved a greater sense of purpose. And, ultimately, the sacralised belief systems and resources co-opted within these campaigns also lent into conscious forms of further civic 'participating', by providing a ready means for rescripting the status quo of their religious communities and wider communities. For both political campaigners who sought out or co-opted religious resources, and, religious gatekeepers who sought out political activism as a part of their calling and cause, sanctuary campaigns thus developed vibrant new avenues of contagious activism, the effects of which still continue to be felt upon those lives it transformed, and indeed saved from deportation.

[758] Brown, *The Death of*, 191; Baker, 'The contagion of', 190-99.

CHAPTER 4:

Sanctuary and the New Urban Left

As discussed in the introduction, the story of Black politics in the 1980s is usually told as one of defeat and rupture, and within that the substory of municipal anti-racism and multiculturalism has come to sit uncomfortably as somewhat of an anomaly – a cul-de-sac in the path to progressivism and equality.[759] Gloria Khamkar has praised the GLC's pioneering multiculturalism, for its new strategies of 'making minority communities to feel part of British society', and Pragna Patel recalls this as a period when despite 'Thatcherism, despite the really bleak landscape that was around us,' there was 'also a moment of possibility, with local authorities setting up women's centres, race committees and equalities committees.'[760] In contrast, Paul Gilroy has come to reflect upon much of the GLC's equalities work as forming overly dictatorial and tokenistic exercises in unhelpful 'signs, badges and stickers.'[761] Likewise, Keith Tompson condemned municipal anti-racism for turning meaningful activism into 'toothless legislative institutions', and the subsequent development of Britain's race relation sector as: 'the story of a bogus alternative to practical action against racial violence.'[762] Such blanketing and diametric descriptions should prompt us to probe further, and to pursue the recent interjection of Camilla Schofield, Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, and Rob Waters of the importance of recognising that Black and anti-racist activism in the 1970s and 1980s was 'far from homogenous', with a radical, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist end *and* a more moderate, ameliorative end: 'there were more and less radical version of equal opportunities, self-help, multiculturalism and anti-racism, and vigorous, debates between different tendencies.'[763]

Here I will argue that focusing on the involvement of some metropolitan Labour councils with anti-deportation cases in this period offers a more nuanced insight into the good, the bad, and the ugly that was the 'political project' of municipal multiculturalism and anti-racism.[764] Following Satnam Virdeee's argument that municipal multiculturalism actually represented a profound change in who worked for local government, as their employment policies fostered organizations which more inclusively reflected metropolitan diversity, I focus on how this profound change had a tangible effect on anti-deportation campaigns.[765] Enabling different types of activists, such as women and single mothers, to become more empowered and involved by state resources. However, anti-deportation

[759]'defeat and rupture' is a phrase from Camilla Schofield, Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, Rob Waters, 'The privatisation of the struggle': Anti-racism in the age of enterprise', in *The Neo-Liberal Age*, 202.
[760] Pragna Patel, 'Sisterhood and after: The Women's Liberation Oral History Project' (2011), British Library.
[761] Gilroy, *Ain't No Black,* 191.
[762] Keith Tompson, *Under Siege: racism and violence in Britain today* (London: Penguin, 1988), 98, 111.
[763] Schofield, *et al*., 'The privatisation of', 201.
[764] Taylor*, Refugees,* 234.
[765] Virdee, *Racism, Class,* 155.

campaign activity also highlights how this inclusivity came at the price of politicisation, which had to be continuously navigated and negotiated.

Here I rethink the model of Lipsky's 'street-level bureaucrats' to develop a more nuanced and disaggregated account of the developing 'multiculturalist state'. Lipsky's seminal 1980 work highlighted how 'street-level bureaucrats' working in public services routinely 'interact with and have wide discretion over the dispensation of benefits, or allocation of public sanctions'.[766] This 'discretion' includes doing their work in ways they feel is appropriate, while maintaining – as Lipsky emphasises – their own sense of identity and self-esteem.[767] Their discretion also often develops out of 'coping strategies' in the context of unmet demands and material conditions including a lack of resources and time constraints. Since Lipsky's theory found academic fame a major strand of subsequent empirical work continues to provide evidence confirming that the types of 'coping strategies' that Lipsky identified are 'both prevalent and plentiful … robbing services of their substantive value and skewing the distribution of benefits'.[768] However, recent work has also identified different forms of street-level bureaucrat and with different uses of discretion.[769] Steven Maynard-Moody and Michael Musheno, in particular, have introduced of the notion of 'citizen agents' as opposed to street-level bureaucrats, in an attempt to highlight how some individuals were working in their client's interests rather than as an extension of the state, guided by their own judgment of each person's worth.[770]

This chapter builds on Lipsky, Moody and Musheno's work and integrates it with recent calls to recognise that in addition to law, technical standards and economic guidelines, emotions also form part of the 'multinormative regulatory basis' for administrative, bureaucratic, and workplace action.[771] Unlike in chapter 1, however, where I highlighted how systems of bureaucracy could operate to disguise and restrain individual emotions, this chapter suggests that in some contexts individuals could also use their discretion to negate cultures of traditionally restrained emotions and "rationality". Ultimately, I highlight how certain radical elements within the local government attempted, and for a particular historical moment were able to, organise the resources of government *against* the government, and so forming and reflecting an unresolvable tension within and between different tiers

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[766] Lipsky's preface to the 2011 edition provides a summary of the core elements of the theory, from the author's own perspective: Michael Lipsky, *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services 30th anniversary edition* (New York: Russell Sage, 2010).
[767] Lucy Gilson, 'Lipsky's Street Level Bureaucracy' in Edward Page, Martin Lodge, and Steven Balla (eds) *Oxford Handbook of the Classics of Public Policy* (Oxford UP, 2015), 5.
[768] Evelyn Brodkin, 'Reflections on Street-Level Bureaucracy: Past, Present, and Future', *Public Administration Review*, 72:6(2012), 943.
[769] See, for example, Durose's description of UK local government workers experimenting and innovating their engagement in community development as 'civic entrepreneurs': Durose, C., 'Revisiting Lipsky: Front-Line Work in UK Local Governance', *Political Studies*, 59:4 (2011), 978–995.
[770] Maynard-Moody, S., and Musheno, M.,'State agent or citizen agent: two narratives of discretion', *Journal of Public Administration Research* 10:2(2000), 329–358.
[771] Collin, *et al*. 'Bureaucracy and Emotions', 7.

of government. While this was arguably predestined to failure it made considerable gains and irrevocable change along the way.

Many individual anti-deportation campaigns received political and material support from their local council. Steve Cohen remembered how in the late 1980s and the early 1990s some Labour-controlled local authorities, reacting to their supposed position as agents for the Tory-controlled Home Office, 'tried to reverse this role by offering positive support to those threatened by immigration controls'.[772] Not all Labour authorities adopted such actively antagonistic position towards immigration controls. And, as we shall see, those that opposed controls – or aspects of controls – were usually responding to grassroots pressure in the form of the proliferation of anti-deportation campaigns arising in many metropolitan centres. Yet Cohen argues this local activity was important towards pushing some parts of the Labour Party at a national level, into making statements that, at least superficially, seemed to be questioning the need in principle for immigration control.[773]

I would add that municipal involvement in anti-deportation campaigns was also important as it represented one of the only official voices of positive support to those threatened by immigration controls at this time. This was not only a period when the leader of the country was voicing openly anti-immigrant sentiments on national television, but also the period that saw increasing police involvement with deportations.[774] Sections 28A to 28K of the 1971 Immigration Act had introduced new and flexible legal provisions for immigration authorities and police, often working closely together, to interview, arrest and detain people who were suspected of being in breach of immigration law, for example by entering illegally or overstaying terms of entry.[775] Subsequently, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, systematic activities such as major passport raids at workplaces and homes that amounted to a 'witch hunt' of African, Caribbean and Asian communities were documented.[776]At the same time, the new legislation stimulated the creation of internal immigration controls, or what Sivanandan characterised as 'pass laws', for people of African, Caribbean and Asian descent resident in Britain on a day-to-day level.[777] By the mid-1980s, the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) saw the need to produce a 'report on local government and nationality issues' that

[772] Cohen, 'The local state of', 528.
[773] See: Syndey Bidwell MP, calling for the abolition of the 1971 Immigration Act: Hansard, HC Deb. 16/11/1987, vol.122, c.822-824; Ken Livingstone statement 'Widows deportation oppose at country hall' 19/10/1982, in London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) GLC/DG/PRB/35/39/477.
[774] See also Ken Follet, *Three Blind Mice: Deportations without Justice* (Charter 88, 1992); Paul Gordon, *Causes of Concern* (London: Penguin, 1984).
[775] Mary Bosworth (eds.) *et al., Race, Criminal Justice, and Migration Control* (Oxford UP, 2017) 67; Immigration Act 1971. Online:https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1971/77/contents.[accessed 23/06/2023].
[776] Paul Gordon, *White Law: Racism in the Police, Courts and Prisons* (London: Pluto, 1984), 35-36; Paul Gordon, *Policing Against Black People* (London: IRR, 1987); As cited in Leanne Weber and Benjamin Bowling, 'Policing Migration: A Framework for Investigating the Regulation of Global Mobility', *Policing & Society*, 14:3(2004), 203.
[777] Sivanandan, *A Different Hunger,* 35.

documented examples of local state employees, including marriage registrars, education department registrars and housing benefit officers, who had reported individuals to the Home Office based on personal suspicions and with no legal evidence.[778] Within this context then, municipal support of anti-deportation campaigns pioneered through street-level bureaucrats, or citizen agents, offered an increasingly rare – but therefore increasingly important – voice of anti-hostility towards immigration from one level of the state.

Municipal women

A key aspect to municipal multiculturalism was the opening of the town hall doors, physically and institutionally, to a wider public and a more inclusive range of state employees and citizen agents.[779] Taylor has also noted how this converged with a 'growing band of, often leftist, middle-class and female, professionals', who as part of the baby boomer generation had benefited from free higher education, had been touched by the radicalism of the 1960s and 1970s, and were then able to carve out and expand professional opportunities for themselves at the front line of the welfare state, in local authorities, and grassroots NGOs: 'a growing number of committed professionals might be found trying to put into practice multicultural policies in the daily round of their lives.'[780]

A frequently emphasized contributing factor to the women I interviewed involved in anti-deportation activism was the opportunities afforded at this time through municipal services in terms of social mobility. Wendy Pettifer – who has worked with immigrants and refugees, dating from her time working as a community worker at Manchester Law Centre, to a caseworker at Hackney's Centerprise, to becoming a qualified solicitor and working for the immigration legal-aid law firm Winstanley Burgess Solicitors – described to me how the support and funding she received from her local council and the GLC was critical to her personal and professional development:

> When I left school, I did a community work certificate at Manchester. And then, when I was a single parent, I worked part-time at Centerprise. And now I've got loads of money off the GLC to do my degree and everything, and then some law society finals, which are discretionary. They always paid the fees, but I got a maintenance grant, and nursery, I got free nursery place. And so, I was *able* to do it. Whereas if they hadn't, I could never have become a solicitor now. And there tends to be a whole tranche of older people like me, who came from working class backgrounds, and Black people who got in that way, and those people now can't afford it.[781]

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[778] G. Wilkins, *No Passports to Services: A Report on Local Government Immigration and Nationality Issues* (London: JCWI, 1985), 10, 33.
[779] Virdee, *Racism, Class,* 155.
[780] Taylor, *Refugees,* 236; Margaretta Jolly, *Sisterhood and After: An Oral History of the UK Women's Liberation Movement, 1968–Present* (Oxford UP: 2019); Lucy Bland, 'Interview – 23/05/2011', *Cultural Studies* 27:5(2013), 687.
[781] My italics. Wendy Pettifer, author interview. Hackney, London, 06/04/2022.

A similar sentiment was expressed amongst women's organisations now based at the Crossroads Women's Centre who had been active in various campaigns in the long 1980s. 'At that time', recalled Cristel Amiss from Women of Colour in the Global Women's Strike and Women Against Rape, 'it was much easier to survive on benefits, and stay out of soul-destroying waged work. We could be activists on the dole!'[782] Amiss felt that the services available in the 1980s enabled a particular kind of social mobility:

> And that's really been taken away. For single mothers, and others, our benefits have been axed and it's harder to survive and challenge injustices we face. Everything's so much more expensive especially housing. Back then, if you lived in a squat or council housing, and you've got some unemployment money, you could be a fulltime anti-sexist/anti-racist activist, and get your rent covered … Or as Greenham women found, they could protest 24/7 because they could live at the site and claim benefits … *I mean, Greenham was made possible, really, because people could "see the man" – that's really changed!* [783]

Pettifer and Amiss's reflections speak to a wider shift in government economic policies and climate, but they also add nuance to the binary arguments that municipal multiculturalism or anti-racism was either a glittering success or an unremitted disaster. Their narratives also speak to how new kinds of street-level bureaucrats became involved in anti-deportation campaigns in the 1980s.

Indeed, we can see further such women using their means and powers of discretion to carve out spaces for other women through the project of municipal multiculturalism. Valerie Wise, Chair of the GLC's Women's Committee, announced a consultation for Black and Ethnic Minority Women in 1983, noting the public meetings they had held before were 'well intended' but under-represented by Black and ethnic minority women: 'This consultation will enable participants to propose courses of action that the Council should follow in developing policies and programmes … to give an idea of the scale of these women's special needs, about 25 percent of the population in Lambeth is black'.[784] Papers from this conference were translated and disrupted in Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi, Hindi, Gujarati, Spanish and Chinese. Interpreters were also provided in Urdi, Hindi, Spanish, Bengali, Turkish, and Greek, for those who wished to attend open events such as the Immigration and Nationality Conference, and the provision of day care nurseries for the children of County Hall staff, was also widened to free creche services for attendees. Such small provisions of accessibility, could have a far greater impact by enabling many more women and minorities to become involved in campaigns.[785]

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[782] Cristell Amiss, author interview, Crossways Women's Centre, London, 21/10/2021.
[783] My italics. Amiss, author interview.
[784] Valerie Wise in LMA GLC/DG/PRB/35/041/363 'London Conference for Black and Ethnic Minority Women', 17/05/1983.
[785] LMA GLC/DG/PRB/35 Vol. 39., 'Go-Ahead for County Hall Creche' 20/10/1982; GLC/DG/PRB/35 Vol. 39., 'GLC Calls Immigration and Nationality Conference' 29/09/1982.

Even so, functioning as an individual citizen agent within the 1980s systems of municipality was not without its difficulties, particularly so if you were a Black woman. Linda Bellos, who worked at Livingstone's GLC as a Team Leader in Equalities and Grant Monitoring, has spoken openly about her role, which involved helping diverse groups to meet conditions of grants and potential funding, as being well-paid and enjoyable, '*except* that my bosses were awful, and I was picked on and bullied'.[786] 'I think partly [it was] because I was well-known in the Women's Liberation Movement, reasonably well-respected, I think in some quarters feared', she reflected.[787] According to Bellos, there was a conflict around her managing two of the women in her team:

> They didn't want to be managed and I think one of them called me a half-breed. They were homophobic and the two bosses of the unit supported them. That was interesting. A particular irony, two years later I became their boss … as far as I was concerned, they were an irritant – they personally were – but the work of the Women's Unit was important and we supported it and the work of the Ethnic Minority Unit included Black History Month which I helped inaugurate.[788]

A similar ongoing negotiation between radicalism with political pragmatism can be found in the reflections of Maria Noble, who was, at the time, a young activist and state-employed Black professional based in Manchester. Noble trained as a solicitor, before working for the Manchester Council as a Equality Policy Researcher, and Senior Education Advisor. She attributed her *wider* activism to a tradition of Black female activism based around Manchester in the long 1980s and interconnected with 'sister' groups across the country – a theme we shall explore further in chapter 5. Specifically, she described Moss Side activist Kathe Locke as the catalyst for her personal involvement, after Locke 'marched up' to her at the Pan-African Society at Manchester University and said 'all you privileged young people here in university need to be doing something in your community'[789]:

> I think I follow her in terms of her radicalism. She was the one who could actually get people together, to motivate people, and mobilise people to do things… She wasn't having any nonsense, she wasn't letting City Council, for instance, impose their agenda upon us a group, you know.[790]

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[786] Linda Bellos, interviewed by Surat Knan for Rainbow Jews on 15/10/2013. Online:http://www.rainbowjews.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/RJ2013LindaBellos-transcript.pdf.[accessed:15/04/2023].
[787] Ibid.
[788] Ibid.
[789] Maria Noble, interview for 'Women of the Soil Project' (WSP), Louise Da-Cocodia EduTrust, 16/06/2018, [4:30]. Online:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psZ2gJjX_mg.[accessed:05/08/2021].
[790] Noble on 'tradition' of Black activism: interview with Noble, Lambeth Archives (LA) 'Do you remember Olive Morris?' oral history project. As quoted in Jessica White, 'Black Women's Groups, Life Narratives, and the Construction of the Self in Late Twentieth-Century Britain', *The Historical Journal*, 65(2022),815.

Noble thus used her law degree to advise and help anti-deportation cases outside of her employment via Manchester's independent Abasindi Women's Co-operative, where she volunteered 'doing things like welfare rights law, providing that support for people so that they knew what their rights were, guiding them through the process of appeals and so on…'[791] Noble emphasised that, when founding Abasindi, the collective consciously avoided taking long-term funding' because 'those agencies that were providing the funding, wanted to – manage [laughs] er, limit, I think – the work that one could do. So we took that stand'.[792] She credited that stand with enabling Abasindi to retain its radicalism, so that it could become, for example, 'a place of safety' both politically and medically during the 1981 uprisings.[793] Reinforcing her wariness of becoming too close to the council, she recounted how as one of its advisors, circumstances were 'very difficult', consultations often felt 'tokenistic', and 'the squeeze' was put on a number of Black women with whom she worked with and knew personally: 'working on very short-term projects [to] achieve all sorts of things beyond the resources they were given' and 'never certain of when their project was going to be ended'. Due to these constraints, she remembers, 'steadily most of them got pushed out.'[794]

Yet through her personal connections and voluntary legal work, Noble not only forged links with other Black and like-minded citizen agents at Manchester council, she also helped to facilitate cooperation with wider radical communities outside of the systems of the local state. She recalled instances, for example, during her anti-deportation advice work with local activists and radical campaigners including Mary Murphy and Paul Okojie, of the Black Peoples Action Group:

> Some of the business with people like Mary Murphy and Paul Okojie, like running up to the airport… Paul and Mary would climb over the fence, you know, run up on the tarmac and, you know, grab people and say: 'You don't need to be deported; we've got a stay on your deportation'. It was as desperate as that at times![795]

Echoing Sivanandan's sentiments that it was better to get the 'tools' from within the system to fight the system, than to 'fight bare-handed', both Bellos and Noble ultimately decided that, in Noble's words, 'although there were problems about getting your voice heard, at least there was a voice happening and I felt that was worth pursuing in my professional life'.[796] Bellos described being 'furious' over the public criminalisation of Black youth after the uprisings in 1981 as one of the

[791] Noble, interview, WSP,[19:30].
[792] Noble, interview, WSP,[5:55].
[793] Noble, interview, WSP,[6:30].
[794] Noble, interview, WSP,[27:57].
[795] Noble, interview, WSP,[18:48].
[796] Sivanandan, 'Challenging Racism: strategies', 8; Noble, interview, WSP,[28:43].

motivators for her wanting to join and make a difference at the GLC.[797] Noble expanded on the emotional predicament that being a part of the local authorities at this time left her in:

> It was really quite hard to stay within that authority, and I know I got personally criticised by people who'd say: 'You shouldn't be working for the local authority, because the local authority is racist.' And I was saying, 'If there's no Black person there, there is no voice!'. If you're not in the room what are you gonna do? You're just standing outside tryna bang on the windows saying let us in sort of thing.[798]

Noble and Bello's actions thus directly supports the findings of Schofield *et al.* that seeing Black activism in the 1980s as 'divided into the incorporated 'professionals' and the authentic radicalism of those who remained outside the state', is to 'ignore the fact that these activists often worked in the same spaces and towards the same ends.'[799] Neither Noble's or Bellos's recollections of operating within the realms of municipal multiculturalism in this period are wholly positive, in fact aspects sound positively traumatic, and yet there is arguably also something to be said for the triumphal narrative arcs they present in their accounts. While they encountered obstacles and discrimination, they ultimately successfully secured well-paid jobs in positions of tangible authority. Both Bellos and Noble worked as openly gay Black women at the GLC and Manchester Council respectively, in roles which went on to aid not only their promotion, but their ability to advance opportunities and equality for others via their acquired powers of discretion.

It is also possible to observe a radicalisation of other individuals *through* their work at the edges of the state. Wendy Pettifer worked as a community worker at Manchester Law Centre before becoming a caseworker at Hackney's Centerprise, in both instances thereby working for organisations that were not state owned but received local council funding. She sketched me a narrative of dedicating her life to refugees, immigrants, and society's most vulnerable, by negotiating the local or periphery state apparatus as a mechanism for progressivism. Both in terms of receiving direct and indirect funding, and by using the good deal of autonomy she and her colleagues had in their everyday activities to the effect that they could spend time supporting campaigns that were challenging the central state.

She accredits her early training to Manchester Law Centre – which largely undertook work through Legal Aid provisions from the local council – and in particular, her encounters with 'exciting' figures such as radical immigration lawyer Steve Cohen there, for sparking 'a real sort of awakening' within her and ingraining that 'silly' but true slogan that 'the personal is political': 'that idea of not just doing individual casework unless you have to, but broadening things out into the wider

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[797] Bellos, L., interviewed by Aviah Day for the GLC Story Oral History Project, 7/03/2017. Online:http://glcstory.co.uk/listen-to-interviews/.[accessed:15/04/2023].
[798] Noble, interview, WSP,[27:40].
[799] Schofield, *et al*. 'The privatisation', 213.

communities; it's a much better way of dealing with things.'[800] This was a philosophy she carried throughout her next nine years as a Case Worker at Centerprise's Advice Centre, during which time Pettifer and her colleagues helped thousands of clients with housing and welfare issues, and also helped to organise and support anti-deportation campaigns.

Centerprise was a grassroots initiative, a 'multi-disciplinary Community Centre', and as the bookshop, coffee bar, and publishing project turned some profit, it had more financial independence from grant-makers than most community organisations. However, the Centerprise Annual Report of 1982 wrote that the aspiration of its early years for financial independence to ensure political autonomy was now impossible to achieve. They realised that 'Centerprise could no longer function without massive subsidy in grant aid'.[801] By 1986, Hackney Council was Centerprise's largest single funder, the GLC a close second, followed by the Greater London Arts Association and the ILEA. Funding from Hackney Council became increasingly important as other funding sources dried up; by 1996, it made up fifty-two per cent of Centerprise's total income.[802] And it wasn't only through direct grants that the council subsidised the centre's work: up until its closure Centerprise's historically low rent to Hackney Council was rumoured to be annually just £520 – just ten pounds a week.[803]

Throughout Pettifer's years at the advice centre, often working fifty-hour-weeks, she and her colleagues developed various practices which might loosely befit Lipsky's notion of street-level bureaucrats 'coping strategies', with varying degrees of success. Some strategies such as her colleague Janet Rees's penchant for cigarettes in an arguably patronising attempt to convince customers they were 'on their side' and 'win people around to the political viewpoint' have aged poorly:

> There was a bit of that going on in Centerprise I think. And it always struck me, that was part of the role of the advice centre. But one of the reasons I smoked was because, people were forever offering me cigarettes, and it felt really prim to say, "Oh no, I don't." So, I used to smoke.[804]

Other strategies, such as their decision to call their 'advice centre customers, customers' – which 'was a very deliberate and explicit thing to do' as they 'didn't want to use the social services type

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[800] Pettifer, author interview; On the development of Legal Aid and Law advice centres see: Kate Bradley, *Lawyers for the Poor* (Manchester UP, 2020),148-180.
[801] Bishopsgate Institute (BI), A Hackney Autobiography (AHA) AHA/1 Centerprise Papers, 'Centerprise Trust Ltd, 'Centerprise Annual Report 1982'; BI AHA/1/5/5 'Draft of Finance Report', 1983.
[802] BI, AHA/1/4/4, 'Report: Centerprise 1971-1996'; 'Centerprise Annual Report 1996', Hackney Autobiography, Bishopsgate Institute, cited in Rosa Schling, *The Lime Green Mystery: An Oral History of the Centerprise co-operative* (London: On the Record, 2017), 49.
[803]'Hackney Council rent hike threatens Centerprise', *Hackney Citizen*, 7/12/2011. Online: https://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2011/12/07/hackney-council-rent-hike-threatens-centerprise/ [accessed 14/04/2023]; For more on Centerprise's closure see Schling, *The Lime Green,*159.
[804] Janet Rees, as quoted in Schling *The Lime Green,* 86.

terminology' – proved more enduring.[805] 'We were very early adopters of something that local authorities adopted subsequently, which is this idea of treating users of services as customers.'[806]

Such intimate casework could be time-consuming and emotionally gruelling, as one official Centerprise report noted: 'all too often we have had to 'pick up the pieces' as it were, after legislation that threatened or seriously eroded citizen's rights.'[807] One worker at Centerprise recalled at one point bringing her six-month-old baby to work with her 'every morning', working long hours, and then getting physically ill: 'I was in hospital for a while, and I think that's why, because I was wiped out, I was knackered really.'[808] Despite the advice centre's attempts to empower people by collectivising issues, changing the language used to describe them, smoking with them, and providing training and resources to enable them to take action themselves, it was often an authoritative voice on the end of the phone that made the difference, as one worker described: 'that made me very angry. And this was me not knowing really what I was doing. … I was able to make a difference, but partly it was because of the way I sound, that I don't sound like a local person.'[809]

We might consider then that the stories of Pettifer, Rees, Bellos and Noble collectively – alongside other women who take leadership roles in municipal anti-deportation campaigns – are just a few out of what Taylor has noted as a 'growing band of', leftist, female, professionals. Collectively carving out and expand professional opportunities for themselves at the front line of the welfare state, in local authorities, and grassroots NGO; 'putting into practice multicultural policies in the daily round of their lives.'[810] Virdee has argued the full significance of this transformation in employment within local authorities can only be grasped when 'set against the backdrop of the neo-liberal restructuring of manufacturing employment, and its disproportionately adverse impact on racialized minorities'.[811] However by turning our focus, in the next section, to the impact that these new street-level bureaucrats could have within just the one example area of anti-deportation campaigns, provides us with a better grasp of the powerful long-term effects and limitations that this transformation had more widely.

London

As we shall see, the GLC's involvement in anti-deportation campaigns ranged from passing motions to funding working groups, and was particularly important in enabling these campaigns and local connections to develop into a significant network. In its final year alone, the GLC gave the Hackney

[805] Rees, Ibid.
[806] Rees, Ibid.
[807] Centerprise Trust Ltd, 'Centerprise Annual Report 1996', as cited in Schling, *The Lime Green*, 87.
[808] Margaret Gosley as cited in Schling, *The Lime Green*, 38.
[809] Jean Milloy, as cited in Schling, *The Lime Green*, 87.
[810] Taylor, *Refugees,* 236.
[811] Virdee, *Racism, Class, and,* 155.

Anti-Deportation Campaign £8,700 in grants, the Turkish Solidarity Campaign, £19,673, the Mark Ponambalam campaign £4,776, the Tamil Refugee Action Group £6000, the Refugee Forum £3,010, and the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism £18,903.[812] For campaigns running on shoe-string budgets such funding was vital for covering essentials, from access to printing facilities and telephones, to paying for the heating of dank sanctuaries, to the support of figures who offered expertise into the systems of post-entry controls and welfare benefits, and 'creative accountancy' channels needed to navigate bureaucratic systems. Moreover, some of this funding even indirectly helped to build connectedness between campaigns. When I interviewed activists, who were living and working in London at that time, how they were able to make such frequent trips across the country to offer support and manpower to multiple anti-deportation campaigns, they recalled that their ability to hire GLC minibuses cheaply and easily was critical to their ability to rally rapidly.[813]

The GLC also functioned as a significant unifying body for raising public awareness against deportations. As part of its 1984 campaign 'London Against Racism', for example, the GLC organized a photographic exhibition and conference, 'Coming Together for Equal Rights', to raise the profile of, and bring together, migrants and refugees to discuss issues of common concern and to promote greater unity and new connections.[814] As its literature explained, the GLC believed migrants and refugees were among the most exploited and vulnerable sections of the population:

> Many thousands of them live in daily fear of deportation, internal immigration controls, and passport raids, while facing unemployment, low-paid menial jobs, and racism and do not enjoy basic civil rights such as the right to vote, the right to free movement, and the right to work where they choose.[815]

That year the GLC also passed a motion condemning deportations and police raids on ethnic minority communities. This endorsed the principles of the European Manifesto for migrants, immigrants, and refugees and resolved to impress these views on the Home Secretary. It also established an Anti-Deportation Working Group. This group met for about eighteenth months, aimed to bring together people from different communities, and ultimately agreed upon a policy document opposing deportations and all immigration controls. This committed to pooling 'our information and other resources, in order to put pressure on local authorities and to see where we could most impact', and to promoting 'public awareness of the need for changes in the immigration and deportation laws.'[816]

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[812] GLC Ethnic Minority Committee, *Grants Approved for 1985-86*, 1985. As cited in Tompson, *Under Siege,* 183.
[813] Amiss, author interview.
[814] LMA GLC/DG/PRB/8/2448, GLC 'Coming together for equal rights', October 1984, 2; As cited in Glora Khamkar, 'The Evolution of British Asian Radio in England: 1960-2004', unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Bournemouth, 2016, 119.
[815] LMA GLC/DG/PRB/8/2452 'GLC Anti-Racist Year' n.d.
[816] GLC, *Right to be,* 4.

On 9 June 1985 the Working Group held a conference at County Hall called, 'Organising Against Deportation', producing a campaign resource pack and publication: *Right to Be Here: A Campaigning Guide to the Immigration Laws.* This extensive guide gave advice and ideas on every aspect of considering, establishing, and maintaining a campaign, from how to choose a typeface for your pamphlets or how to navigate the media attention, to how to choose a lawyer or decipher Home Office bureaucratic correspondence. The publishing group felt that what they curated must 'strengthen the movement and be its voice. And in this it seems it was true to its aims. One editorial member and activist confirmed that it had 'complete editorial control. The GLC paid for the publication but it was written and compiled and edited by those of us in the working group and others.[817] Another put it:

> it must be a resource for the movement, that it must be a campaigning guide, so it would have information on the laws it would give ideas about campaigning, and, *crucially*, it would report on different campaigns in their *own* words. So, we asked different campaigns to write something about their campaigns, what they thought worked, what they thought didn't work and so on…[818]

At publication *Right to Be Here* collated together the collective wisdom of contributors from over fifteen different campaigns and organisations.[819] No small editorial feat, the guide offered an invaluable source of collective advice from those who had experienced or were experiencing the multiple and onerous demands of an anti-deportation campaign.

The GLC's work thus went beyond shallow tokenism but rather directly set itself in opposition to the Home Office's self-purported values of serving the British community and upholding the established international values of human rights, as discussed in chapter 1. To be sure, there is some evidence that the relationship between anti-deportation campaigns and the GLC reflected some of the problematic tropes Gilroy highlighted in the GLC's wider anti-racist campaigns. There were tensions over autonomy within the GLC. Anne Neale, a key editorial member of the Anti-Deportation Working Group, became involved in anti-deportation campaigns through her wider activism, and brought with her an experience of autonomous organisation activism from her work at the Kings Cross Women's Centre. Neale recollected that although the GLC didn't have any editorial say on the anti-deportation campaigning guide, 'we had to fight quite hard to make sure that the Anti-deportation Working Group, which was part of the GLC, wasn't going to become a coordinating group, or wasn't going to be in charge or giving direction to any of the individual campaigns.'[820] She

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[817]Anne Neale and Sue Shutter, speaking at 'Here to Stay: Tracing the histories of deportations resistance' (HTS) 9/02/2019. Online:http://glcstory.co.uk/deportations-resistance-resources/.[accessed:17/04/2023].
[818] Neale, at HTS.
[819] These were: Nony Ardill of the Resident Domestics Campaign; Shokat Babul; the Afia Begum Campaign Against Deportation; George Euegeniou of Theatro Technis; Johanna Faulkes; Rev. David Haslam; Muhammad Idrish; Imran Khan of Friends of Rashida Abedi; Halya Kowalski of the Hasbudak Campaign; Manchester Law Centre; Bill Morris of Transport and General Workers Union; Shemin Nasser; Juan Rincon of the Latin American Advisory Committee; and Minister Paul Weller.
[820] Anne Neale, of Queer Strike, author interview, London, Womens Crossways Centre, 21/10/2021.

felt that there: 'kept being a tendency for people to want to have a coordinating body" but she, and others from the King's Cross Women's Centre who were involved thought that:

> it was really important for the GLC not to have that role, because the GLC was local government and therefore subject to all kinds of different political pressures … so that played out in various tensions about 'what was the role of this Anti-Deportation Working Group?' In the end, we succeeded in not being a coordinating body. [821]

This conviction that individual campaigns needed to maintain political autonomy was evident in the literature Neale wrote for the Anti-Deportation Group's 1985 campaigning guide, which explicitly advised campaigners:

> Obviously it is extremely important for campaigns to get backing from local councils, individual councillors and MPs. But whoever we approach for support, they should not be allowed to set the terms of the campaign in return for their support. Politicians are usually on the lookout for whatever approach will be most convenient in their careers. This might even mean they would be reluctant to take up "controversial" cases, preferring to stick to those they consider mainstream. We must remember that by its success, the movement makes "mainstream", cases which were considered "way out" the year before.[822]

Here, Neale consciously self-identified and recognised the importance of her role as brokers between the 'mainstream' and those 'way out' there. Neale thus actively conceptualised her role as a campaigner working *with* the GLC and the local state to *change* that state; both with and against the state simultaneously. Here we are seeing a variant of Lipsky's street-level bureaucracy at play.[823] In fact, Neale, who was not actually working for the state per se, and indeed remained protective of her political autonomy as an activist, and was rather 'co-opted' into working with the state, through the funding of the Anti-Deportation Working Group, perhaps better befits Maynard-Moody and Musheno's introduction of the notion of citizen agents.[824] Moreover, in contrast to the major strand of current empirical work on street-level bureaucrats, evidencing how the types of 'coping strategies' that Lipsky identified are 'robbing services of their substantive value', through the example of the Anti-Deportation Working Group's actions, we find evidence of citizen agents using their discretion for radical ends.[825] Key members like Neale who had substantial experience with campaigns and relationships with those they were campaigning for, were able to steer the group's function and impact. While wary of the dangers of losing political autonomy by incorporating their work with the

[821] Neale, author interview.
[822] Neale, as cited in *Right To Be*, 90.
[823] Lipksy, *Streel-Level Bureaucrats.*
[824] Mayard-Moody, Musheeno, 'State agents or'.
[825] Brodkin, 'Reflections on Street-Level', 943.

GLC, campaigners like Neale were nonetheless able to negotiate a partnership, which in her own words 'succeeded'.[826]

If we further follow the findings that the street-level bureaucrat's behaviour is simultaneously influenced by the organisational and institutional environment in which they work, at the same time that they were shaping this culture through their acts of discretion, we should also consider that spaces such as the GLC, offered an organizational culture that if not encouraged, at least allowed, space for street-level bureaucrats/ citizen agents to use their discretion for radical ends. More recent explorations of organisational cultures, such as that from Michael Piore, recognise managerial and other relational influences as a significant factor in guiding individual behaviour.[827] Piore argues that in a street-level bureaucracy decisions are made within a framework of tacit rules and procedures, embedded in the organisational culture, passed on through the socialization of new organisational recruits, and reinforced and evolving through discussion among peers and managers.[828] Piore's theory might give the previously mentioned resolutions, motions, and statements passed by the GLC committees added importance – perhaps further sanctioning a more radical culture. When local council leaders or politicians including Ken Livingstone shaped the GLC's organizational conversations by promoting the 1984 'London Against Racism Year', for example, this arguably encouraged the innovative and entrepreneurial behaviour of citizen agents like Neale, which, in turn, shaped practice, such as the work of the Anti-Deportation Working Group.

We can see how the emotional intimacy sometimes inspired or required by the work of the different kinds of street-level bureaucrats and citizen agents who were being co-opted into the municipal multiculturalist project of the long 1980s could lend itself to more radical outcomes. As different kinds of agents, with different personal outlooks were enabled to use funding opportunities to reach positions with discretionary power. Wendy Pettifer's casework with customers, for example, readily transcended into political campaigning. In particular, she intervened in 1986 in the case of Prem Lathar (see **figure 24**), who had arrived in Britain some eleven years earlier, and was threatened not only with deportation, but with the spectre of having to leave her four British-born children behind: Mina, aged seven, Kiran, six, Vijay, three, and Sanjay, two. As Lathar said at the time: 'How can I take my children to India, I would have no way of feeding them. The alternative [was] to leave them in care and that would break my heart. Why should I be parted from my children?'[829] Pettifer recalled how she became aware of Lathar's predicament:

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[826] Neale, author interview.
[827] M. J. Piore, 'Beyond Markets: Sociology, street-level bureaucracy, and the management of the public sector', *Regulation & Governance*, 5:1(2011), 145–164.
[828] Piore, 'Beyond Markets', as cited in Lucy Gilson, 'Lipsky's Street Level Bureaucracy', in Edward Page, *et al.* (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of the Classics of Public Policy* (Oxford UP, 2015),394-395.
[829] Lathar in John Dillon, 'Mother facing deportation', *Hackney Gazette*, 8/08/1986.

> Prem was just one of my child cases; I think she originally came about a benefits matter. And then she got served for the removal notice with her four kids. So the campaign was very organised around with the school caucus and primary school, who were incredibly supportive, and then later, there was a big campaign about two Turkish kids [Zeynep, aged seven, and Fatih Hasbudak, aged five.] … there were many.[830]

Figure 24: Photograph of the Lathar family, courtesy of Wendy Pettifer personal collection.

Pettifer's rather self-effacing, blasé, description of her involvement in this case as 'just one of' her cases somewhat belies how much work, collective effort, skill, and professional discretionary decisions went into such campaigns. Around 1800 people signed a petition supporting the family. It was picked up by newspapers including the local *Hackney Gazette*, while Hackney South MP, Brian Sedgemore, raised the case with the Home Office.[831] Pettifer expanded on her deep personal involvement in the case to me, explaining that she herself wrote many letters to the Home Secretary, to community leaders, and 'this Bishop of Stepney':

> So he [the bishop] came on board, and he was doing a lot of lobbying. And also, community groups, Trade Unions… and we had a big thing at Centerprise, a big kind of event, a fundraising event in November… on a Sunday with the Bishop and the school and everything,

[830] Pettifer, author interview.
[831] John Dillion, 'Mother facing deportation', *Hackney Gazette,* 8/08/1986.

> and then like the next day, they just gave her leave, because all their kids were born here. Much more discretion then.

On an emotional level Pettifer was able to build up a relationship of trust and support with Lathar which enabled her to confide in her. On a practical level she was able to use her professional skills to help organize and guide a campaign. Both aspects were critical, and both were conceivably enabled by the fact that Pettifer, was herself a single-mum being funded by the local council to carry out community work, and being subsidized to study law – in many ways then a prime example of the different kinds of people making discretionary decisions as a result of the municipal politics of the 1980s. But equally without the intervention of Camden Council and the GLC, Pettifer and her colleagues may not have been in a position to help support the campaign.

Another major Hackney-based campaign that Pettifer worked on, that of the Hasbudak family, did not end so successfully. After the family was forced into hiding for three months, Polat Hasbudak was arrested and deported via a police trap and his wife and two children handed themselves over for deportation shortly thereafter.[832] Even so, the central involvement of local schools in the campaigns for both Lathar and the Hasbudaks highlights another important layer of street-level bureaucrats or citizen agents at play: state-sponsored educators and educative administrators. Education was of course a key site of debate within the wider culture wars of the 1980s, and within the political debate over the effect of the Left in local government and municipal multiculturalism in particular.[833] The debate was emblemised by 'the Ray Honeyford affair', wherein an obscure white headteacher was turned into a national figure, both admired on the one hand and reviled on the other, for his opinions published in *The Times*.[834] In such a context greater appreciation should be given to the commitment, personal costs and professional risks undertaken by those citizen agents engaged in the struggle to reform school curricula, teacher training and other educative practices.[835]

This courage was acutely visible in the Hasbudak's campaign, which was widely supported by staff, teachers, governors, parents, and children, at Zeynep's and Fatih's state primary school in Hackney, the William Patten School. Between 1984 and 1985 the school's populace was central to the array of campaigning efforts, from candlelit vigils outside the school, to twenty- four- hour-pickets outside the Home Office, to a fundraising 'No Deportation Disco' (see **figure 25**). The school

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[832] David Shaw, 'Hideaway father trapped by police', *Evening Standard*, 8/03/1984, 5.; Stephen Cook, 'Home Office adopts tougher approach over deportations', *The Guardian*, 3/04/1984, 4.

[833] The findings of the 1985 Swann Report officially highlighted the unmet needs of Black and ethnic minority children within the education system, albeit in limited terms. See Troyna and Carrington, *Education, Racism and Reform* (Routledge, 1990),79; *The Swann Report* (1985), online:http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/swann/swann1985.html.[accessed:16/04/2023].

[834] Following the publication a series of Honeyford's essays in *The Times* in which he ranted in culturally racist terms about the dangers of multicultural education. Honeyford was eventually sacked but continued to be presented in the popular press as a martyr and became a popular rallying point for the New Right. For more on the Honeyford affair see: Gilroy, *Ain't no Black*, 108.

[835] Ali Rattansi,'Changing the Subject? Racism, Culture and Education', in Rattansi and James Donald, *'Race' Culture & Difference* (1992),11.

children were often present at demonstrations and were further co-opted into the publicity raising: four-hundred letters were reportedly sent to the Home Office from the children; they wrote protest songs; held a children's press conference; came along to meetings between Brian Sedgemore MP and Waddington; and even got Father Christmas to deliver a huge postcard to 10 Downing Street.[836] These stunts succeeded in gaining the campaign TV coverage, but also attracted adverse attention. According to reports from contemporary campaigners:

> The police then harassed the whole school over a long period — surveillance by phone-tapping, interfering with mail, police stake-outs of the school and helicopter observation of the playground. Nursery age children were questioned by the police.[837]

Teachers involved were alleged to have been subjected to particular police attention. One member of the Hackney Teacher's Association (HTA), who was very active on the Hasbudak campaign, attended as a delegate on a miner's picket at Mansfield. According to the teacher, on his way back to the coach, long after any confrontation had finished, he was set upon by a group of policemen dressed in full riot gear who beat him unconscious, leaving him hospitalized. The HTA reported that:

> This event seemed a bit of a mystery until we realised that police from Stoke Newington were amongst those who had been drafted to the picket. It is difficult not to conclude that they took the opportunity to settle scores with a local teacher who they knew to take the side of deportees.[838]

[836] William Patten School, *The Patten Pages*, Iss:175,2/07/2021. Online:https://www.williampatten.hackney.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Patten-Pages-Issue-175.docx.pdf.[accessed20/06/2023].
[837] Hackney Teachers Association, *Police Out of School* (London, National Union of Teachers, 1985), 4. Online:https://hackneyhistory.wordpress.com/2013/10/30/police-out-of-school/.[accessed:14/04/2023].
[838] *Police Out of*, 5.

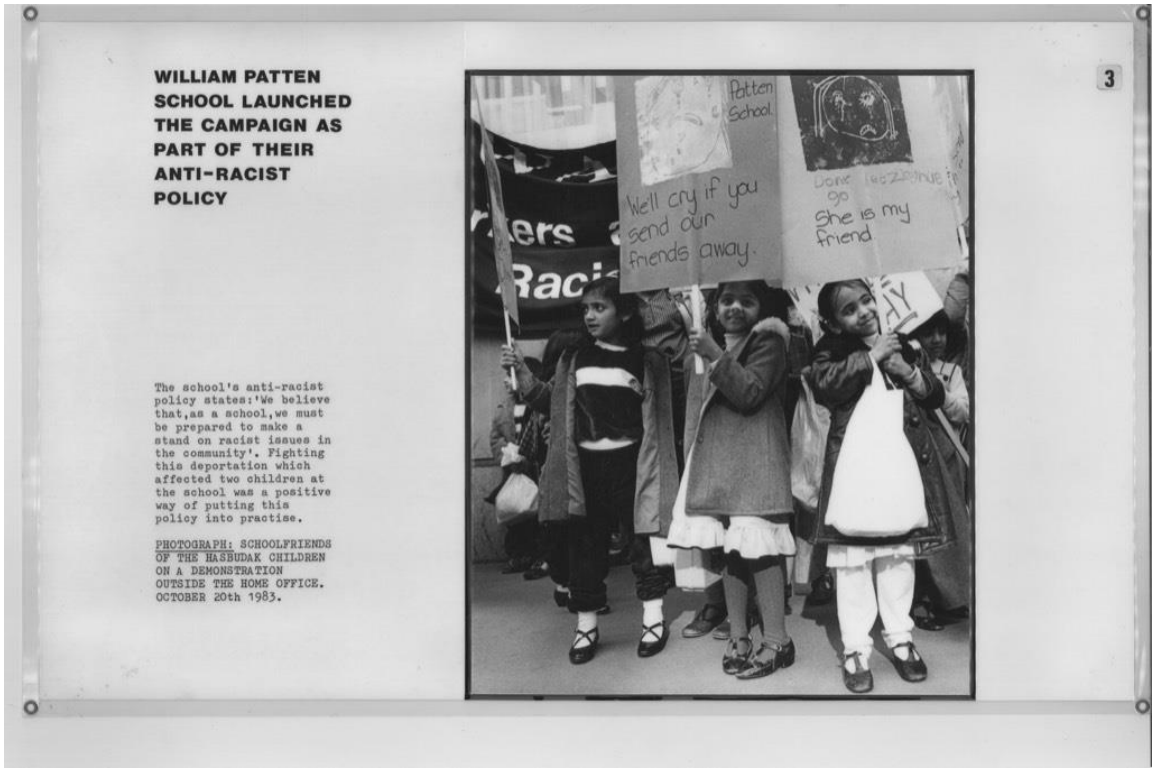

Figure 25: Screenshot of William Patten school children campaigning, photo copyright of Anna Shewin. Online:https://www.ahackneyautobiography.org.uk/trails/community-action/1.[accessed 17/04/2023].

To be clear this politicisation of the playground during the Hasbudak's campaign did not occur in a political vacuum. In 1979 the Hackney branch of the National Union of Teachers had begun a radical policy of non-cooperation with the police, mounting a prolonged campaign and publishing a corresponding pamphlet in 1985 titled: *Police Out of School*.[839] The immediate cause of this was the murder, and sustained cover-up of an East London based teacher, Blair Peach, by the Special Patrol Group police while he was at a anti-racist demonstration.[840] The teachers also had further reasons for not supporting the police – they had become aware of the distrust and suspicion that many minority children and their families felt for the police – fuelled by "Stop and Search" policies, the local killing of Colin Roach, and increasing police involvement in deportation operations – to name but a few.[841]

[839] Ibid.
[840] For more information see: John Cass, 'Report of Commander Cass' , Metropolitan Police Report, 12/07/1979. Online: https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/metropolitan-police/other_information/corporate/blair-peach---12-july-1979-report-pseudonyms [accessed 15/04/2023].
[841] Roach was a 21-year-old Black British man shot under suspicious circumstances in the entrance of Stoke Newington police station, Hackney, on 12/12/1983, fuelling community distrust of police. See: Emma Bartholomew, 'Benjamin Zephaniah on how Colin Roach's death inside Stoke Newington Police Station sparked a movement 35 years ago', *Ham & High*, 23/01/2018. Online:https://www.hamhigh.co.uk/news/21159628.benjamin-zephaniah-colin-roachs-death-inside-stoke-newington-police-station-sparked-movement-35-years-ago/.[accessed:15/04/2023].

What is striking however is how the Hackney Teaching Association explicitly linked their actions, and in particular the Habudak's anti-deportation campaign, to local authority municipal anti-racist led policy: 'William Patten, in Hackney, took the side of the Hasbudaks *as part of* the school and ILEA's [the Inner London Education Authority's] anti-racist policy.'[842] Yet their *Police Out* campaign literature also makes clear that teachers involved in taking a stand against police discrimination, harassment and invasion, which was how they conceptualised the police led-entrapment and deportation of Mr Husbaduk, were acutely aware that they were also pushing the boundaries of the municipal multiculturalism with their actions:

> This year the ILEA had produced an anti-racist policy. They have produced *extensive documents* in support of their policy and asked all schools to actively implement it. However, in their policy, they have nothing to say about the police… the ILEA is able to ignore them in its anti-racist policy documents.[843]

Following the *Police Out* campaign a working party of ILEA officers, headteachers and police met to re-consider policy. The ILEA produced a new policy document which instructed schools not to divulge pupil's personal records to the police without a court order. Again then, we find here direct evidence of state-employed street-level bureaucrats, using their positions and resources to advance a New Urban Left agenda, actively using bureaucratic systems of anti-racist policy, and specifically 'the extensive documents produced', to gain legitimacy and momentum in the process.

These local actions and campaigns thus support the findings of Schofield *et al.*, of the 1980s as being a time when there 'were more and less radical versions of equal opportunities, self-help, multiculturalism and anti-racism', as well as both vigorous debates between these different tendencies and evidence how these debates could play out in localised but powerful ways.[844] But also, when we consider that this was a time commonly associated with the effects of Clause 28 – the series of laws across Britain that prohibited the 'promotion of homosexuality' by local authorities and their schools – these actions of manifested municipal anti-racism also remind us of the competing visions of Britain as a multicultural nation that were at play. Revealing alliances between street-level bureaucrats and sanctuary campaigns thus contribute to the growing field of research viewing the period with a less Thatcher-centric lens.[845]

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[842] My italics. *Police Out of,* 4.
[843] Ibid.
[844] Schofield, *et al*. 'the privatisation of'.
[845] Hilton, M., Moores, C., and Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 'New Times revisited: Britain in the 1980s', *Contemporary British History*, 31:2(2017), 152-157.

Manchester

It was not just in London that we see the resources and tools of the New Urban Left being used to support anti-deportation campaigns. The other hub of anti-deportation campaigns in the 1980s was Manchester. Manchester had its own unique history of municipal radicalism and multiculturalism. Throughout the 1980s it was a city without a viable local Conservative opposition, waves of deindustrialization throughout the 1970s and mounting unemployment during the recession of the early 1980s that stoked resentment against Westminster and the Conservative Government's political-economic programme. This laid the foundations for a vibrant form of oppositional politics that characterized both the city council, and the city more widely.[846]

This though was not the same thing as a unified Labour party. Manchester council, as with its near-neighbour Liverpool, experienced power shifts between what might be loosely categorised as the centre-left and far-left factions of its Labour party. In the May 1984 local elections, after a bitter struggle with the right-wing Labour leadership over spending cuts that had led to a four-year period of exile for thirteen rebel councillors, the ruling Labour Group fell under the control of the Labour Left and its leader, Graham Stringer, one of the thirteen rebels.[847] Manchester was thus a relative latecomer to municipal socialism and multiculturalism, and Stringer's left-led council were up against Whitehall policies of rate-capping and deep cuts almost as soon as they took control. Stringer soon established Manchester as a public bastion of radical politics, however, the central theme though, to which all else was subordinated, was the political struggle against Thatcher.

During their periods of expulsion, Stringer and the Labour Left forged contacts with a range of community activists, feminists and anti-racist groups, which became the basis for the broad alliance strategy developed in Manchester. As Stringer reflected:

> During our three or four years of opposition, we made alliances at all sorts of people who put feminist politics and the politics of the gay movement on the agendas in Manchester. If we had not been fighting the cuts with them, these issues would have dropped from most agendas.[848]

Under his leadership, the City Council actively opposed central government policies while promoting radical initiatives around local economic development, nuclear disarmament and sexual equality.[849]

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[846] Adam Tickell and Jamie Peck, 'The Return of the Manchester Men: Men's Words and Men's Deeds in the Remaking of the Local State', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 21:4(1996),606; Stephen Quilley 'Manchester First: From Municipal Socialism to the Entrepreneurial City', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 24:3(2000),606.

[847] Contemporary councillor Kath Fry, explains the right-wing Labour Group, who were still in the majority, proposed cutting £13.7 million from the budget for 1980/81.13 Left-wing councillors voted against this and were expelled from the Labour Group, but reinstated after appeal. See Kath Fry's full account online:https://manchester1984.uk/chapters/section-1/chapter-1/appendix-1a/.[accessed:17/04/2023];

[848] Interview cited in Lansley, *et al*., *Councils in Conflict,* 14.

[849] Tickell and Peck, 'The Return of', 606.

An orientation towards marginalized social groups outside Labour's traditional supporters certainly provided a major plank of this municipal project: radical democratization, enfranchisement, and the political empowerment of marginalized and disadvantage groups.[850] As Stringer, declared to the *Tribune*, 19 July 1985:

> We want to bring people in, and open up the town hall, ask people what they want and involve them in the decision-making process. We want to involve all sorts of different people who are exploited in society and provide support for them.[851]

Herein we can see direct evidence of Taylor's findings of the New Left, Labour-led local governments, increasingly viewing multicultural municipalism as a political project, as engagement with new social movements of class and identity politics coalesced to forge a new urban-leftist coalition against Thatcherism.[852]

In line with this ethos of progressive inclusivity in the summer of 1984, much like as had been done at the GLC, a Council Anti-deportation Working Party was established that helped co-ordinate conferences for campaigns. On 23 March 1985, together with local anti-deportation campaigns, it organised a national demonstration against deportations. The same year it sent two advisors to Pakistan to collect evidence for pending immigration appeal cases, publishing a pamphlet, *What would you do if your fiancée lived on the moon?* based on their findings.[853] The Working Party also published a book, *The Same Old Story*, comparing the experiences of controls by Jewish and Black workers in Manchester.[854] It even placed advertisements in *The Guardian*, 'Manchester Against Deportation', that actively supported local campaigns and stated how the dramatic increase in deportations from 1979 to 1982 was 'the result of immigration controls which are both racist and sexist and an attack on the security of its black citizens.'[855] Readers were thus encouraged: 'The least you can do is to write to us and support these people. We will send your letters direct to the Home Secretary. Write to: The Town Clerk, Town Hall, Manchester M60 2LA'.[856]

One of the Working Party's reports, submitted to the Council's Race Sub-Committee, shows that it was particularly aware of the importance of its own responsibility to agitate for change from within. The report acknowledged that many immigration cases had a 'greater chance of success outside the formal appeals system than inside' and that political agitation and 'assistance from the council [was] crucial to the success of campaigning activities organised by those experiencing

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[850] Quilley, 'Manchester first' 604; See Hilary Wainwright, *Labour: a tale of two parties* (London: Hogarth Press, 1987).
[851] Graham Stringer quoted in *Tribune*, 19/071985.
[852] Taylor, *Refugees,* 234.
[853] AIURC SCC GB3228.28/01/111, Steve Cohen and Nadia Siddiqui, *What would you do if your fiancé went to the Moon?* (MCC, 1986).
[854] Steve Cohen, *It's The Same Old Story* (MCC, 1987).
[855] My italics. *The Guardian*, 16/08/1984, 2.
[856] Ibid.

immigration problems'. It stressed that council support 'has ranged from the printing of leaflets and petitions to attendance at rallies and demonstrations and … at hearing of appeals'. This assistance was described as 'crucial to the Council's anti-racist policies'.[857] The report also expressed concern at developing internal immigration controls, stating 'the main area of [council] activity is an examination of the question of post-entry controls, i.e., where immigration status is used to determine eligibility for welfare benefits'.[858]

Manchester council's support to anti-deportation campaigns was particularly important for long and protracted campaigns such as Mendis's. As the Mendis campaign mushroomed into a beacon of anti-Thatcherism and anti-racist activity, the local council showed several public acts of support: passing resolutions sanctioning a long list of more proactive actions such as sending a delegation to visit the sanctuary; attending press conferences; inviting VMDC members to speak to the council; displaying banners at the town hall; and publicising the national demonstration, even sending 'as many members as possible on the demonstration… to ensure that banners are taken along.'[859] Again, as with the GLC, the council made available its resources to help in less overt ways too, providing the campaign with office space at the town hall and so to crucial access to photocopiers and the 'use of the external telephone', all of which helped 'the VMDC to mobilise'.[860]

This activity was actively undermining Home Office policy, something which did not go unnoticed in Whitehall. As one informant to the Home Office reported in April 1987, the VMDC would be holding a weekend conference at the place of sanctuary. They sent several VMDC leaflets attached to their update and noted:

> These leaflets have been produced with finance provided by Manchester City Council – *there is clearly no lack of funds*. The aim of the conference is to develop the sanctuary movement to the extent that all who are made subjects of deportation orders are persuaded to seek sanctuary. *We have now reached a stage where the sanctuary movement within this case has grown larger than the case itself* – so much so that, even if Mendis wanted to leave sanctuary, the campaign would not let him do so.[861]

Evidently in the eyes of the Home Office, or their immigration officer informant at least, Manchester Council and the VMDC were in a league together, and the platform and resources this could provide to anti-deportation campaigns made the issue much higher stakes.

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[857] Report submitted by the Town Clerk to the council's Race Sub-Committee', June 1986, as cited in Cohen, *Immigration Controls*, 22.
[858] Cohen, 'The local state', 528.
[859] Manchester Central Library (MCL), MCL GB127 M819/3/3/5, Manchester City Labour Party 'Minutes of the General Management Committee', 14/10/1987.
[860] MCL GB127 M818/3/2/6 'Manchester City Labour Party RESOLUTIONS', 11/5/88.
[861] My italics. TNA HO 394/900, T. W. Paterson, 'Update in the case of Viraj Mendis' to Lunar House, 11/03/1987.

This kind of support and resources from Manchester Council did not just occur and appear overnight, however, it had to permeate through levels of street-level bureaucracy. A crucial aspect to enabling the council to put its money where its mouth was in deportation campaigns, was the fact that in July 1985, a Special Needs Charitable Trust was established to assist those threatened with deportation.[862] The councillors were not allowed to directly use tax-payers money to help people in this way, so a few hundred thousand pounds was invested in a special high-interest bearing account, so that the interest generated, could be used for giving out hardship grants. This was deemed by the City Solicitor to be perfectly legal, since the original sum of money wasn't being spent. Then, in 1985 Manchester City Council established along with the former Greater Manchester Council, an Immigration Needs Trust. Both paid £50,000. The purpose of the trust was to 'provide financial assistance to needy Manchester residents who … are seeking to establish a right to reside in Manchester'.[863] In this way, hundreds of desperately poor people, who had no access to any other source of income, were thereby helped, although the individual sums given out rarely amounted to more than a few pounds.

As contemporary councillor Kath Fry reflected, this was no small feat in the context of consistent and deep central government cuts:

> There is no doubt that without the genius of Frances Done and the City Treasurer in devising the fantastically successful creative accountancy schemes to combat the punitive government measures designed to bring local councils to their knees, things would have been much harsher for the people of the city.[864]

Here then in Done we find another example of an individual street-level bureaucrat, working within a constellation of left-wing professionals and councillors across the country, alongside and among an increasingly diverse staff membership, sincerely motivated to enact policies of equality and anti-racism from where they were standing. In 1987 steering members of Manchester Council's Labour Group were able to channel and establish these funds into establishing an Immigration Aid Unit, which still survives today. At least two other authorities, namely Birmingham and Liverpool, followed suit and established independent immigration aid units. The unit produced a pamphlet, 'Help us set up an Immigration Aid Unit in Manchester', which itemised thirty-six campaigns established between 1978 and 1987 within Greater Manchester. Twenty-six were formed between 1985 and 1987.[865]As Cohen, correctly observes, 'These campaigns and others elsewhere forced the issue of

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[862] Nigel Bunyan, 'Public money wasted on Mendis case, says Tories', *The Daily Telegraph,* 2/02/1989, 6.
[863] Cohen*, Immigration Controls,* 201.
[864] Fry quoted in 'Manchester 1984'. Online: https://manchester1984.uk/chapters/epilogue/ [accessed 15/04/2023]. Fry moved to Manchester as a young single parent of two in 1973, joined the Labour Party and served as Secretary of Manchester City Labour Party from 1984-1988, and Manchester City Councillor from 1988-2004.
[865] Cohen, *Immigration Controls, the*, 23.

controls on the agenda of local authorities.'[866] But it should also be acknowledged that key street-level bureaucrats such as Done were important actors in translating that agenda into action.

Still, we must note the limits of the New Urban Left which was also evident in Manchester council's involvement in the Mendis campaign. In 1987 the council offered Mendis a job as a Diversity Officer, only to effectively u-turn following an onslaught of negative press under headlines such as 'Uproar over £10,000 in handouts to hideaway immigrant'.[867] The wisdom of the council's multicultural credentials were already under fire due to the recent tragic murder of thirteen-year-old, Ahmed Iqbal Ullah in a Manchester school playground, at the hands of another thirteen-year-old white pupil.[868] The council's inquiry into the murder found that the particular way its own anti-racist policies were implemented at Burnage High School, under the administration of the Manchester Education Committee, were an 'unmitigated disaster'.[869] It explicitly condemned the school's management for its 'failure to see the link between the way the school treated those white students and the potential for racial conflict' as 'unforgivable'. The murder was thus widely regarded by Conservatives as proof that the council had gone too far in its pursuit of anti-racist education and provoked inter-racial hostilities.[870] And, in the eyes of some, became conflated with ongoing Mendis affair. *The Guardian* quoted 'An Asian who has been doing community work in South Manchester' as stating that '"Mendis brought it all to the boil,"', '"Especially after two of his defence committee, were allowed into Burnage School to speak':

> The council think they did something courageous. I think it was plain stupid and I say that even though I might agree that somebody like Mendis is the right choice for the job. The council didn't do it for us. They did it for other politicians. A lot of white parents saw it as a leftie propaganda move and their resentments have spread to the children.[871]

The Council's attempt to straddle both sides of the fence regarding Mendis after this is visible in its memorandum 'Election 1988, Doorstep questions and answers'. Members were warned that 'the Tories have been circulating a leaflet around the city which allegedly 'exposes' seven examples of 'left-wing madness in Manchester'' and provides 'the facts and arguments to use if any of these items are raised'. Amongst the usual suspects of concerns against the 'looney left' – 'Support for the IRA', 'Lesbian sex film on the rates' – and the age old – 'How do I get my bins collected properly?' – the

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[866] Cohen, *Immigration Controls, the*, 25.
[867] 'Uproar over £10,000 in handouts to hideaway immigrant', *The Express*, 8/05/1989.
[868] Ball *et al*. have also observed that by the later 1980s there were already wider signs that previously radical local authorities were adopting a lower profile on issues concerned with racial equality: Ball, *et al*, *Race and Local Politics*, 12.
[869] Ian McDonald, *Murder in the Playground: Report of the Macdonald Inquiry into Racism and Racial Violence in Manchester Schools* (London: New Beacon Books, 1989).
[870] Gilroy asserts the subsequent McDonald Inquiry exposed the 'moralistic excesses' and 'dictatorial character' of anti-racism: Gilroy, 'The End of Anti-Racism', in Ball *et al. Race and Local Politics*, 191-209.
[871] 'Aftermath to a murder', *The Guardian*, 04/04/1987, 9.

fact that 'Mendis [was] appointed a £10,000 a year job' was ranked number two. Doorsteppers were prompted to respond that:

> Viraj has lived in Manchester for thirteen years and is not an 'illegal immigrant' since he entered the country perfectly lawfully and has lived here for such a long time and has made this country his home.
>
> The present Government's immigration laws *are totally inhumane* and the City Council has supported a number of Manchester residents under threat of deportation in their campaign to stay in this country. The Council, needless to say, is *completely opposed to all forms of radical discrimination.*[872]

The council was not only supporting the VMDC, but publicly going as far as to condemn all the government's immigration laws as discriminatory. The influence of key VMDC arguments is patent. They also consistently opened their campaign literature with the fact that 'Viraj has lived in Manchester for thirteen years', and it was one of its key strategies to emphasise the importance of Mendis' case as a symbolic and integral fight against all the government's 'totally inhuman' and 'discriminatory' immigration laws.[873]

However, the memorandum from 1988 then continued by guiding doorsteppers to explain to constituents, that Mendis was only 'offered the job because he was the best person for the job' but had been unable to take up the appointment because of his confinement to sanctuary and was 'therefore, not being paid by the Council even though he is doing some immigration work on a voluntary basis'.[874] This makes it plain that the Council was attempting to save face and distance itself from the press. The Labour-Left of Manchester Council experienced electoral defeats in the 1988, and Stringer, openly blamed media misrepresentation and concentration on a number of issues for some of the election setbacks: 'concentration on the Viraj Mendis issue and on gays has lost seats.'[875] We should, however, understand Manchester's defeats in the wider national context, explored by James Curran, that had seen 'vitriolic' popular press attacks on the 'loony left' GLC for the last five years, and that had intensified in the run-up to the 1987 general election. Curran argues these likely had a 'toxifying' hangover effect upon the perception of other Labour councils and the New Urban Left specifically, in the eyes of both the public and Labour leadership.[876]

Simultaneously, immigration officers were reporting, gleefully, back to the Home Office on these disputes. 'I thought you might like to know', one wrote, 'that at the AGM of the Manchester Council for Community Relations, which I attended', while 'most speakers were anxious to be seen to

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[872] My italics. MCL GB127 M818/3/2/5, 'Doorstep questions and answers: Election 1988'.
[873] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/46.
[874] MCL GB127 M818/3/2/5, 'Doorstep questions'.
[875] Stringer quoted in *The Manchester Evening News* 'Labour's gloom', 8/05/987; See also Fry, 'Appendix' of 'Manchester 1984'.
[876] James Curran, 'Toxifying the new urban left', in Curran, J., Gaber, I. and Petley, J., *Culture Wars* (London: Routledge, 2018), 121;'Kinnock slams town hall wreckers', *Daily Express*, 20/11/1986; 'Kinnock blasts at "zealots" for helping the enemy', *The Times,* 20/11/1986.

show sympathy for Mendis the underlying message was that the MCCR did not wish to become too closely involved'. The informant ultimately deduced that:

> some members of the executive whom I met after the meeting made it plain that they have little sympathy for Mendis. They are in a difficult position inasmuch that they have to play to a domestic audience which sees the Mendis campaign as a good bandwagon on which to crusade against the 'racist' immigration laws, their view is that whilst they are not prepared to condone Mendis' proven duplicity in avoiding detection they are prepared to be seen to support his case on a purely humanitarian level. *I also perceived that they wished to distance themselves from the more radical elements of Manchester City Council who offer to espouse any anti-racist or any anti-immigration enforcement cause.* Reading between the lines my view is that MCCR will only put up *token* resistance if the Home Office maintain the line…[877]

It seems likely that there was at least an element of truth in the immigration officer's comments. The meeting minutes of Manchester Council's Joint Policy Committee evidence deliberation between members of the Labour Group and City Party factions over Mendis' job offer well into June.[878] Councillor Kath Fry has written that 'there was a lot of resentment within the Labour Group' about the offer: 'Some members of the Labour Group felt that it was a deliberately provocative decision and there should have been consultation with other councillors'.[879]

However, certain Labour councillors, including leader of Manchester City Council, Graham Stringer, remained quietly committed to Mendis's cause. Surviving Home Office files show that until the very day of Mendis's deportation, Stringer was actively lobbying Gerald Kaufman MP to 'promise to 'get in touch with the Home Office' in an attempt to request the Home Office for a stay in Mendis removal. This was on the rather desperate sounding basis that 'that the Governor General of Gibraltar had made a statement saying that he was willing to accept Viraj Mendis in Gibraltar.'[880] By the time Stringer eventually got through to a secretary from the Home Office 'Mr Mendis was on his way back to Colombo', and it was made clear to him that the statement from Gibraltar was not sufficient terms for the Home Secretary to have considered a defer in Mendis's removal.[881]

Through the Mendis case the heights and limits of alliances with municipal multiculturalism are made plain: council support could prove critical but also ultimately contingent. Local councillors such as Stringer, like all politicians, were necessarily strategists; causes and campaigns were inevitably mediated by electoral risk and reward. Key street-level bureaucrats around the steering group of this Labour Left council, such as Done, were integral to the ushering in and rolling out of radical policies that could make a critical difference towards the immigration status for countless

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[877] My italics. TNA HO 394/901, Letter from P. Nicolson, Chief Immigration Officer, to B3 Division, Home Office, titled 'Viraj Mendis' n.d.
[878] MCL GB127 M818/3/2/5, 'Joint Policy Committee, 23/09/987', 1.
[879] Fry, 'Manchester 1984': 'APPENDIX 2E : VIRAJ MENDIS DEFENCE CAMPAIGN'. Online:https://manchester1984.uk/chapters/section-1/chapter-2/appendix-2e/.[accessed:17/04/2023].
[880] TNA HO 394/906, P. Mawer, Principal Private Secretary, 'Note for the Record, Viraj Mendis', 23/01/1989.
[881] Ibid.

individuals and their families. But these policies and decisions remained politically or personally risk-laden, as politicians had the power to retreat on our dissolve expedient elements, and ultimately remained vulnerable to overarching changes in central government's economic and political policy.

Chapter conclusion

Reflecting upon the relationship between the New Urban Left and anti-deportation campaigns allows us to build on the work of historians such as Payling to finesse characterisations of Labour-led metropolitan councils as being either tokenistic on the one hand, or futile on the other.[882] The actions of the GLC and Manchester Council in supporting local anti-deportation campaigns were important and aimed at genuine change, and ranged from funding politically controversial campaigns, enabling the formation of Anti-Deportation Working Groups, to public statements that the contemporary immigration laws were racist. This then does not necessarily fit within Gilroy's description of municipal multiculturalism being principally about 'signs, badges and stickers'.[883] Certainly, the street-level bureaucrats and citizen agents encountered here, who were using the resources made available to them by New Urban Left councils to aid anti-deportation campaigns, were not motivated by tokenistic concerns, and their efforts made tangible differences to the lives of some Black and minority people.

Clearly, this does not take away from Gilroy and others findings that the effectiveness of progressive municipal anti-racism remained limited, constrained, and sometimes dictatorial in nature.[884] Above all there remained an unresolvable tension between trying to organise the resources of local government against central government, within a context of increasing economic pressure and right-wing press backlash on the one hand, and more cautious, or ideologically divergent elements of local leftist politics on the other. The abolition of the GLC, and the Conservative's 1987 General Election victory have contributed to understandings of municipal anti-racism and other new Leftist programmes as being a story of embarrassment and defeat. Tightened spending controls and the precise legal supervisions over local government that had been introduced by Thatcher to curb wayward councils translated into a devastating lack of funding for many previously supported progressive projects. Some of the ideas and language of multiculturalism and grassroots change were still adopted into local council policies, but without the finance, powers, or motivation to pursue the more radical or wider scale actions that needed to be undertaken to improve the underlying problems of discrimination and inequality.

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[882] Payling, 'City Limits'.
[883] Gilroy, *Ain't no Black*.
[884] Ibid.

In terms of anti-deportation campaigns Cohen observed that there was 'a period in the late 1980s when the number of anti-deportation campaigns noticeably diminished.'[885] In part, this was likely due to a loss of morale after the well-publicized and violent deportation of Mendis, and the impact of increasingly restrictive concessions on immigration controls that included shortened times for MPs to appeal and the introduction of visa requirements from Commonwealth citizens from 1985. These together represented major obstacles of intimidation as well as administration. It was also likely a result of the devastating twin attacks of the poll tax and Compulsory Competitive Tendering which had firmly set in across the country by the end of the decade. Councils such as Manchester, under the leadership of Stringer, thus began to forge paths less of resistance and more of acceptance, shrewdly embracing the pragmatism and privatism of the 1990s more readily and rapidly than most.[886] The fact that Stringer admitted that 'we made alliances with at all sorts of people' who, 'If we had not been fighting the cuts with them', would have been 'dropped from most agendas', thus serves to support the convictions of activists like Neale, that progressive campaigns should strive to protect their autonomy.[887] The systems of local politicism can ruthlessly use grassroots activism in order to coop support or publicity through relatively tokenistic gestures, and drop causes when they are no longer expedient.

However, the findings of this chapter, and the successes of street-level bureaucrats or citizen agents like Neale, Pettifer, Done, and Bellos and Noble, also highlight that in small but important ways this exploitation of resources could effectively be harnessed both ways. To some extent local government's embrace of progressive radicalism in the long 1980s was used as a motor, powered by vibrant networks of grassroot campaigners to evoke tangible acts of resistance against the odds. In the next chapter we will further probe into how these competing visions for a multi-cultural nation played out, specifically within the national and localised spaces and places of anti-deportation campaigns.

CHAPTER 5:

Sanctuary: in place and as a space of politics and faith

[885] Cohen, 'Local State of', 530.
[886] Michael Watts, 'Voices from Hulme', *Daily Telegraph*, 20/03/1993, 154.
[887] Interview cited in Lansley *et al.*, *Councils in Conflict,* 14.

It took me and my smart-er-than-me-phone several, embarrassingly long, circles of the block to find the Church of Ascension. It was a typically damp Mancunian morning, but the Hulme I found was unrecognisable from the grey-scale newspapers shots from some forty years ago I had studied: the iconic crescent-shape council flats long-since replaced by swanky student accommodation blocks; the 'grotty' estate pubs frequented by Rastas and punks, replaced by multistorey carparks and multilevel motorway fly-overs, for the residential ease of 'young professionals, and families.'[888] Yet, nestled between the new developments of fresh redbrick and modern slate cladding, I came across a patch of land which stood seemingly untouched by time, differing little from the observations of another fledgling PhD student, who came some thirty years before me:

> The church is built of concrete block … The roof is clad in aluminium or zinc narrow strip sheets with standing seams, to a shallow pitch ... *From street level the building is severe, even undistinguished.*[889]

Stepping inside I found an interior that also corresponded with my predecessor's observations:

> Maintenance is obviously restricted by funds, but proceeds when possible… some damp patches on the walls where cills are missing, and some minor roof leaks … and a smell of damp in the Worship area.[890]

After attending a few Sunday services, however, I did note some tell-tell signs of the passage of time. The present congregation still 'consists largely of West Indians' and the church still provides a flexible 'mixture of Catholic worship and engagement with the local community'.[891] But I could not agree that: 'The parish is extremely lively'.[892] Sat amongst predominantly empty pews, which seemingly only echoed my tone-deafly recited hymns, I instead sensed a dwindling parish, stoically holding onto each other as the winds of gentrification and modernisation beat at the windows.

Discernibly lacking from my own, and the foregoing student architect's observations, of this typical post-war mix-use concrete box with leaky tin roof, was anything to give away that this particular 'undistinguished' inner-city concrete box had actually been at the centre of an international media frenzy and three-year-long anti-deportation campaign, prompting an embittered battle with the government over immigration laws in their totality. So what exactly had temporarily turned this rather unremarkable place into such a remarkable space?[893]

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[888] See:https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/all-about/hulme.[accessed:29/06/2022]
[889] My italics. Michael Gilman, 'A study of churches built for the use of congregations of the church of England between 1945 and 1970 and their effectiveness in serving the needs of their congregations today', PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1993. 153.
[890] Gilman, 'A study of', 154.
[891] Gilman, 'A study of', 155.
[892] Gilman, 'A study of', 155.
[893] According to scholars, 'place' is 'space to which meaning has been ascribed: Erica Carter, *et al.* (eds.), *Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1993), xii.

Gargi Bhattacharyya and John Gabriel's study of anti-deportation campaigning in the West Midlands found that 'there are no set rules about how community resistance works.' Effective organisation can be funded or non-funded, linked to established groups or freelance – the key issue is '*commitment and energy over a sustained period*'.[894] My research supports this general supposition, but by focusing on the space and place of sanctuary campaigns here, I believe we can further break down just where this sustained 'commitment and energy' might come from – probing the foundations of localised activism to consider the forces and processes which initiated and enabled it, as well as the common environment which sustained it practically and emotionally. We have just seen municipal multiculturalism at work (chapter 4); the importance of entryism of radicals into the state; the importance of municipal politics. But we must also connect this to the places and spaces in which this was occurring. This local politics is not floating in the ether. It needs to happen on particular foundations.

Historians of environmental urbanism, such as Sam Wetherell, have shown how urban planning and factors such as mortgage lending restrictions in inner-city areas, contribute to what he has likened to a 'redlining' of the British city.[895] Otto Saumarez Smith has also observed how influential neo-liberal ideas blaming inner-city ills on government intervention, affected and interacted with practical local authority actions from the 1970s.[896] And Guy Ortolano has traced the rise and fall of British social democracy through the new town of Milton Keynes.[897] Then there is the work of historians focused on community and ideas of community, forwarded by those such as Lawrence, who has outlined the ways that community has been conceived of and politicized.[898] Lise Butler has also shown how progressive idealised concepts working class community were promoted by organisations such as Institute of Community Studies.[899] Yet we might work to join up these literatures further, to think about how concrete spatial realities affect political worlds.

Academics have written extensively on 'space' and 'place', with most associating 'place' with a physical location, and 'space' with a more abstract dimension of the world we all live in.[900] This

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[894] My emphasis. Gargi Bhattacharyya, John Gabriel, 'Anti-deportation campaigning in the West Midlands', in Floya Antihias, Cathie Lloyd (eds.), *Rethinking Anti-racisms: From theory to practice* (London: Routledge: 2002), 165.
[895] Sam Wetherell, *Foundations* (Princeton UP, 2020), 128.
[896] Otto Saumarez Smith, 'The Inner City Crisis and the End of Urban Modernism in 1970s Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 27(2016)521-542.
[897] Guy Ortolano, *Thatcher's Progress: From Social Democracy to Market Liberalism through and English New Town* (Cambridge UP, 2020).
[898] Jon Lawrence, *Me, Me, Me: Individualism and the Search for Community in Postwar Britain* (Oxford UP, 2019).
[899] Lise Butler, 'Alternatives to State-Socialism: Other Worlds of Labour in Twentieth Century Britain', *The Political Quarterly*, 89:1(2018)161-162.

[900] Doreen Massey, 'Geographies of Responsibility', *Geografiska Annaler*, 86:1(2004), 5-18. Important contributions to the definition of space also include Bourdieu, for whom space is a product of society that translates into physical space its social characteristics. In fact, '[t]he state uses space in such a way that it

chapter adopts Doreen Massey's approach of viewing space and place as a dimension of multiple and simultaneous 'processes', 'a product of practices, relations, connections and disconnections'[901] made continuously and at differing scales.[902] Place is therefore the articulation of 'a particular constellation of social relations' weaving 'together at a particular locus' *stretched-out* 'across multiple scales, interlinking us in relations of tension and solidarity'.[903] Teasing out how these processes of space-time building are occurring at different scales, are co-constituted by flows and interconnections of capital, labour, culture and ideas, enables us to 'map power relations' with further nuance and clarity.[904] We will draw on Massey's framework of processes operating at different spatial scales, to analyse the constituting aspects of place, space, and micro-space at play in sanctuary campaigns. This allows us to unveil how urban places as political constructs of defence and disenfranchisement at the national scale, were interweaving with localities of multicultural space in the immediate areas surrounding sanctuaries, to create a unique *cultural compression* for its foundations.

Cultural compression, was coined by anthropologist Robert Paine, in 1992 to denote the effects of globalisation upon space-time as: 'space transverse becomes less of a signifier of cultural distance and difference'.[905] Paine observed that in a post-modern society individuals are exposed to a number of different cultural groups, leading to a 'weakening of the power ascription' and enabling people to 'draw on a range of cultural resources of varied provenance.'[906] Vincent Walsh countered that this was an 'overly romantic' analysis, which ignored how individual's choice to 'draw on' resources remained limited by various socio-economic factors. An areas residnents could still be forced to choose from a particular type of cultural menu because they could not afford to live anywhere else.[907] In Walsh's analysis, although cultural compression allows interaction and exchange, the overall increase in the number of possible social experiences as a result, 'decreases the possibility of collective class action based on social issues.'[908] This prompted him to conclude that 'Cultural compression increases individual creativity but weakens social coherence.'[909]

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ensures its control of places'. Pierre Bourdieu, 'Physical Space, Social Space and Habitus', Vilhelm Aubert Memorial Lecture, University of Oslo, 1996; see also: Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991).

[901] Doreen Massey, 'Space, Time and Political Responsibility in the Midst of Global Inequality', *Erdkunde,* 60:2(2006), 94.

[902] Massey, 'Space, Time and', 94.

[903] Massey, 'A Global Sense of Place', *Marxism Today*, (June 1991), 28; Susan Roberts, 'Just carry on being on different', in Marion Werner *et al*. (eds), *Doreen Massey: A Critical Reader* (New Castle upon Tyne: Agenda Publishing, 2018),130-131.

[904] Massey, 'Space, Time, and', 94.

[905] Robert Paine, 'The Marabar Caves, 1920-2020' in Sandra Wallman (ed.), *Contemporary Futures: Perspectives in Social Anthropology* (London: Routledge, 1992), 197.

[906] Paine, 'The Marabar Caves', 200, 196.

[907] Vincent Walsh, 'The Social Life of Hulme: Politics and Protest in an Inner-City Housing Estate', PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 1993. 110.

[908] Walsh, 'The Social Life', 109, 117-118.

[909] Walsh, 'The Social Life', 212.

In this chapter I build on but rework these understandings of 'cultural compression'. I use the term hereafter to refer to the spatial compression of social, temporal, and physical boundaries that was occurring in urban locales. This, I argue, not only increased the number of social exchanges people were sharing within these areas, but also intensified them, as a result of synergies created by the density of networks and experiences. Thereby, individuals and groups came to share and diversify a significant part of each other's cultural experience and identities. Individuals living in the surrounding culturally compressed urban localities thus did remain limited by their socio-economic boundaries. But, the effects of increased globalisation through inflows of people and ideas both nationally and internationally also *did* have a tangible effect upon the space building process that *did not* necessarily 'weaken' social coherence. Rather it could create new hybrid avenues for coherence, cohesion and collective resistance. Employing a cultural compression and space/place framework in this way, enables us to see how place/space makes certain forms of politics *possible.*

In fact, the cultural compression effecting people in inner cities, was critically important throughout their support of sanctuary campaigns. In this chapter we will observe how participants and residents professed identities and affiliations throughout the campaigns by interweaving major lines of national political debate, reappropriating the established language of community, integrating with social activist networks, and incorporating practices of protest previously used within the surrounding area.

Building on these everyday experiences of political place making, in the second half of the chapter we then explore how this compression of space-time, fed into the particular micro-spaces of sanctuary. Micro-spaces of shared unity and disunity fostered and managed within the physical and metaphysical perimeters of the sanctuary, through practical, physical, and social forms. In particular, I build upon Francecsa Polleta's reconception of "free spaces", as small-scale settings within a community or movement, 'removed from the direct control of dominant groups', 'voluntarily participated in', and generating a 'cultural challenge that precedes or accompanies political mobilization'.[910] Specifically I draw on her argument that it is people acting as 'network intersections', which are critical to generating mobilizing identities within these apparent "free spaces". As 'weak-tied' individuals, Polletta argues network intersections provide access to previously unavailable material and informational resources, while their social distance can endow them 'with the authority to contest existing relations of deference.'[911] It is these network intersections, in the form of vicars and revolutionaries, which I argue, although not necessarily 'weak-tied', were critical to the effectiveness of the space and place of sanctuary campaigns.

[910] Francesca Polletta, '"Free Spaces" in Collective Action', *Theory and Society*, 28:1(1999), 1-38.
[911] Polletta, '"Free Spaces"', 2.

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The places of sanctuary

As Massey and others have pointed out 'place' and 'community' have only rarely been coterminous, and we must conceptualise ‘places’ within broader and increasingly global networks to understand their dynamics.[912] All-encompassing terms such as community, often paper over divisions within social populations, reflecting little more than imposed relational constructions.[913] However, following Massey’s recognition that identities are shaped through practices of interaction within a space-time frame, makes it ‘possible to isolate some predominant types of identities within certain spatial contexts.’[914] As we will see when we look at campaigns based in London and Manchester, such alliances can give rise to forces within locales, from defensive or reactionary forms of antagonism to outsiders, to progressive impetuses for an embracing of change. Common forces are traceable within the places in which sanctuary campaigns were emerging and growing.

It is significant that sanctuary campaigns were an overwhelmingly urban phenomenon, with the majority of recorded public sanctuary’s clustering in the big cities of London and Manchester, but also arising in the smaller cities (see appendices for further details). Schofield and Jones have highlighted how London’s Notting Hill, an area of post-war protest and riot, had the particular ability to galvanise community resistance as well as attract ‘a motley group of Methodist ministers, Christian Workers, students, social workers, and community leaders’ who tested the limits of liberal paternalism and the ‘universalism’ of the post-war social democratic state.[915] And as I go on to show, we see similar process of space-building at work via the networks which built up around places of sanctuary protest too, where strong ties were manifested between varied activists and the communities in which sanctuaries were sustained.

In the case of Renoukaben Lakhani who took sanctuary for a month in 1987 at the Shree Santan Mandir, her campaign was operating within the multicultural place of Leicester. Specifically,

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[912] Massey, *Space, Place*, *and Gender* (University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 147; Felix Driver and Raphael Samuel, ‘Rethinking the Idea of Place’, *History Workshop Journal*, 39(1995), v-vii; David Harvey, ‘From space to place and back again: reflections on the condition of post-modernity’, in John Bird, *et al.* (eds.) in *Mapping the Futures: Local Cultures, Global Change*, (London: Routledge, 1993), 3-30. On how globalisation blurs distinctions between the local and the global: Peter Marden, ‘Geographies of dissent: globalisation, identity and the nation’, *Political Geography,*16 (1997), 37-64; Allan Pred and Michael Watts, *Reworking Modernity: Capitalism and Symbolic Discontent* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1992). For an overview of other competing types of belonging see: Nira Yuval-Davis, ‘Belonging and the politics of belonging’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 40:3(2006), 197-214.

[913] Ben Rogaly and Becky Taylor, *Moving Histories of Class and Community: Identity, Place and Belonging in Contemporary Britain* (Springer, 2016), 15-21.

[914] Massey, *Space, Place,* 278.

[915] Schofield and Jones, 'Whatever community is’, 173.

within the space of Belgrave Road, known as the new Asian city centre.[916] The large-scale settlement of Asians to Leicester from Kenya and Uganda in the 1960s and 1970s, had bolstered strong social ties of locality.[917] Records indicated over one-hundred-and-eighty different social and religious groups serving the Indian population of Leicester by the 1990s, with many based in the Belgrave area, and many accumulating experience in organising forms of anti-racist defence.[918] Leicester's Inter-Racial Solidarity Campaign, for example, formed in the summer of 1969, was a locally-based broad committee representing: the Indian Workers' Association, some Labour Party branches and trade union branches, Liberals, the Communist Party, student and trade unions and sections of the Church. Collectively these groups coordinated marches through the city in protest at the 1968 anti-immigration bill, attended anti-apartheid demonstrations, picketed stores said to be refusing to employ Black staff, and conducted defiant silent protests against the National Front.[919] In 1974 Leicester then hosted the Imperial Typewriters strike, one of the first major strikes initiated by Asian workers to win migrant worker rights in Britain.[920] By the late 1970s, we see an increased political galvanisation of the Labour Party against "anti-Asian" sentiment, occasionally manifesting in local MPs supporting deportation appeal cases and publicly criticising the 'sheer bloody mindedness with no rhyme or reason' of the Home Office decisions.[921] This local knowledge of community protest tactics laid important foundations for Lakhani's campaign, which not only incorporated marching and petitioning, but gained the explicit and vocal support of Labour MP for Leicester East, Keith Vaz.

The sanctuary campaign of the Adedimeji family who sought refuge in City Road Methodist Church, Birmingham, for a month in 1988, also drew on local support, from Adedoja Adedimeji's connections through his role as Minister for exiled Nigerians at the Holy Apostolic Bethel Church (see **figure 26**).

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[916] Statistics from the 1991 census revealed that 'Asian' people made up near half of the population in nine of the city's twenty-eight wards. The 'Asian' category was calculated from the sum of those who self-identified as Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, or 'Asian Other'. See, Leicester City Council, *Ethnic Minorities in Leicester: Facts from the 1991 Census* (1996), 8.
Online:https://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll2/id/4414 [accessed:07/02/2023]
[917] A. Sills, *et al*., 'Asians in an inner city ', *New Community*, 11:2(1983), 39.
[918] Steven Vertovec, 'Multicultural, multi-Asian, multi-Muslim Leicester', *Innovation,* 7:3(1994), 265-270.
[919] 'City Protest', *Leicester Mercury,* 27/02/1968,1;'Anti-Apartheid Demo in City' , *Leicester Mercury*, 16/5/1969; 'Police called to store picketing', *Leicester Mercury*, 1/6/1974, 1; '150 Picket Lone NF Seller', *Leicester Mercury*, 11/3/1978, 1; 'Two Arrested As Protesters Picket Front Offices', *Leicester Mercury*, 11/11/1978, 1; I am grateful to Liam McCarthy for highlighting these references: 'The Leicester Mercury: Race on the Front Page', Working Paper (2021).
Online:https://figshare.le.ac.uk/articles/preprint/The_Leicester_Mercury_Race_on_the_Front_Page_/14685843/1[accessed:14/06/2023].
[920] Robin Bunce and Paul Field, 'The Black Leveller', *Historian,* 12(2014): argue that the Imperial Typewriters strike was 'the first step towards a full union intellectual position', forcing the union movement to rethink its stance towards Black and Asian, 31.
[921] David Nash and David Reeder (eds.), *Leicester in the Twentieth Century* (Stroud, Sutton, 1993), 116-119; 'MP in battle to halt student's deportation', *Leicester Mercury,* 19/9/1977, 1; 'Student wins battle against deportation', *Leicester Mercury*, 25/10/1977, 19; 'Deportation of Indian Children deferred at the eleventh hour', *Leicester Mercury,* 7/8/1979, 19.

Figure 26: Mr Adedoja Ademiji with his wife Felicia and children (from left) Oluwabori, Abayomi and Oluway who suffered from a blood disorder, that Mr Ademeji said would kill Oluway if the family had to go back to Nigeria. Photograph a clipping from Rob Perkins, 'Church is a refuge for family', *Birmingham Evening News*, 27/4/1988, 5.

At the Amir Kabul Kahn sanctuary then held in Birmingham Central Mosque for nearly three months in 1989, not only did Kahn have the growing support of the Asian community based in Small Heath, but he also had the experience and contacts of some of his close family members who were already active in organisations such as the Asian Youth Movement, the Indian Workers Association and the Kashmiri Workers Association.[922] These campaigns, also set a further precedent for the launching of Kulwinder Kaur's sanctuary campaign in a Sikh temple in Birmingham's Small Heath in 1991 (see appendix).[923]

The strength of the activity in British Asian communities had long been of concern to British officials. The Pakistan Workers Union, for instance, founded in 1968, was declared to be 'a left-wing communist organisation' aligned with other 'extremist organisations', whose Birmingham branch in particular had developed out of the militant, socialist, Black People's Alliance.[924] These sanctuary campaigns were situated within a space-time, which, as Connell has dissected in *Black Handsworth*, produced a spectrum of 'shades of black' in local political groups.[925] We can see how this fed into

[922] Hussein, author interview.
[923] 'Sikh to stay put' fifth day of sanctuary, *Birmingham Evening Mail*, 2/07/1991, 10.
[924] TNA FCO 37/970, 87-105, 'The Pakistani Community in Britain'. As cited in Patel, *We're Here Because,* 69.
[925] Connell, *Black Handsworth.*

support for anti-deportation campaigns through the records of groups such as the Birmingham Black Sisters (BBS). Established in 1982, for the BBS 'Afro/Asian unity was what formed the essence of our existence', and their meeting minutes testify to getting 'involved in many campaigns collaboratively with other groups around issues of deportation'.[926] BBS members Surinder Guru, Shirin Housee, and Kalpana Joshi recall supporting 'numerous anti-deportation campaigns that were going on in our community', 'some concerning men (Baba Bakhtaura, a folk singer who had overstayed as a visitor and Mohammed Idrish, a social worker)', and 'other women (Prakash Chavrimatoo and her son Prem)', as well as Caribbean women's campaigns Margaret Parchment and Jackie Berkley.[927]

We can see from these brief examples how sanctuaries occurred in places that provided particularly fertile environments for establishing the ongoing social space necessitated by the campaigns. Each case had unique elements and connections, but a critical factor sustaining all these campaigns was the fact that they operated within areas with pre-existing networks of migrants and activists. Sanctuary campaigns could thus be seen as one extension of increasingly diverse grassroot, migrant activism occurring in urban areas in the long 1980s at the national scale.

Significantly, sanctuaries were also a conduit for anti-Thatcherite discontent found in urban places at the national scale. As discussed in the introductory chapter, historians have increasingly argued for the need to look beyond the shadow of Thatcherism in the 1980s. Yet while it is a truism that Thatcherism become an over-encompassing term, it also stands that it became a powerful common enemy for all those opposed to the neoliberal, capitalist, and authoritarian powers effecting British society in this period.[928] Academics such as Andrew Jones, Matthew Worley, Nick Crossley and Gavin Schaffer, have all comprehensively explored how differing stands of leftist counterculture were finding increasingly creative ways of voicing their collective discontent with Thatcherite policies.[929]

These strands of political discontent at the national scale discernibly fed into the arena of local space through the sanctuary campaigns. A unifying feature in the memories of those involved who I interviewed, was certainly a strong memory of the pervasive dislike of Thatcherism. 'Ughh, Thatcher.' [Pulls face of disgust], as Bridget Methuen, wife of the Father Methuen, rector of the

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[926] Although BBS was a fluid group, its core membership was approximately 15, which at times amounted to an equal number of women of African, Caribbean and Asian descent.
[927] Surinder Guru, Shirin Housee, and Kalpana Joshi, 'Birmingham Black Sisters: Struggles to end injustice', *Critical Social Policy*, 40:2(2020), 179-327.
[928] Brooke, 'Living in 'New'.
[929] Andrew Jones, 'Band Aid revisited: humanitarianism, consumption and philanthropy in the 1980s', *Contemporary British History,* 31:2(2017), 189-289; Matthew Worley, 'Oi! O! Oi!: Class, Locality, and British Punk, *Twentieth Century British History*, 24:4(2013), 606-636; Nick Crossley, *Networks of Sound, Style and Subversion: The Punk and Post–punk Worlds of Manchester, London, Liverpool and Sheffield, 1975–80*, (Manchester UP, 2015); Gavin Schaffer, 'Fighting Thatcher with Comedy: What to do when there is no alternative', *Journal of British Studies,* 55:2(2016), 374-397.

Ascension, demonstrated to me when I mentioned the name. Neighbouring Catholic Priest Father Sumner recalled that 'There was more political awareness in the area in the Thatcher period'. Listening to his parishioners he felt that 'it all seemed to be impacting, it was causing even more anger, more despondency – the policies of Thatcher.'[930] The contemporary testimony, of Manchester based gay rights activist and anti-deportation campaigner Tony Openshaw, supports this: 'I think like over the last couple of years, the Thatcher years – as its been termed, more and more people are feeling the feeling, and more and more people feel angry about that and want to do something about' it:

> Now you can go to a Clause 28 meeting … and there's two hundred people there… people are more prepared now, because things have got tighter and tighter.[931]

Mendis himself believed that his campaign's notoriety for 'fighting against the state' was an 'attraction' to many of his supporters. He shared with me the story of how one campaigner, an American living in London, who 'couldn't even pronounce his name', when she first volunteered, ended up becoming 'one of the most important supporters' and stayed for the rest of his lengthy campaign:

> So she came to me and said:
>
> 'I used to be in the Greenham Commons thing, and now that's over. I just heard that Thatcher has been elected again … I looked around and this campaign seemed to be the strongest resistance against the Thatcher government right now.'
>
> … she couldn't even pronounce my name, you know! ... So, it's this kind of thing, and people came from London, they just lived in Manchester, only to support the campaign, you know? They just came! I don't know it was an attraction for people fighting against the state, you know, and against racism.[932]

This "strong resistance" can be seen as part of a 'continued a lineage of spontaneous and direct action protest', which Rebecca Bins traces from the anti-nuclear and peace movements of the previous decade into the Greenham Common Peace Camp, The Miners' Strike, The Battle of the Beanfield and Stop the City protests of the 1980s.[933] But anti-Thatcherite sentiment specifically had certainly grown across a number of fronts: from the 'howl of protest' that greeted the British Nationality Act of 1981, to the 1983 People's March for Jobs that ended in a rally in Hyde Park over ten thousand strong; to the

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[930] Sumner, author interview.
[931] Tony Openshaw interview by Margot Farnham, track 4, BL.
[932] Mendis, author interview.
[933] Rebecca Binns, 'It's your world too, you can do what you want": the role of subcultural activism in Stop The City protests (1983-1984) and its implications for political protest in Britain', *Contemporary British History*, 37:1(2023), 63-88, 65.

mass lobbying and guerrilla tactics of the 1987-1988 ‘Stop the Clause’ movement, prompting tabloid headlines such as ‘SCREAMING GAYS BRING COMMONS TO A HALT!’[934]

Yet as the effects of Thatcherite policies were impacting urban areas nationally, we must examine the localities supporting these campaigns, and explore how these national processes were interweaving with the particularities of local space surrounding sanctuary campaigns. We shall now turn to the specific localities, supporting multiple sanctuary campaigns, to see how diverse complaints coalesced to fuel an inner-city disenchantment, and unified behind the common cause of sanctuary.

Manchester: Hulme and Moss Side

Figure 27: Screenshot taken from ‘MANCHESTER ANTI-DEPORTATION RALLY - MARCH TO ALBERT SQUARE’, MMU NWFA 1985 Film:7616.

Manchester in particular was integral to the development of British anti-deportation campaigns, which increased in correlation with the tightening immigration laws. In the early 1980s Manchester witnessed several public campaigns for individuals and by 1984 we see co-ordinated anti-deportation campaigns reaching national media attention under banners such as ‘Manchester Against

[934] Phil Baker, ‘British Nationality Bill 1980’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 15:2(1981), 36; ‘SCREAMING GAYS BRING COMMONS TO A HALT *The Sun*, 16/12/1987, 1.

Deportation'.[935] As Cohen, an immigration lawyer of the South Manchester Law centre, who represented many of these anti-deportation cases wrote in 1987: 'Over the last ten years Greater Manchester has been at the centre of and has very much spearheaded, the campaigns against deportation and for the unification of families'.[936] Indeed, the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre in Manchester holds the memorabilia from over seventy, anti-deportation and immigration campaigns fought in Greater Manchester from 1975 to 1996.[937]

In Chauhan's sanctuary fast campaign, discussed in the introductory chapter, the local community of Ashton-under-Lyne visibly embraced the concept of public sanctuary.[938] Weller, the local Baptist minister, had come up with the idea to host a protest sanctuary fast. As discussed in chapter 2, the idea had begun to take root within Weller, via his knowledge of international and historical Christian precedents.[939] It was at the initial launch meeting for Chauhan's campaign in March 1983, however, that Weller observed that participants 'were mainly representatives from the various local Asian community organisations, together with a sprinkling of church people and Labour Party members.'[940] And so: 'It occurred to me that the places of worship of *all* religions have a long history of offering sanctuary to those who have fallen foul of the injustice'. He calculated that 'this idea and action would be understood by the people of Muslim and Hindu background in our community as well as by Christians'.[941] Likewise, 'fasting is familiar within the Hindu, Muslim and Christian religions, and is also a means of social struggle.'[942] The sanctuary fast was thus held over Diwali weekend as a form of 'prayer and protest', and as their campaign literature described it: 'Vinod is having to fast whilst others feasted and celebrated, thus dramatically underlining his situation. The sanctuary fast was an event of universal symbolism in action.'[943]

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[935] See for example the campaigns for Nasira Begum, Nasreen Akhtar, Praveen Khan, Anthony Brown, Manjit Kaur, Esther Ankeli, Kemal Kumar, Enus Ali, Kantilal Mistry and the Aslam family; 'Wanted … but not by Whitehall', *The Guardian*, 16/8/1984, 2; By 1986 the collective Manchester Wives and Fiancées Campaign wrote a booklet: Cohen and Siddiqui, *What would you* (1986) detailing their investigation into cases of Pakistani men being denied entry to the UK through unequal use of the 'primary purpose rule'.
[936] Cohen, *It's The Same.*
[937] AIURC SCC GB3228.28.
[938] Ashton-under-Lyne is a market town and semi-suburb of Manchester, located approximately a 40-minute bus ride from the city centre, or eleven minutes on the train.
[939] Weller, author Interview.
[940] Weller, *Legalised Abduction*, 4
[941] Weller in *Right to be,* 57.
[942] Weller, *Legalised Abduction*, 8.
[943] Weller, *Legalised Abduction*, 8.

Figure 28: Vinod Chauhan on the march to stop his deportation order, clipping of photograph from the *Ashton Reporter*, n.d April 1984: TLSA DD289.

Over two hundred people were recorded in the sanctuary fast's visitors book which began and ended with co-ordinated press conferences. Local television and regional radio programmes began to regularly report on his story.[944] Campaign meetings gained attendance across the multicultural community, with local groups such as the Indian Social Club joining demonstrations and 'saving money in a large glass bottle to aid his struggle'.[945] Following the fast, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and Greater Manchester Council offered practical support to the sanctuary campaign including the use of its buildings to display posters and press cuttings, as well as sending a delegation of advocacy to the Home Office.[946]

Weller attributed this critical engagement with 'the structures of local authorities' and 'interested Labour Party members in Ashton' who became actively involved in the 'late stage' of the campaign, to the campaign's success in establishing itself as 'a local issue first'.[947] Specifically, he believed it was the 'imaginative engagement of church support represented by the sanctuary fast' that was critical to gaining the backing of local authorities, as the support and press attention manifested forced them to respond to 'rising local public concern'[948] 'Soon after' the sanctuary, Ashton's County Councillor put a motion for debate in the Greater Manchester County Council, which led to the

[944] Weller, *Legalised Abduction,* 7.
[945] TLSA, DD289/15 'Vinod Chauhan Campaign Documents'.
[946] 'Press Release: Greater Manchester County Council Supports Vinod!', 25/11/1983.
[947] Weller, *Legalised Abduction*, 7- 8.
[948] Weller, *Legalised Abduction,* 9.

Greater Manchester County declare that it was 'proud of its multi-cultural attitudes and as such, supports Mr. Chauhan in his wish to stay in this country', and, indeed, in general terms all: 'persons who have worked and resided within the County for substantial periods of time and who merely because of change in marital circumstances, are denied the opportunity to continue residence'.[949]

The sanctuary fast illustrates how the cultural compression found within an urban place could foster and initiate new networks of cross-community strength. Members of the Christian church, the urban left-ist city council, and Hindu and Indian Social networks, were all able to rapidly mobilise to create hybrid avenues of resistance, channelling and combining universal forms of Hindu and Christian symbolism with political protest – fasting, shrining, postering, marching, fundraising – to collectively garner some 3,300 signatures in the written petition to the Home Office in support of Chauhan. It set an important initial precedent in Manchester for how a religious space could be used as a centre for anti-deportation campaigns, and to widen public appeal.[950]

Support for Chauhan's defence campaign paled in comparison to the backing accumulated in Manchester throughout Mendis's campaign. As activist and academic Janet Batsleer recorded the campaign for the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign (VMDC), became a 'focus for alliance' and a 'basis for community organising'.[951] Attention-grabbing rallies and marches were an integral aspect to their tactics. In 1985 Mendis himself led an initial anti-deportation march of around five hundred people through Manchester and to the steps of Manchester Town Hall. In the summer of 1986, the VMDC then organised a two-week-long march from Manchester to London. And by the summer of 1987, the VMDC was spearheading a national march, which ended at the Crescents high-rise flats in Hulme, next to the Ascension. Here, as Batsleer recorded, 'Thousands of people marched into the arena – an area of grass encircled by some of the worst examples of Manchester's housing stock … The flats have been decorated with graffiti stating succinctly: 'Viraj Mendis is our friend.'[952] The campaign, organized originally by a handful of Hulme tenants and members of the Socialist Workers Party, also included innumerable petitions, flyers outlining the case and distributed door-to-door, public demonstrations, and multiple twenty-four-hour vigils at the front of the church of the Ascension. These events, plus the novelty of sanctuary attracted international media attention. A BBC film-crew even arrived to record a programme on Mendis's story.[953] As activist Tony Openshaw, put it, 'This just felt, if you lived in Manchester that you couldn't not be involved in it. I mean for Manchester it was just so big.[954]

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[949] Weller, *Legalised Abduction,* 7.
[950] Weller, *Legalised Abduction*, 7-8.
[951] Batsleer, 'The Viraj Mendis', 78.
[952] Ibid.
[953] Brass Tacks: Sanctuary (BBC2, 23/06/1987).
[954] Openshaw, interviewed by Farnham, Part 3, BL.[26:56].

Yet for all that Mendis garnered international attention, the core of the campaign remained centred on the Ascension church and the surrounding streets of Hulme, and Moss Side. Hulme and Moss Side are neighbouring but separate areas (see **figure 29**), within walking distance of each other and locally 'cited interchangeably'.[955] Both also have a history of disillusionment with the state, which readily fed into the activism of the VMDC and other local anti-deportation campaigns in nuanced ways as we shall now explore.

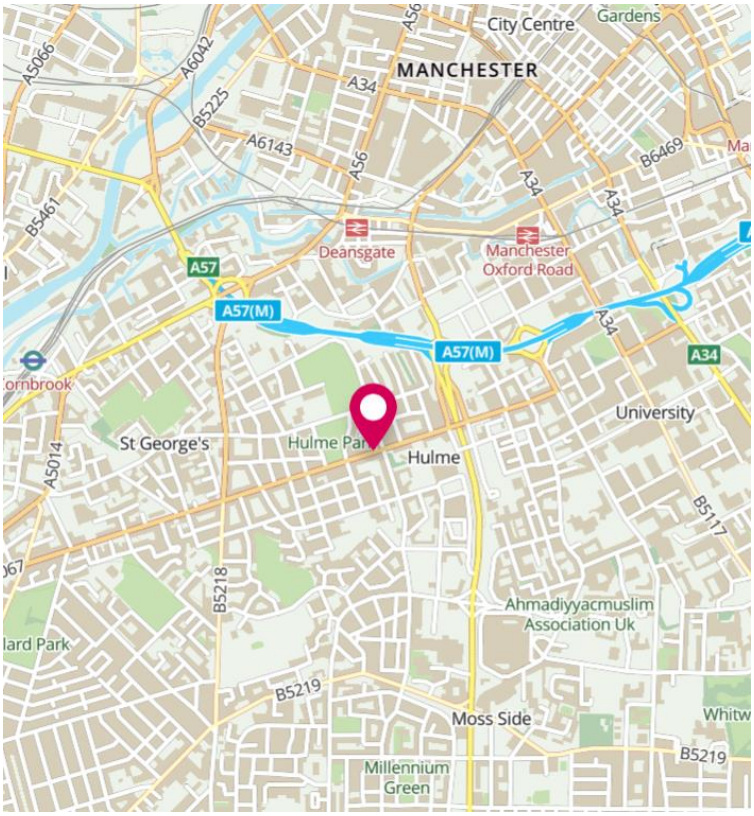

Figure 29: Map of Hulme and Moss Side, with the location of the Church of Ascension is pinpointed.

Hulme was infamous for its social housing estate of dire living conditions named the Crescents, but dubbed 'Colditz' by the Manchester press. Cockroaches, damp, and dog foul covered balconies, featured heavily in the memories of locals I interviewed. Tenant anger was palpable and incited collective resistance, catalysing Hulme's evolution into a place practiced as a space of dissent and protest. Multiple tenant associations and a joint Tenants Alliance was formed to protest against living conditions, explicitly advocating for 'increased community control at all levels of local politics' and establishing a drop-in advice centre and community arts centre.[956] By 1978 the chair of

[955] Penny Fraser, 'Social and Spatial Relationships and the 'Problem' Inner City: Moss Side in Manchester', *Critical Social Policy*, 16:49(1996), 43-65.
[956] Minutes of Manchester and Salford Housing Action Meeting, Manchester University Community Action. 2 April 1973. All MASHA material is deposited at Manchester Central Reference Library. As cited in Peter Shapely, 'Tenants Arise!' Consumerism, tenants and the challenge to council authority in Manchester, 1968-92', *Social History*, 31:1(2006), 61.

Manchester Council's Housing Committee had accepted that the Crescents were an 'absolute disaster – it shouldn't have been planned, it shouldn't have been built'.[957]

Local priest, Phil Sumner, recalled the depth of unified anger felt by his parishioners and local residents:

> There were some meetings at the time – to give residents the chance to speak to the council or whoever – they would be *powerful* meetings, and the councillors would go off with their tail between their legs…. The adversity brought people together, but the *power* of their *anger* was considerable as well… There was a couple of women who really stood out, for they could really make the councillors feel small, and anyone else who felt they could speak for the community but didn't.[958]

Contemporary accounts record one such woman, Mary Moonsammy leading tenants on marches directly into Manchester's Council chambers, where she and fellow tenants 'would jeer the councillors' on the poor living conditions of Hulme, and 'on occasion throw bags of dog excrement, cockroaches, beetles, and other objects which came to symbolize these conditions, down onto the councillors.'[959] A speech given by Maureen Mahon at one such meeting is recorded:

> People always say things like this is about politics … It's about people … This is about people who get hurt, bleed, cry and this is about people being homeless, and this government policy is against people, against working class people. We see on the telly that Sister Teresa is down for a visit in London. What a shame she comes all the way here to see people living in cardboard boxes in the streets. If I know Maggie Thatcher she'll have been investing in the cardboard box industry.[960]

In many respects Moonsamy's actions can be seen as an extenuation of a long history of working-class women self-organising and resisting against authorities.[961] But, they were also pioneering a particularly *localised* psyche for cathartic protest in Hulme, creating a space for future anti-deportation campaigns where informal barriers of social compliance to authority had already broken down and been replaced with bonds of collectivised interests and emotion. As Peter Shapely summarised in his study 'Slum clearance gave everyone a set of common interests'.[962] And, crucially,

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[957] Councillor Allan Roberts, interviewed in 'There's No Place like Hulme', *World in Action*, 10/4/1978.
[958] Sumner, author interview.
[959] Walsh, 'The Social Life', 122.
[960] Maureen Mahon as quoted in Walsh, 'The Social Life', 147.
[961] See, the Glasgow rent strike of 1915 led by "Mrs Barbour's Army": https://remembermarybarbour.wordpress.com/mary-barbour-rent-strike-1915/.[accessed:18/02/2023]; Or the 'headscarf revolutionaries' led by Lillian Bilocca, who campaigned to improve safety conditions onboard North Sea trawlers: Tom White, 'Radical Object: Hull's 'Headscarf Revolutionaries' Mural', Historyworkshop.org, 30/08/2019. Online:https://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/activism-solidarity/radical-objects-hulls-headscarf-revolutionaries-mural/.[accessed:17/02/2022]
[962] Peter Shapely, *The Politics of Housing: Power, Consumers and Urban Culture*, (Manchester UP, 2007), 186.

‘established a tradition of standing up to the authorities’, not necessarily with any ‘expectations of having the power to achieve their demands’.[963]

Schofield and Jones have demonstrated how Black activists in London’s Notting Hill reappropriated the language of ‘community’ to suit their needs, and a similar process can be seen to have occurred in Hulme.[964] Indeed, some of these same tactics used by the Tenants Alliance, lobbying local councillors, town hall demonstrations, and public marching would be repeatedly adopted in successive anti-deportation campaigns. Mendis himself, framed his campaign as part of wider localised resistance, telling contemporary reporters that just as he was 'excess to requirements' as one Black person too many threatened with deportation, so people in Hulme are seen by the Conservative Government as 'excess to requirements', not wanted and not needed. He thus saw his problem as 'just an extreme version of their problem.'[965] The campaigning pamphlets, flyers, and appeal letters supporting Mendis, made repeated explicit reference to his commitment and proven links to the local community: ‘Viraj has lived in Manchester for 12 years, and is settled here. He has been actively involved in anti-racist and anti-deportation campaigns’.[966] The concerns and issues affecting the locality were even adopted into the campaign’s symbolic repertoire. As Batsleer documented: ‘From the balcony of the flats we saw a banner draped down for everyone to read: ‘Kick out the cockroaches, not Viraj Mendis’.[967] Such a banner might not make sense to outsiders but was instantly meaningful to locals who recognised the cockroaches, as emblematic of their ongoing fight for better living standards. Here, we thus see a succinct conflation of the local issues of deprivation with anti-deportation cases, combining the two to infer that they were all fighting against the same authoritarian government powers.

‘If the issues in Hulme were about housing’, as Sumner explained it, ‘in Moss Side it was a whole cocktail of things.’[968] Migrants from the Indian subcontinent and the Caribbean settled in the areas during the 1950s and 1960s, and by the 1980s Moss Side was the hub of Manchester's Afro-Caribbean community. Here, the impact of poor housing was compounded by high rates of unemployment, particularly affecting young Black men.[969] As in other diverse urban places at this time, such as Brixton and Toxeth, young people’s experience of harassment by police officers, which included ‘capricious use of ‘stop and search’ powers, illegal detentions and racial abuse of young people’, further strained relations with residents and authorities and contributed to a ‘us’ and ‘them’

[963] Shapely, ‘Tenants arise!’, 75, 63.
[964] Schofield and Jones, ‘Whatever Community is’.
[965] Mendis, as quoted in Batsleer, ‘The Viraj Mendis’, 79.
[966] AIURC SCC GB3228.02/01/46, ‘Stop the Deportation of Viraj Mendis to Sri Lanka’, VMDC, 1985.
[967] Batsleer, ‘The Viraj Mendis’, 78.
[968] Phil Sumner, author interview.
[969] Fraser, ‘Social and spatial’, 43-65.

mentality.[970] The community organised solidarity efforts such as the West Indian Overseas Coordinating Committee, the West Indian Sports and Social Club, the Arawak-Walton Housing Association, the Moss Side People's Centre, and the Black Women's Abasindi Co-operative. Community organising, with limited resources would only ever be able to soften the experiences of structural racism and material inequalities, however, and decades of simmering resentments came to boiling point during the nationwide 1981 uprisings, which between 8-11 July saw the streets of Moss Side descend into a virtual warzone.[971]

In the aftermath of the disturbances, these groups provided an important structure on which post-riot action could be based. Groups such as the Moss Side Defence Committee were formed bringing together key community activists such as Eloise Edwards and Louise Da'Codia, founding members of the Abasindi Co-operative, and activist Gus John; thus further amalgamating their experiences and skills. Abasindi purposefully adopted 'the politics of sisterhood' to promote the 'politics personal and political in a radical liberatory stance'; the name Abasindi – the word for survivors in the language of the Zulu people of South Africa – being chosen as a tribute to the strength, resilience and competence of Black women.[972] Their educational project was transnational, informed by connections to anti-imperialist, class and feminist politics networks. But the issues they took on were local, growing in response to the needs of the community and providing a resource centre and facilities for young people who were being discriminatively sent to schools for the 'educationally subnormal'.[973] Gus John, on the other hand, had already worked with other prominent Race Today Collective figures such as Darcus Howe and John La Rose, who had their own erudition in radical international Black liberation politics. John noted that they had 'developed and honed this practice of defence committees… so I brought all of that.'[974] Indeed, John had already been one of the principles organisers of the New Cross Massacre Action Committee and the 1981 Black People's Day of Action. And in 1983 he used that experience to help co-ordinate the Anthony Brown Anti-Deportation Campaign, which successfully saw the young Manchester student and Moss Side resident's deportation order reversed.[975]

As seen in chapter 4, political disaffection with Toryism had by the mid-1980s led to the domination of Manchester's Council by the new Left, but as Shapely puts it, 'there was no hiding from the fact that they had little room for independent action.'[976] The direct-action and pressure group

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[970] Mary Venner, 'The disturbances in moss side, Manchester', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 9:3 (1981), 375; TNA HO 266/136/1, Moss Side: Hytner report Moss Side enquiry panel: notes from a meeting, 1981.
[971] Simon Peplow, *Race and Riots in Thatcher's Britain* (Manchester UP, 2019).
[972] Diana Watt and Adele D. Jones, *Catching Hell and Doing Well* (University College London, 2015), 4.
[973] Watt and Jones, *Catching Hell,* 4, 12.
[974] Gus John, interview 19/5/2017, as quoted in Peplow, *Race and Riots*, 181.
[975] Gentleman, 'Anthony Brown', *The Guardian,* 12/5/2021.
[976] Shapely, *Housing,* 196.

tactics emerging in Moss Side, however, had irrevocably raised the stakes and forced authorities to give race issues a seat at the table. As one local Black Community Liaison Officer for Greater Manchester Council, Linbert Spencer, described:

> I only have space… whilst the Moss Side Defence Committee is kicking-off and being noisy. Because if they're not doing that, then the institution isn't bothering about talking to anybody… if you don't make the noise, we don't get to bring about the change.[977]

Many of the same "noisy" activist figures of the locality in turn directly participated in anti-deportation campaigns. Long before his sanctuary campaign, for example, Mendis used to attend Abasindi. 'That's where I first met him,' lifelong Mancunian activist and academic Paul Okojie recalled to me, but 'Manchester is a very incestuous society, it's very small. So if there is a campaign, we know who is who, you know who is gonna turn up; you see the same kind of characters.'[978] The Abasindi Womens Co-operative, thus 'naturally' aligned with Mendis's cause and became heavily involved in mobilizing support and funding.[979] They also supported and organised the later 'community sanctuary' of Victoria Apetor, and her son Stephen Apetor – wherein the late stages of her anti-deportation campaign, Victoria 'was supported in her own accommodation by a continual presence of Black women, the majority Abasdindi' (see **figure 30**).[980]

Figure 30: Victoria and Stephen Apetor with campaigners outside her 'sanctuary in the home'. Image a cutting from 'Mother and son battle to stay', *Manchester Evening News*, 31/7/1989.

[977] Linbert Spencer, interview 20/3/2017, as quoted in Peplow, *Race and Riots,* 197.
[978] Paul Okojie, author interview.
[979] Watt and Jones, *Catching Hell,* 131.
[980] Batsleer, author interview.

These women provided practical aid in the forms of things like childcare and fundraising events, but they also supported Apetor emotionally, when 'the intense distress and anxiety' hanging over her in the lead-up to her removal date left her 'too ill to leave the house.'[981] Working from the principle that 'a community can provide both space and opportunity to begin to determine and redefine its conditions', Abasindi operated with the conscious intention of creating 'a space for their involvement in wider struggles linked to the development of self and the community', and in Apetor's case they brought this sense/space of community to her.[982]

Here then, in Hulme and Moss Side, we can of course see the compressed effects of urban inequality conditions exacerbated by ill-conceived planning, which have rightly prompted Wetherell to compare Britain's post war council estates to 'redlining', or 'the agents, sometimes unwittingly, in the reproduction of white supremacy.'[983] However, we can also see how localised forms of resistance to these conditions could in turn feed out and into practised forms of community activism in anti-deportation campaigns. From this perspective the entanglement of women from Abasindi, and the 'same kind of characters' noted by Okojie, becoming involved with their localities sanctuary can be seen as an prime example of Massey's emphasis on the social dimension of place and space. Place identities are 'constituted *out* of social relations, social interactions, and for [this] reason always and everywhere an expression and a medium of power' and place is a 'particular articulation of power-filled social relations'.[984]

For some, this anti-establishment social culture that had become synonymous with Moss Side and Hulme was also appealing. Indeed, a further important layer was also added to these overlapping strands of dissent when families began moving out from the Crescents and the area witnessed influxes of student overspill, squatters, communists, anarchists, and artists. As resident and photographer, Kevin Cummins described, 'suddenly' the flats were being populated by 'left-field types who didn't want to pay big rents', some were knocked through and turned into clubs, photography and recording studios.[985] The oral testimony of then Manchester student, turned activist, Tony Openshaw, attests to how this counter-culture could readily transcend into forms of local activism. Long before becoming involved in anti-deportation campaigns in Manchester, Openshaw began attending gay discos and events at the nearby Manchester Polytechnic, an environment which he found to be 'just a really great place' he 'could relax in' and feel 'protected'. This led to his becoming 'involved in a number of gay campaigns and so on', such as postering and 'picketing Hulme's Labour Club on a Friday night'.[986] Direct inheritors from these experiences can be seen in Openshaw's later activism in the VMDC,

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[981] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/09, 'Support Victoria and Stephen in 'Community Sanctuary', 1.
[982] Watt and Jones, *Catching Hell,* 96.
[983] Wetherell, *Foundations*, 100.
[984] Massey, 'Thinking Radical Democracy Spatially', *Environment and Planning D,* 13:3,(1995), 284.
[985] Kevin Cummins, 'Kevin Cummins on Manchester Music', *The Observer,* 20/9/2009.
[986] Openshaw, BL, track 3.

wherein he established a sub-support group: 'Lesbians and Gays Support Group Viraj Mendis' making banners which they took on the Friday marches. The very first rally that occurred at the Church of Ascension for Mendis at the Church of Ascension was also called by the gay men.[987] Okojie remembers these weekly rallies as:

> where you went to know "who is who" in Manchester on the Left. Yeah. And you could see the singing. It was a carnival atmosphere. It was wonderful; it brought people on the Left together.[988]

To be clear, Hulme and Moss Side were not areas of homogenous harmony, nor a utopian mecca for alternative politics alone. As elderly inhabitant, Doris of Ledburn Close, told one reporter: 'That crowd that lives there [in the crescents] are insane.'[989] Walsh noted that it was 'clear that not everyone' in Hulme agreed that Mendis should have the right to remain in Britain. He felt 'the Mendis issue' had 'split the community into two opposing camps'.[990] But noted that Mendis supporters seemed to be more unified, 'their arguments may differ but are nonetheless complementary', enabling supporters on the estate to mount a strong, vocal, and high-profile campaign.[991] Evidently, the cultural compression of these burgeoning political issues within the confined spatial boundaries of Hulme and Moss Side ensured that local anti-deportation and sanctuary campaigns played out within practised communities of dissent. Not only were residents and visitors likely to be predisposed and engaged with the politics of institutional inequality, race, and disenfranchisement, but some had direct experience in subversive tactics of resistance, from marches and occupations to defence committees and petitions.

London: Sommers Town and Kings Cross

Undercurrents of national anti-authoritarian politics feeding into existing local tributaries of resistance were further evident in anti-deportation and sanctuary campaigns outside of Manchester, and in London in particular. In Kings Cross, Somers Town, the idea and reality of a sanctuary space was also germinating through a web of activist connections and experience.[992] In 1985 when Vasilis and Katerina Nicola, Cypriot refugees who had been living in London for the past nine years, arrived

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[987] Openshaw, BL, track 3,[30:56].
[988] Okojie, author interview.
[989] Doris Ledburn in Walsh, 'The Social Life', 112.
[990] Walsh, *Social Life,* 181.
[991] Walsh, *Social Life*, 185.
[992] Historically, the name "Somers Town" was used for the larger triangular area between the Pancras, Hampstead, and Euston Roads, but it is now taken to mean the rough rectangle centred on Chalton Street and bounded by Pancras Road, Euston Road, Eversholt Street, Crowndale Road, and the railway approaches to St. Pancras station. See:https://www.theundergroundmap.com/article.html?id=691.[accessed:08/02/2023].

at Theatro Technis, deportation papers in hand, asking George Eugeniou, the founder and manager of the community run theatre outreach programme for help. Eugeniou responded: 'Vasilis, we do what we did in the play!'[993] Two years earlier, inspired by the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus which had resulted in 10,000 Cypriot refugees arriving in the UK, Eugeniou had written and produced a political play about refugees facing deportation. *The Appellants* told the story of a Greek Cypriot man and a Turkish Cypriot woman, who fled occupied Cyprus and sought refuge in London. In the play, the couple decide to appeal, to the vicar of an unnamed church, where they are ultimately given sanctuary. In 1985, in a serendipitous instance of life imitating art, at Eugeniou's request, St Mary's Church in Somers Town took in the Nicolas. As discussed in previous chapters, they stayed in sanctuary at St Mary's for five months; until Katerina fell ill and the couple was forced to admit defeat and leave the country. But the Nicola's sanctuary, in turn, inspired St Aloysius Catholic Church, just around the corner on Phoenix Street, to offer sanctuary to a Filipino woman, Pina Manuel, and her son Arman, who were also threatened with deportation, and eventually granted leave to stay.[994]

Eugeniou explained that his play's concept, drew inspiration from events taking place around him as he was writing. In 1982 The English Collective of Prostitutes had occupied the Church of the Holy Cross in Kings Cross, to protest against the police violence they were experiencing. 'What a wonderful idea!' Eugeniou said to himself and began conceiving of using sanctuary for refugees as a result.[995] The English Collective of Prostitutes was just one element of the progressive activist networks which could be found in Kings Cross and Somers Town in the long 1980s. And, actually just one of the multiple groups working from the local Kings Cross Women's Centre. The Collective was principally led by renowned feminist activist Selma James, who wrote that in occupying the church they were following the example of the French sex workers strike in the 1970s. But the very premises of the Women's Centre itself was the product of an accumulation of activism empowered by movements of occupation and squatting throughout the 1970s. The Women's Centre 'had been first squatted by a radical bookshop which passed it on when they knew we were looking for a place', explained James, 'the whole neighbourhood was squatted. It was a diverse inner-city community – including many homeless Bangladeshi families living in squats… There was a great *community spirit*.'[996] Fellow Women's Centre member, Anne Neale added:

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[993] http://www.unfinishedhistories.com/interviews/interviewees-a-e/george-eugeniou/.[accessed:08/02/23].
[994] http://www.unfinishedhistories.com/interviews/interviewees-a-e/george-eugeniou/; Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity,* 135.
[995] Eugeniou, interview 'The Reality of The Play', Online:https://storypalace.org/stories/life-art-back-life/.[accessed:08/02/2023]
[996] My italics. Selma James in Cristel Amiss and Didi Rossi, 'Living History – 40th Anniversary of the Crossroads Women's Centre', 22/01/2015. Online:https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/blog/living-history-anniversary-crossroads-womens-centre.[accessed:21/02/2023].

> There was no funding, all of the groups came together because they wanted to organise and change things … Differences between people were acknowledged and worked out… you felt the power of different sectors come together; it was just a *tremendous feeling*.[997]

Somers Town certainly has an 'absurdly layered' community make-up.[998] The area's cheap slum housing was literally the first port of call for migrants both nationally and internationally throughout the twentieth-century. In the 1970s its derelict houses and industrial spaces awaiting a redevelopment that never came, became ideal sites for mass squatting, activism, and community projects. It has been well-established that squatting has a long history, not least associated with the housing crises following the two world wars, but then becoming more embedded in the urban landscape and taking on additional counter and youth culture associations in the late 1960s and 1970s.[999] For many, squats became about 'more than just squatting', but about living amongst people who are 'trying to set up alternatives for themselves', or 'who can no longer accept what society offers or is doing to itself; alternatives, for instance in housing and ways of living with people, education, community care, sex attitudes, work and technology.'[1000] Matt Cook has illuminated how the new forms of sociability coalescing within the squatted 'Gay Centre of Brixton' could engender belonging and political engagement for residents.[1001] Christine Wall found a 'sisterhood' of feminist and lesbian support evolving through squats in 1970s-1980s Hackney.[1002] And Shabna Begum has interjected how Bengali migrant squatting involved 'homemaking' practices rooted in transnational diasporic identities, which permeated into the surrounding streets.[1003] For some, the housing struggle was where they 'cut their teeth' into wider social action and community projects, as one of the activists based in Spitalfields reflected:

> what they were shown was, you can move into a house, you can move into a block of flats, and you can back the state off and get rehoused. So, if can do it over houses, I can do it over other things.[1004]

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[997] My italics. Neale speaking, in Crossroads Women: 'Our Story. Our Film'[3:20]. Online:http://crossroadswomen.net/our-story-our-film.[accessed:21/02/2023].
[998] Esther Leslie, 'A Discontinuous History of Squatting in Somers Town', The Walkative Project, 5/5/2017. Online: http://thewalkativeproject.org/2017/05/05/saturday-29th-april-a-discontinuous-history-of-squatting-in-somers-town-esther-leslie/.[accessed:02/02/2023]
[999] Nick Anning, *Squatting: The Real Story* (London: Biteback, 1980); Michael Gordon, *The Nuclear Family in Crisis: The Search for an Alternative,* (New York: 1972); James Hinton, 'Self-Help and Socialism the Squatters' Movement of 1946', *History Workshop Journal,* 25(1988), 100–26.
[1000] Newsletter, *Villain*, 21, 1977, cited in Kesia Reeve,''Gay Times', Squatting since 1945 The enduring relevance of material need', in Peter Somerville, Nigel Sprigings (eds.), *Housing and Social Policy* (London: Routledge, 2005), 197-216.
[1001] Cook,''Gay Times': Identity', 84–109.
[1002] Christine Wall, 'Sisterhood and Squatting in the 1970s: Feminism, Housing and Urban Change in Hackney', *History Workshop Journal*, 83:1(2017), 79–97.
[1003] Shabna Begum, 'From Sylhet to Spitalfields', PhD Thesis, Queen Mary University, 2021.
[1004] Terry Fitzpatrick, as quoted in Begum, 'From Sylhet to', 162.

In the case of Somers Town and Kings Cross, its particular make-up of occupied and claimed spaces – some of which had been squatted for over a decade – created a unique cultural compression of multi-activism and resistance, fostering a '*tremendous feeling'* of '*community spirit'* that leant itself towards the local sanctuaries that emerged.[1005]

The area's diversity and multi-layered activism did not immediately necessitate a harmonic sense of community. Nassar Ali, recalls growing up near Drummond Street as a young boy recently immigrated from Bangladesh, and being 'wary' when walking through the neighboured, 'because although I'm not that far from where I live, you're conscious of who's there, what's going on. If you go further up… again it was a different kind of make-up.'[1006] As the recently compiled histories of the Kings Cross Story Palace collectively attest, this area in the 1980s was populated by predominantly white working-class families of several generations, alongside increasing numbers of newly migrated families, juxtaposed by renowned gay pubs, and all just around the corner from London's premier red-light area.[1007] Some were drawn to the area through necessity. Others more out of curiosity. Cristel Amiss, who attended the Women's Centre, recalled 'on average I would come up once a month to London' – she was living some hundred miles away in Bristol at the time – 'and then I began to increase the frequency' until 'the centre then became a real sort of second home' for me. [1008]

Yet the cultural compression of the diverse communities within the area could open them up to new avenues of cohesion and collective resistance. 'In some ways', Amiss added:

> the memorable times have also been the times when we weren't actually in the centre, and have been about what we've managed to organise as the different groups that are based working collectively together.[1009]

Among the first visitors to the Kings Cross Women's Centre, for instance, were Bangladeshi women who were experiencing housing problems forcing them to squat, and protesting against being injected with Depo-Provera, a harmful long-term contraception. It was this compression of networks and activism that we can see directly feeding into the area's sanctuary campaigns in practical terms, providing concentrated networks and spaces of activism which fed into and inspired each other. Not only was Eugeniou directly inspired by the space occupying tactics of the organisations based at the neighbouring Women's Centre, but the Women's Centre would also become one of the hubs of organisations supporting the Nicola's sanctuary – before becoming actively involved in a number of succeeding anti-deportation campaigns including the Mendis sanctuary.[1010] The concentration of

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[1005] Dyson, author interview.
[1006] Nassar Ali moved to the UK in 1979. Online:https://soundcloud.com/historypin/09-how-the-areas-changed.[accessed:08/02/2023].
[1007] https://about.historypin.org/project/kings-cross-story-palace/.[accessed:08/02/2023].
[1008] Cristel Amiss, in 'Our Story. Our Film'.[7:33]
[1009] Amiss, interview.
[1010] A pamphlet for the Nicola's Sanctuary Campaign listed over 36 organisations supporting the sanctuary including: JCWI, Migrant Action Group, Migrant Service Unit, Kings Cross Womens Centre, Camden Council

activism within the locality, thus not only inspired each other in terms of tactics of resistance but catalysed local activists to become involved in resistance on multiple fronts.

It is also possible to interpret that this compression of activism created a '*tremendous feeling'* of '*community spirit'* in a less tangible, but still powerful emotional sense; the momentum of "you can back the state off"[1011] Footage of the Nicolas's campaign captured a glimpse of how this emotional 'spirit' fed into in the sanctuary. The following exchange was recorded between campaign chairman Eugeniou and Father Dyson, several weeks into the sanctuary:

> Dyson: We've explored as far as we are able, and it's gone at the highest level too ... I don't see there is any amount of pressure we can put anywhere that will alter that.
>
> Eugeniou: I don't think there is an end of the road. I've been fighting for this for the last ten years – if I thought it was end of the road – I should've given it up. This is a *just* cause … and we must have the will to fight it![1012]

Some thirty years later, Eugeniou explained that he gained this passionate belief in community based direct-action via his experience of spending three years turning a dilapidated railway shed behind Kings Cross Station into Theatro Technis first premises, then to be told by the council that the area was to be redeveloped. They mounted a public and televised campaign, which forced the council, against the odds of redevelopment, to relocate them in a derelict church house around the corner:

> They said, 'are you mad?' I said, 'yes'. A convincing improbability is preferable than an unconvincing probability - it became my motto ever since until the present time. If you believe in something, it will happen.[1013]

Here, we have an example of how the emotion of being able to take on the authorities and win, concentrated within a space-time that held a history of space claiming, squatting, and occupation could not only inspire a sanctuary's initial creation, but potentially sustain it too.

Also important to this sense of feasible resistance was of course the fact that campaigns and activists could co-opt receptive local urban authorities. By the 1980s urban community projects such as Theatro Technis were able to get support and funding via their local council and the GLC, as part of the push for municipal multiculturalism discussed in chapter 4. Camden council not only enabled Theatro Technis to move from its disused railway shed premises to a permanent premises in the form of a disused church house, but the GLC also provided financial grants towards the Nichola's sanctuary campaign directly.[1014] Again then, in London we find a pertinent history of national trends of

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Labour Group, Camdens Race.and Community Relations Committee, Camdens Womens Committee, Camden Against Deportation,.SWAAP, Euston Community Workshop, London Association of Community Relations Council, Refugee Forum, GLC–Anti Deportation Group, Hackney Anti-Deportation Group, Haringey Council, Camden Chinese Community Centre, Bengali Workers Action Group, GLC–Police Committee Support Unit.

[1011] Quotes as before: Neale; James; Fitzpatrick, retrospectively.

[1012] Eugeniou and Dyson speaking in 'Sanctuary challenge',[22:30].

[1013] Eugeniou, interview with Polly Rodgers, 'Second Home'. Online:https://soundcloud.com/search?q=george%20eugeniou.[accessed:19/06/2023].

[1014] *Right To Be*, 59.

disenfranchisement and anti-authoritarian politics, feeding into local community activism and direct-action, conjointly lending the neighbourhood space towards the microcosm of the sanctuary spaces.

Section summary

The places giving home to sanctuary campaigns were able to do so as the result of being sites of cultural compression. From Hulme to Hackney, these urban areas were responding to national trends in migration, currents of socio-economic disenfranchisement, and housing demands. Responses to these national-scale forces were being mitigated through localised precedents and networks of discontent and dissent. Then manifesting in hybrid ways. The conjunctions of these forces with precedents were crucial ingredients within the communities that in turn initiated and sustained sanctuary spaces. From inspiring symbolic acts of multi-faith resistance in Ashton-Under-Lyne, to creating a concentrated knowledge and activist 'community spirit' in Kings Cross, the unique cultural compression of these urban places fed into and out of the sanctuary campaigns.

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The spaces of sanctuary

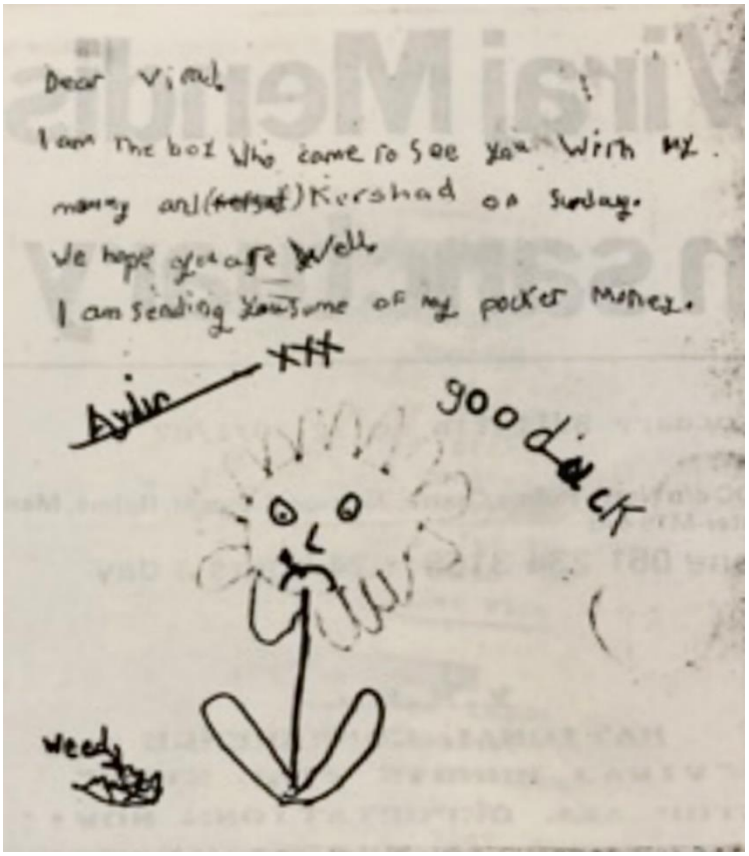

Figure 31: Letter of support from one of Mendis's young supporters after visiting the sanctuary with his 'mummy.' Image cutting from: AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/46, VMDC, *Sanctuary Bulletin*, No.12, 30/01/87, 2.

It remains, that sanctuaries did not occur in all of the potential religious sites situated within places of urban cultural compression, prompting us to further scrutinise what it was that drew in these forces of compression into some sites in particular. In this next section, we will therefore consider whether there was "something special" about the spaces of the churches, temples, and mosques involved specifically, which facilitated their evolution into hubs of political protest. We shall explore this in terms of accessibility, physicality and managed inclusivity.

Accessibility

Spaces of worship offered potentially "open" places for campaign engagement in key practical senses. As seen in chapter 3, religious networks are largely already self-generating. They typically operate within an open access policy, or at least open to everyone of that particular faith, in a way which few other spaces did, with the exception of perhaps public libraries which often require silence, or

community centre's which required red-taped public funding, or daunting levels of sustained fundraising and volunteerism. As activist and academic Sivanandan reflected in 1985, since the 1970s 'Government funding of self-help groups undermined the self-reliance, the self-created social and economic bases, of those groups: they were no longer responsive to or responsible for the people they served – and service itself became a profitable concern.'[1015] In this landscape a free and open-to-all sanctuary space was thus a potentially increasing rarity to community activists.

The urban location of the places of worship involved also made access easier to the time or cash poor, like mothers and students, or those less inclined to venture far. A church such as the Ascension also offered regular playgroup facilities which could draw-in and free-up women and families to participate (see **figure 31**). For some, participating in a sanctuary campaign seems to have fit in routinely alongside, their pre-existing activism or day-to-day lives, drawing them in almost instinctually. In the account of one former young student and member of the Sheffield Anarchist Group, for example, he details under the subheading 'Blind Activism' how he 'got stuck into everything that was going on… because I thought I was "doing the business"'.[1016] This included 'getting involved in a campaign to stop the deportation of a bloke from Sri Lanka who was seeking sanctuary in a church in Hulme':

> Basically, people would lock themselves in the church overnight with Mendis. We were supposed to be prepared to defend it in the event of a police raid. Some of us went over to Manchester one night a week and stayed over. Sometimes we'd go over on the Friday and take part in the weekly march from the city centre to Hulme. This occasionally got a bit more interesting when the odd reactionary turned up to taunt us. Anyway, we went over every week and stayed up all night chatting, playing cards and football in the church.[1017]

Evidently for some participating in a sanctuary campaign became just a part of their weekly social life. He found the marches 'more interesting' when there was the prospect of reaction, but his concluding memories of the time were simply 'chatting, playing cards and football in the church'. The physical openness of sanctuary could draw-in likeminded individuals via its local anti-authoritarian reputation, or perhaps just ostensibly on the basis of good time, but either way the outcome was a form of co-opted political activism fostered within that space; simply playing a casual game of cards holds added meaning when you are choosing to play in a space wherein you are knowingly expected to provide potential physical resistance, or risk arrest, at the drop of a hat.

The open accessibility of the sanctuary also lent itself to creating a space of hospitality and shared exchange between those already pre-disposed to political activism and those who were less so. When Batsleer moved to Manchester Polytechnic, she had already been active in The Miners Strikes

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[1015] Sivanandan, 'RAT and the', 6.
[1016] 'AnarchiOi', 'What is wrong with the anarchist movement?',15/04/2006. Online:http://www.anarkhia.org/article.php?sid=964.[accessed:06/02/2023].
[1017] Ibid.

and at Greenham Common and 'become somebody who saw direct action as my main way of doing politics at that stage'. She was 'very drawn to that campaign [VMDC] that existed at that time, more or less as soon as I moved to the city'.[1018] She recalled to me that 'those communities were just incredibly welcoming. For me as somebody who already came from a very activist background', and it 'would have definitely been the collectivity that drew me.'[1019] Yet according to Batsleer, the sanctuary was equally as welcoming to experienced activists as it was locals turning to them for help 'with immigration cases and with welfare benefits questions'. One contemporary account described how:

> It is not an unusual experience to visit the sanctuary and meet people who have been severely alienated by the rest of society or driven to the edge of despair by the stresses of poverty and violence. The campaign welcomes such people and can often involve them in its organisation where for example 'community mental health projects' might be less successful. This is because the sanctuary is rooted in a belief in solidarity and mutual aid.[1020]

Batsleer explained to me that the effect of this ethos within the space of the sanctuary meant 'something quite hospitable in a way':

> if you're prepared to get involved in something like that, nobody cares who you are really… you could be wealthy, or you could be broke – *as long as you're getting involved* – and you're genuine in that.[1021]

The campaign's emphasis upon 'mutual aid' and 'getting involved' not only distinguished it from a space of charity, but speaks to the level of connection that the fixed open space of the sanctuary could foster. The sanctuary's reliably open doors encouraged regular as well as casual attendance and made it a feature of the community.

Physicality

Batsleer's description of the sanctuary as being an open space on the provision of 'just as long as you're getting involved', also speaks to a level of social accountability that was fostered within the physicality of the fixed meeting-cum-sanctuary space, another key sustaining aspect of these campaigns. Most sanctuary campaigns ensured that there was a regular rotation of campaigners present, or able, to be rapidly assembled around the clock, in case of a surprise raid. In a time before group messaging services 'Phone-trees' were established. At the sanctuary for the Ogunwobi's, campaigning chairman Ian Rathbone explained to me that if the 'balloon went up that the cops were coming', they would use a 'hotline' to ensure that 'we would be standing around them [the

[1018] Batsleer, author interview.
[1019] Ibid.
[1020] Batlseer,'The Viraj Mendis'.
[1021] My italics. Batsleer, author interview.

Ogunwobis], holding a prayer meeting; and so they would have to break up a prayer meeting in order to take the family.'[1022] At the VMDC, Mendis explained to me how a rota was drawn up to continually protect the sanctuary from raids or hate attacks twenty-four-hours a day:

> so that people don't sort of come all at once, you know… we divided it up, there was the women's group, the gay men's group, and you know various-, from some part of Manchester some groups used to come, and the peace movement group, and the anti-fascists, anti-apartheid type of people came … so we organised this kind of rota.[1023]

On a practical level such systems distributed numbers and security, but it also had a side-effect of tying people into the campaign, forcing them to meet new people, fostering a sense of collective energy, and so frequently precipitating individual's further involvement.

Openshaw described how when he first became involved with the Mendis sanctuary 'for the first sort of two or three months, I used to join the rota … and I used to do a two-hour slot in the early evening or weekends.' He recalled that the rota 'had a number of different functions, and people on it had different ideas about what it was [laughs]':

> some people thought it was to beat the police up if they arrived. And some people thought it was like a PR job, to check people who came in, ask them very nicely were they coming to visit the church or, you know people who came to visit Viraj. And just show them and be very nice to them, and chat to them, and tell them about the campaign.[1024]

While doing that 'for maybe three months', he 'seemed to meet different people each time, because there'd just be two or three people on the rota'. Then, 'there was a conference organised by the campaign' and he 'helped at the creche for that'. Then they 'had *another* conference sort of three months later and that's when I became sort of much more involved. And I subsequently became the treasurer for the campaign.'[1025] Openshaw's story of gradual incorporation into the campaign exemplifies how the regular open space of the sanctuary enabled him to become more enveloped and consistent in his involvement. In this sense, to quote Massey, space appears as the 'dimension of the social'. The people participating in the sanctuary continually 'produced' a wider social, political and cultural space by establishing its core values and its line of action.[1026]

Openshaw's story of gradual involvement by 'getting to meet different people each time' and observing others be 'very nice' to newcomers or chatting to them a bit 'like a PR job' highlights the campaigns tangible sense of collectivism: the physicality of human connection afforded by the sanctuary space. Recent theorists have begun critically analysing the importance of such physical bonds in social activism, or lack of, in the wake of social media. With some noting that while internet

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[1022] Rathbone, author interview.
[1023] Mendis, author interview.
[1024] Openshaw, BL.
[1025] My italics. Openshaw, track 4, BL.
[1026] Massey, 'On Space'.

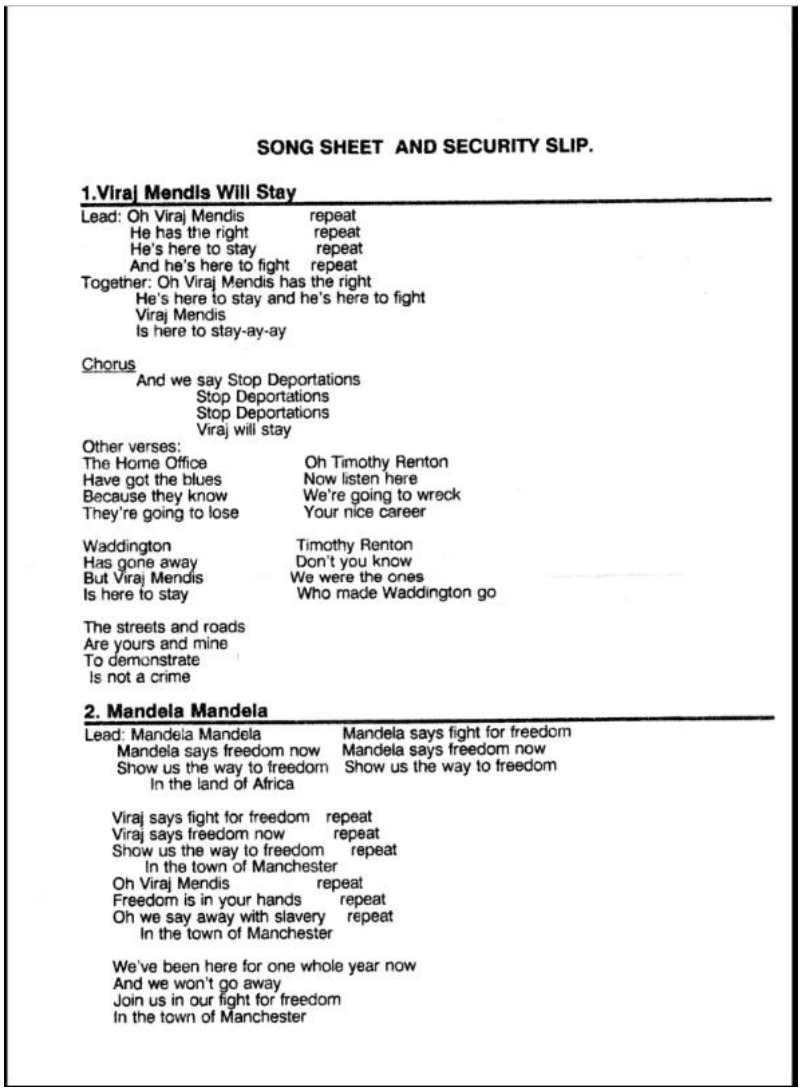
activism can improve information dissemination and virtual connectivity, it also breeds a level of 'fast-fading political evanescence', 'twitter fetishism', or 'slactivism'; 'feel good activism that has zero political or social impact' but creates 'an illusion of having a meaningful impact on the world without demanding anything more than joining a Facebook group'.[1027] Sanctuary campaigns certainly support theories emphasising the importance of physical collective campaigning, for they routinely made use of forms of collective direct-action, alongside the routine protection of the sanctuary through their physical presence.

The advantage of the regular and physical place for forming inter-campaigner-bonds is evident in the recollections of those involved in the VMDC. Okojie, for example, described to me how:

> The Church of Ascension – that was the place! Then it was every Friday, we had a meeting, where we considered all of the campaign events for the week ... So it was a political movement. It was a rally. Where you went to know who is who in Manchester on the Left. And you could see the singing. It was a carnival atmosphere. It was wonderful – it brought people on the Left together. I'll tell you, it was fantastic.[1028]

A frequent feature in the memories of former VMDC members, and local residents alike, was the regular Friday marches in particular. Marchers would meet at the Church of Ascension every Friday, before beginning their walk to the City Hall and back. Primarily this weekly excursion (excluding Viraj who would stay holed up in the church but gave speeches of encouragement from the window), was intended as awareness raising tactic, armed with an assortment of placards, posters, pamphlets, and a collection of chants, hymnals, and adapted popular music, they intended to make 'their local presence known' (see **figure 32).**

[1027] Paolo Gerbaudo*, Tweets and the Streets: social media and contemporary activism* (London: Pluto, 2012); Evgenyi Morozov, *The Net Delusion* (London: Penguin, 2011).
[1028] Okojie, author interview.



SONG SHEET AND SECURITY SLIP.

1.Viraj Mendis Will Stay

Lead: Oh Viraj Mendis repeat
He has the right repeat
He's here to stay repeat
And he's here to fight repeat
Together: Oh Viraj Mendis has the right
He's here to stay and he's here to fight
Viraj Mendis
Is here to stay-ay-ay

Chorus
And we say Stop Deportations
Stop Deportations
Stop Deportations
Viraj will stay

Other verses:
The Home Office
Have got the blues
Because they know
They're going to lose

Oh Timothy Renton
Now listen here
We're going to wreck
Your nice career

Waddington
Has gone away
But Viraj Mendis
Is here to stay

Timothy Renton
Don't you know
We were the ones
Who made Waddington go

The streets and roads
Are yours and mine
To demonstrate
Is not a crime

2. Mandela Mandela

Lead: Mandela Mandela Mandela says fight for freedom
Mandela says freedom now Mandela says freedom now
Show us the way to freedom Show us the way to freedom
In the land of Africa

Viraj says fight for freedom repeat
Viraj says freedom now repeat
Show us the way to freedom repeat
In the town of Manchester
Oh Viraj Mendis repeat
Freedom is in your hands repeat
Oh we say away with slavery repeat
In the town of Manchester

We've been here for one whole year now
And we won't go away
Join us in our fight for freedom
In the town of Manchester

Figure 32: AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/46, 19/06/1987, 1. Image of 'VMDC SONG SHEET AND SECURITY SLIP'. AUIR. Online:https://aiucentre.wordpress.com/2014/03/28/viraj-mendis-is-our-friend/#jp-carousel-405[accessed: 23/06/2023].

Batsleer recalled how these weekly musical Friday marches 'were very moral boosting and solidarity building'. Occasionally they faced hecklers, and occasionally violent attackers, but their practiced methods of physically protecting each other and working together, meant that when it came to the final deportation blockade for instance, 'there was enough of us, used to being together, trusting each other.'[1029] The effect of this galvanised morale was further concentrated within the confines of the sanctuary when they all met up again (see **figure 33**). As Okojie reminisced:

> When you go to those meetings, it is emotionally electric; we're all sitting on the floor of the church, it was a particularly big church, but it was crowded. You know, it was that feeling, the singing … You are not in doubt that was our republic, a socialist republic.[1030]

[1029] Batsleer, author interview.
[1030] Okojie, author interview[1:15:20].

Figure 33: Viraj Mendis speaking at the church of ascension, *n.d* photograph author's own copy.

It was not just the young or political activist types looking for a 'socialist republic' to 'do the business' that sanctuary spaces attracted, however. They also acted as sites of unification by bringing together different aspects of the community, including the regular religious congregation, into close contact with the reality of the British immigration system and personalising it. Many studies across disciplines have noted the depersonalising effect produced by mass images of suffering on television and in newspapers; generalities of bodies-dead, wounded, starving, diseased, and homeless' amounting to a 'psychic numbing', 'dehistoricizing universalism', or 'cultural anaesthesia'.[1031] In particular, Liz Fekete has noted 'a blindness that is only explicable in terms of the xeno-racism meted out to the desperate and the dispossessed'.[1032] Yet close-contact experience, as encountered via sanctuary campaigns, can make us more likely to act when presented with a crisis. Evidence of these allegiances formed through the close-contact physicality of the sanctuary can be seen across sanctuary campaigns. Father Dyson remarked to cameras on the 'very tight-knit community' manifested by the Nichola's sanctuary, 'who bring food in plenty into them, and sit with them and stay with all day long, play games with them, talk to them, encourage them', with the effect that 'the morale is incredibly high', when 'most of us would be very down'.[1033]

[1031] Paul Slovic *et al*., 'Psychic Numbing and Mass Atrocity', in E. Shafir (ed.), *The behavioural foundations of public policy* (Princeton UP, 2013), 126-142; Malkki, 'Speechless Emissaries', 377-404; Allen Feldman, 'On Cultural Anesthesia: From Desert Storm to Rodney King', *American Ethnologist*, 21:2(1994), 404-418.
[1032] Liz Fekete, 'The deportation machine: Europe, asylum and human rights', *Race & Class*, 47 (2005), 64.
[1033] Dyson in 'Sanctuary Challenge',[08:26].

Mendis similarly recalled to me that he had 'a huge amount of food coming in', because so many people from the local community brough him food daily. 'In fact, I put on a lot of weight inside!', he laughed. What's more, he 'didn't have time' to become lonely or bored 'because people were always there interviewing me', each day 'all kinds of people come and talk to you and it was a struggle to keep the time for everybody'.[1034] And, as we have seen in chapter 3, the results of these new bonds formed in the shared space of the sanctuary could be dramatic: turning inconspicuous figures such as Hilda Carr, from a 'typical' elderly parishioner with no previously apparent political allegiances, into a passionate radical sacrificing her own blood and sending it to the Home Office within a matter of weeks.

Managed inclusivity

Not every congregation member was as open-minded or onboard with sanctuary campaigns as the formidable Mrs Carr. So how did faith which we saw in chapter 3 as being vital for the sanctuary movement, intersect with the places and spaces where they played out? Rathbone, the chairman for the sanctuary campaign of the Ogunwobi family, remembered the reaction of the Hackney Down Baptist congregation as being decidedly mixed. He recalled that at a meeting called to decide the campaign's fate: 'there were several people who never ever agreed to the sanctuary at all. But the majority – it was a very thin majority – agreed to the sanctuary going ahead', under the proviso that 'the campaign had an agreement with the church, to pay for the heating, and lighting, and everything else'.[1035] According to Rathbone, over the next three and a quarter years those who had opposed it just 'kind of ignored it' and 'church services and activities just carried on, as though there was no one else there kind of thing'.[1036]

Still, he noted that there were times during those years when there was 'like a crisis':

> [The minister] said, 'Oh people in the church are beginning to wonder why they still here; "they should go home"; "they're not going to get anywhere"; "they should just go home and allow the immigration officers to take them". To which we said: 'No way!' There's no way that is going to happen.[1037]

The church's minister at the time, Steve Latham, reflected on relations between the congregation and the campaign with a more harmonious hue. Latham recounted to me how he felt the Ogunwobis were responsible for quite 'a spiritual renewal of the church'. They were 'very spiritual prayerful people', they 'attended our prayer meetings', and 'people would go to them for advice, people would go to

[1034] Mendis, author interview.
[1035] Rathbone, author interview.
[1036] Rathbone, author interview.
[1037] Rathbone, author interview.

them for prayer. They would counsel people in the church at the time; they had a big impact on people's lives.'[1038]

As has been well-documented, retrospective oral history accounts typically produce such variances. [1039] Alessandro Portelli has famously highlighted: 'memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meaning.' We sometimes remember what we wish to be true or omit parts we wish were not.[1040] In this case, however, I am inclined to consider that the accounts of both Rathbone, the chairman, and Latham, the minister, are true. Both concur that the campaign proceeded on account of the democratic majority. Rathbone stated that, 'At the end of the day, there is a democratic process; If the church congregation say no, that is it… but they didn't'. Latham expanded that while he made the initial decision to accept the Ogunwobi's for two weeks, by simply phoning round 'key leaders', he was then required by Baptist practice and structure to call a church members meeting to try and discern what God might be calling them to do and vote: "'Vox Populi, Vox Dei', that's the Latin. So, we try and operate on that basis, although leaders are important.'[1041]

Clearly, Latham was conscious to operate within the confines of Baptist democracy, but was not afraid to use his leadership position to encourage a space of inclusion. Indeed, inclusivity was integral to his broader vision for a multicultural church. He described to me how upon his arrival at Hackney Downs in 1980, 'there was sixteen people, most of them elderly, most of them Black, but led by white elderly people' who 'were holding onto the power.' By the time he left 'there was about seventy to eighty people in the church': 'Zimbabwean, Ghanaian, Nigerian, Ugandan, Brazilian, Irish, Australian, I think we had Chinese as well, in the congregation at that time.' He accepted that within such a multicultural church, 'there is process of negotiation and compromise and of course sacrifice', but 'that's been my vision throughout my ministry':

> I think it's a very powerful testament and witness. I think it's a foretaste of heaven. The book of revelation talks about every tribe and language and nation, so I think that's part of the vision I was working towards [1042]

Indeed, even campaign chairman, Rathbone, was not previously an parishioner at Hackney Downs, or even a Baptist, but came to be involved in the sanctuary through his reputation as local activist and the persuasion of Latham: 'Steve could be quite persuasive and encouraging in a quiet way' recalled Rathbone.[1043] We can thus see how the combination of a charismatic leadership driven by principles of

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[1038] Latham, author interview.
[1039] Alastair Thomson, 'Fifty Years On: An International Perspective on Oral History', *The Journal of American History*, 85:2(1998), 581-595.
[1040]Alessandro Portelli,'What Makes Oral History Different', in Robert Perks and Alastair Thompson (eds.), *Oral History Reader* (New York: Routledge,1989), 69.
[1041] Latham, author interview.
[1042] Ibid.
[1043] Rathbone, see: https://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/634481/The_Revd_Dr.aspx.[accessed:16/06/2023]

inclusivity created a space open to sanctuary. This is a narrative we find repeated across sanctuary campaigns in various guises.

Indeed when Carr explained her decision to perform a dramatic blood sacrifice to curious local radio reporters she notably made repeated reference to how she ran everything past minister Weller, whom she evidently associated with maintaining the sanctuary campaign's higher authority: '*I asked Paul (Weller) if he thought it would be right* that I should ask Vinod …'; 'and *then asked Paul if he could tell the* difference'; *'Well as far as I know, Paul is going to* send them up to the House of Commons'.[1044] Her frequent denotations to the authority of 'Paul', is indicative of how he was effectively acting, in Polletta's terminology, as the key network intersection here. Not only did he come up with the initial idea of establishing a physical space for the sanctuary campaign, but through this space he was bringing together different elements of local communities through his own dual connections as both an activist and minister.

Just as Weller was supporting a space of inclusivity through a mixture of courageous of action and leadership guided by Christian spirituality, we can see a similar process at play in sanctuary spaces of other faiths too. Geetha Maheshwaran, for instance, whose father, Sinnathurai Ratnasingham opened the Shree Ghanapathy Temple to Tamil refugees for months in 1985, recalled that her father was central to enabling this action as a leader with a 'soul for service' that was 'always in action'. He therefore instinctually defied the ban placed on the sanctuary at the temple when Merton Council threatened to fine them up to up to £100 per day for breaking housing health and safety regulations.[1045] But in Maheshwaran's opinion, he was also a democratic leader, 'My father was not attached to his role nor saw it as a position of power. He was a 'karma yogi':

> He was very charming – and spent a lot of time at the temple, speaking with people. He was grounded; it was not him in charge and everyone else following. He made you feel that you were important. He listened to everybody even if they came up with crazy ideas. He used to listen to them and say 'yes, go for it'. I think that's what you need, *someone who makes others feel this is their temple.*[1046]

At the other end of the personality spectrum in leadership, Father Methuen of the Ascension, had a reputation amongst those who knew him for being 'a really great show man', with a 'strength of personality and flamboyance' that 'could fill the church' and fuel perceptions that he was a force to be reckoned with.[1047] 'His style of management was … Well, I mean I know what they were talking about because I worked with him! [laughs], but he was a terrific guy!', recalled neighbouring priest

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[1044] My italics. Carr in *Legalised Abduction*, 8.
[1045] Shyam Bhatia, 'Priests defy a ban on Tamil sanctuary', *The Observer,* 14/06/1985, 5.
[1046] My italics. Maheshwaran,:.https://www.hinduismtoday.com/magazine/october-november-december-2015/2015-10-saivites-of-london-interviews/.[accessed:06/02/2023].
[1047] Batsleer, author interview.

Sumner.[1048] Frances Ward's 2000 thesis into scripture and churchmanship offers further nuance into the particular power dynamics within the Ascension's congregation.[1049] The members she surveyed conveyed that much of the church's ethos for social-political action which responded to the needs of its neighbourhood stemmed from Methuen.[1050] But, 'I got the clear impression that the only thing John [Methuen] wouldn't tolerate was intolerance', added one.[1051] As we have seen in chapter 3, the effect of this intolerance to intolerance was particularly evident in respondent's reflections on the Mendis campaign. One parishioner commented upon how unpopular the sanctuary was with many who felt they could not express their views:

> Interviewer: Did anyone leave because of it?
>
> Parishioner: No, not really, but a lot were against it.
>
> Interviewer: Were they able to say anything?
>
> Parishioner: Not to Father John, but to each other they did.[1052]

Ward suggests such power relations were indicative of how Methuen operated within the traditions of the Anglo-Catholic 'slum priests': 'representing a very politically engaged inner-city ministry, but often highly autocratic'.[1053] As we have seen in chapters 2 and 3, however, there was also a radical tradition of grassroots religious leaders working to re-script these power relations in response to their spiritual beliefs and parishioners needs. Sumner, who worked in alliance with Methuen, described to me how as inner-city faith leaders, who were both heavily involved in the social work of their parishes, an imperative part of their role was listening to those community's needs. He recalled initially feeling 'totally out of my depth' but learning through an 'apprenticeship' of building good relations with the local resident activists over the years.[1054] And, as discussed in chapter 2, this work routinely in collaboration with Methuen, and fellow neighbouring Anglican vicar, Alec Balfe-Mitchell: 'It was a powerful team. That gave us a tremendous influence.'[1055] From this perspective, Methuen was arguably being equally influenced by the demands of the surrounding place-space of his neighbourhood. Afterall, had Methuen not been managing this barometer of church inclusivity against the greater needs of the locality effectively, he would have surely lost his congregation, as opposed to commanding full pews.

Indeed, actions sometimes speak louder than words, and a memory of Bridget Methuen's from when they were living at the Ascension is anecdotally indicative of Methuen's success at

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[1048] Sumner, author interview.
[1049] Ward, Writing the Body.
[1050] Ibid. 50.
[1051] Ibid., 91.
[1052] Ibid., 52.
[1053] Ibid.,19.
[1054] Sumner, author interview.
[1055] Ibid.

transcending authority across the local power relations and so functioning as a powerful network intersection. 'John always wore his cassock and was known everywhere', she told me. And he always 'refused to lock his car anywhere in the parish.' Initially this policy of open trust seemed ill-advised, during the first six months of his tenure Methuen was burgled forty-three times, 'mostly', he laughingly told a journalist, 'by the same person'.[1056] But then, Bridget recalled, one night 'we heard these people going along, testing all the cars and somebody said: "Not that one! That's Father John's that is."'[1057]

Methuen's particular form of managed inclusivity guided by an intolerance to intolerance evidently permeated and sustained the space of the sanctuary campaign too. As the Mendis campaign reached international news levels, Methuen continued to offer himself up to charges of being a 'muddle-headed cleric' from the press, politicians, and fellow clergy alike.[1058] Hate mail and being advised to check under cars for bombs became routine, but he maintained his position of public support and commitment to the sanctuary's open doors.[1059] As we have seen, the campaign's ability to draw in a diverse allegiance of supporters, boasting lesbian and gay groups, women's groups, religious groups, communists, anti-fascists, and Black self-aid groups alike, was integral to sustaining the campaign. While the VMDC was initially organised by the Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG), its development into an accessible sanctuary space was then enabled by the church. Thus, as Batsleer put it, 'on the one hand you've got these figureheads who were not particularly democratic figures', and 'a party that was not a particularly democratic party'. Yet, collectively, 'it was certainly very open, it wasn't very bureaucratic in the way that trade union organising, or labour movement things are.' The RCG did 'keep quite a tight grip on it all', but by her memory 'they weren't a typical far Left party, in the sense of controlling other people who wanted to be involved in the campaign'.[1060] Bridget Methuen was uniquely positioned to observe these dynamics, as a clergy wife living in the house attached to the Ascension, but relative outsider to the internal 'factions' of the campaign:

> There were quite a few IRA members of the VMDC, so it did get taken over slightly by interesting militant people. And you know, there were kind of factions within it. It was a bit like the Monty Python's skit, you know, 'Splitter!'… 'They're the Palestinian whatever… We're not them!'. Yeah, it was just interesting watching what went on [laughs].[1061]

To an observer one step removed like Bridget Methuen, such scenes might have appeared comedic, but they can also perhaps be viewed as the epitome of an open-space in action – a space wherein anyone could come and converse, debate, and argue for the kind of future they wanted.

[1056] Michael Watts, 'Voices from Hulme', *The Daily Telegraph,* 20/03/1993, 156.
[1057] Methuen, author interview.
[1058] Verah, Ibid.
[1059] Methuen, author interview.
[1060] Batsleer, author interview.
[1061] Methuen, author interview.

When I asked Mendis himself, how they made such a broad-spectrum alliance work, he admitted that on occasion tensions could arise, but that crucially:

> We had an open structure, that was the main thing, you know, we insisted on having a democratic open platform, where all the people are allowed their say, right … basically the people who do the work, they make the decisions more or less, you know. The more work you do, the more rights you have! [laughs][1062]

In part, this 'open platform', was spearheaded by Mendis himself. He insisted on wearing a badge that read 'Hands Off Ireland', despite the campaign being very split on this and being advised: 'You do this, you're going to be deported.' He increasingly situated his campaign as being supportive of 'all fellow sanctuary campaigns', despite being advised by 'a high-ranking person in the church' that they could better support him if he did not 'make a big mess out of it' and 'just stuck to Sri Lanka'. And, above all, he explicitly projected his case as a frontier against 'all racist immigration laws', despite fellow anti-deportation activists pointing out that this was not tactic that the Home Office would likely concede to.[1063]

Yet, crucially, Mendis also felt that Methuen was critical to initiating and sustaining this type of space:

> I'd say the campaign ethos was very democratic, but I'd also say Father John – I mean obviously he was a huge figure – because without his agreement none of this could have happened without him being prepared to put himself forward. And it wouldn't have been as strong.[1064]

Figure 34:
Methuen and Mendis in the Ascension's vestry space which became Mendis's home-cum-press office. Photograph cutting from Dossier concerning Judicial Review of Viraj Mendis's case, VMDC, September 1987.

[1062] Mendis, author interview.
[1063] Ibid.
[1064] Batsleer, author interview.

By facilitating the church sanctuary campaign Methuen not only provided access to previously unavailable resources, such as use the physical use of the church, its congregation, and links to established respectability. But he also instilled the theological foundations that provided the guidelines of inclusivity, safeguarding a space for protest. No party could own or dominate the campaign, because no party indisputably owned the space, a factor we also saw affecting Khan's sanctuary in chapter 3. It was through Methuen's partnership with Mendis, that, the unique potential of the sanctuary space, situated within a cultural compression such as Hulme and Moss Side came about. Mendis injected Methuen's vocation for social issues and equality with radicalism and urgency. Together, Mendis and Methuen therefore jointly functioned as a powerfully symbolic and practical network intersection within this shared space.[1065]

How the strength and limitations of this partnership affected the sanctuary space is encapsulated in one final anecdote Mendis told me. 'We had one big meeting, where we had the Archbishop of York invited' and 'then we had also invited somebody from Sinn Fein', he explained. A 'big sort of altercation' ensued: 'What's the matter with you? Sinn Fein, then the Archbishop of York, a conservative theologian! … It's not gonna work, you cannot have it'. But, Mendis recalled, 'we insisted: 'No. We will have both; both will have a right to speak.'[1066] The incident remains demonstrative of the kind of all-embracing "free space" the sanctuary aspired to be, and indeed became, wherein neither Bishop nor Sinn Fein member held more authority. Whether the Bishop found himself otherwise engaged that day, by chance or by tact, the principal of the free space remained intact, due at least in part due to Mendis and Methuen's determination against the voices of reticence. The incident offers us an exemplar of how the free spaces of sanctuary, were actually only "free" by design and managed inclusivity, requiring careful behind the scenes stage-management and ongoing curation, in order to balance the competing and compressing internal and external forces required to support such a space.

Chapter conclusion.

Sanctuary spaces were key nodes at the centre of national, localised, and micro-organised forms of resistance, sociability, and spirituality. This chapter shows that while there is no singular explanation for what enabled and sustained the campaigns, viewing them through the lens of spatial scales enables us to identify patterns of key components.

In the first section we uncovered how forces affecting urban places on a national scale, including changing migration laws, political approaches to socio-economic inequalities, and housing

[1065] Polletta,'"Free Spaces"', 1-38.
[1066] Mendis, interview

demand, coagulated within localised contexts in areas such as Hulme and Somers Town. From throwing cockroaches in the former, to community theatre projects in the latter, local forms resistance created a cultural compression of networks, knowledge, and cross-community strength; a 'tremendous feeling' and 'powerful' anger.[1067] These urban localities were thus a mixed cocktail of ingredients prone to leaking out into different forms of activism and tapping into pre-existing flows of disenfranchisement and forms of dissent.

The commonality of fermenting anti-authoritarian and anti-Thatcherite sentiment in particular, proved to be attractive, with sanctuary campaigners repeatedly adopting and responding to the established tactics and articulations of resistance within the locality, to present the campaign as 'just an extreme version' of the area's other problems.[1068] However, much like how Schofield and Jones found activists within London's Notting Hill reappropriating the language of 'community' to suit their needs, sanctuary campaigns were being modified through the established languages and methods of resistance. In Moss Side and Hulme we see the campaign incorporate networks and tactics from the areas strong tradition of Tenants Alliances, whereas in Somers Town and Kings Cross we see the campaign being inspired and sustained by networks of squatting and space occupying.

These contributories of cultural compression were only a partial explanation of what created and sustained sanctuary campaigns, however. In the second section of this chapter, we therefore looked at the particular microparameters of the sanctuary space, to consider what was not only attracting supporters to these spaces, but prompting them to come back. We found that the spaces of sanctuary were "free" in critical forms of accessibility. Their open doors invited in mobilising forms of sociability and accountability, which transgressed differences of race, religion, gender, class and sexuality, through physical encounters of cohesion. From playing cards and chatting, to strategizing how to fend of potential physical raids or attacks, people became absorbed into the activism of the sanctuary through a regular drip-feed of giving time and receiving belonging. These spaces were not, however, "free" in the sense of "anything goes" spontaneity and anarchy. Beneath the Monty Python like brouhaha of debating activists, cameras, and blood sacrifices, we find these spaces operating within established bounds of spiritual and moral congruity.

The assigned leadership of these spaces acted as crucial gatekeepers of the space's managed inclusivity and as crucial gate-openers of the space to its wider networks of urban place and locality. By facilitating the Mendis sanctuary campaign for nearly three years, Methuen provided access to previously unavailable resources, but it was through his partnership with Mendis that unique potential of the social space was made manifest. Jointly, they functioned as both symbolic and practical

[1067] Neale, author interview; Sumner, author interview.
[1068] Mendis, author interview.

network intersections within and beyond this space.[1069] Polletta's identification of network intersections as being those with 'weak ties' to other groups is thus not immediately transferable to the spaces sponsoring sanctuary. But Mendis and Methuen's relative social distance in terms of status and allegiances, as Anglican reverend and revolutionary communist, certainly enabled them to challenge existing relations of deference. Methuen endowed Mendis's cause with legitimacy and respectability. Mendis endowed Methuen's cause with radicalism and urgency. Their resulting shared space created a febrile environment for generating mobilizing identities.

The relationship between the bigger and smaller scales of place and space is thus symbiotic, messy, and equivocal, but both were important to facilitating sanctuary spaces. Their surrounding contributing communities, the hybrid communities they created, and the legacies they leave behind, highlight the momentum that could be created, within the core space-time of campaigns. The fact that these campaigns were happening, spreading, and accumulating support from established multicultural areas throughout the long 1980s stands as a testament to how urban Britain had been profoundly remade by the changes of the last three decades. While government officials were attempting to keep the numbers of migration down to preserve antiquated notions of "British" culture and communities, contending multicultural communities and networks were already irrevocably integrated into the British socio-political landscape by the 1980s.

[1069] Polletta,'"Free Spaces"',1-38.

EPILOGUE:

Thesis conclusion:

At the start of this thesis, we met the formidable Hilda Carr during an extraordinary episode in her life when she committed a dramatic act of faith and community-based political action and which, for us, offered an entry-point into the politics and place of sanctuary in late twentieth-century Britain. In particular, when I came across the trace of her actions in the archives, I was prompted to explore what this episode might tell us about the nation's competing versions and understandings of state involvement in migration cases, the role of belief in migration cases, and in turn, the role of emotion in all these. And as I travelled further into the subject, I became interested in how these three threads – the state, belief, and emotion – interwove to animate and shape the development, workings and spread of British anti-deportation campaigns. In doing so I have sought to reveal how this process of enmeshment adds texture, overlooked variation, and new insights into our understandings of the broader tapestry of British society in the long 1980s.

To take first, the state, we encountered its interactions with anti-deportation at its highest official levels in chapter 1 by examining Home Office files against corresponding campaign actions. We found that while the processing of deportation cases was purportedly being driven by numbers and black-and-white legislation, the way policy was being enforced and reformed was in fact being decided within the grey areas of human discretion. This process masked the true violence of the Home Office's actions or inactions behind an opaque screen of bureaucracy, whose true levitators, in the forms of politicians, advisors, and cooperating civil servants, were insipidly employing the language of 'compassion' and 'human rights', while conterminously finding ways to diminish the Home Office's definition of, and corresponding public requirements to, these supposedly enshrined protections.

But the state is more than just Whitehall. When we moved to look in depth at Manchester and London we found municipal politics working directly in opposition to these top-down migration and deportation policies. Through the prisism of anti-deportation campaigns we observed how increasingly diverse individuals penetrating aspects of the local state at this time, were able to acquire resources in the forms of funds, spaces, and skills. Such resources provided support to individuals under threat of deportation, and at times made the crucial difference in raising the profile of their campaigns to the national political level. This work therefore supports the findings of other historians injecting nuance into the narratives regarding municipal socialism and multiculturalism in the 1980s. Taylor, for example, has highlighted how the local state surmounted a significant challenge to the

national state through a highly politicised infiltration of leftist ideas.[1070] Schofield *et al*. have emphasised the varying degrees of radicalism were present within this infiltration.[1071] Payling has showcased how this infiltration occurred through untidy networks of NGOs and individuals.[1072]

However, closer examination of the how teachers, council treasurers, women's groups, and members of community race resistance projects, interacted with anti-deportation campaigns also pushes this narrative of the New Urban Right further, by signposting how particular forms of emotion were also infiltrating and mobilising this project. The acts of individuals such as Wendy Pettifer - who through her work as a housing benefits advisor became enmeshed in helping fellow single mother Prem Lathar's right to stay united in Britain with her children - demonstrate how emotional discretion proved advantageous to those fighting deportations as this constellation of semi-autonomous, semi-state-funded street-level bureaucrats and civic agents, formed bonds of allegiance, or understanding, which incited them to help. While this thesis has thus highlighted the profound changes the Thatcher administration advanced in terms of immigration laws, it has also highlighted how at the local level Thatcherite fears over being "swamped" were clearly not pervasive amongst the councillors, trade union branches, and working groups supporting anti-deportation campaigns. Therefore reinforcing the validity of the approach offered by Matthew Hilton, Chris Moore and Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, who collectively highlighted how Thatcher can be viewed 'as one part of the story rather than the story itself'.[1073] And, furthering Stephen Brooke's call to explore other 'guiding forces', by suggesting how emotions may be one such fruitful guiding force.[1074]

Competing tensions between bases of power, influence, and resources, also interacted with my second thread: 'belief'. First, we explored how the higher echelons of the Church of England responded to sanctuary campaigns. We found that understanding the conversative pluralist nature of this institution is imperative to understanding its interactions with sanctuary campaigns. For although it had increasingly influential links to international and ecumenical sources of Christian radicalism, it also remained tied to bases of white English liberalism in its hierarchical structures and wedded to a top-down desire to stay with sitting 'on the Government side of the House of Lords'.[1075] This is important, not only because it holds transferable implications about the Church's broader and ongoing process of decolonization, but because it highlights how future work pursuing this area might look beyond the surface level of the Church's interactions, and also past the vocality of the 1980s politicisation of Christianity by the New Right. There is a wider story here to be told of Christian resistance relating to the wider Church structures, as signposted by the actions of individuals

[1070] Taylor, *Refugees*, 234.
[1071] Schofield, et al. 'The privatisation of'.
[1072] Payling, *Socialist Republic*.
[1073] Hilton *et al.,* '*New Times* Revisited', 157.
[1074] Brooke, 'Living in 'New', 21.
[1075] James quoted in Carpenter, *Robert Runcie*, 375.

including Wilfred Wood and Kenneth Leech, who demonstrated the presence and impact of Anglicans dedicated to transforming the Anglican Church from the inside out. Similarly, the actions of individuals such as Paul Weller and David Haslam denote a caucus of radical Christians pursuing their progressive religious/political beliefs on the fringes of established church channels, long after the 1960s.

But belief and faith is about more than just institutional channels and bodies of influence, and in part sanctuaries are also a story of the enduring parish, a theme also recently flagged by Geiringer and Owens.[1076] Religious sites act as more than just ornate buildings or empty vessels, but as spaces for people to express faith.[1077] In chapter 3 we then examined how sanctuaries were actually birthed and sustained by vibrant grassroot faith actions across a multitude of beliefs. We found that faith was an integral feature to these campaigns in terms of inspiration, articulation, and their preservation. Faith-based bonds of belonging, forms of becoming, and further civic participating, were all encouraged via sanctuaries, which began functioning as acute sites of religious rescripting.[1078] Together chapters 2 and 3 then not only cast further doubt on the accuracy of theories of the wholesale secularisation of British society since the 1960s, but add significant nuance to the alternative posited theories of its transformation in forms of religious participation affecting British society.[1079] Through the actions of individuals such as Shafaq Hussein and Mr Ratnasingham, we gain sight of an increasingly vocal populace of non-Christian faith-based communities which were actively reshaping British socio-religious norms. All these strands of religious transformation, through their engagement in anti-deportation campaigns, were challenging the very notion of what it meant to be British morally and legally by pursing and carving forms of active religious citizenship.

Woven through this thesis, but coming into sharpest focus in the final chapter, is — chiming with Maguire's call to diversify political history — an insistence of the diffuse and everyday nature of political life.[1080] Mothers attending a playgroup attached to the religious site where a sanctuary was being held could "drop in" to visit and lend the sanctuary seeker words of support. Youths looking for a way to spend their Friday nights might do so by kicking a football around the church hall attached to the sanctuary. But both everyday acts became inherently political via their alignment to a cause which directly challenged the authority of the state. Widening who we count as political actors also allows us to gain sight of the overt political influence of protagonists who might otherwise be overlooked. An elderly non-political parishioner such as Carr, being moved by the words of Jesus might not read as a political moment. Likewise, the actions of a determined young theatre director, such as Eugeniou, dedicated to putting on community plays in converted squat buildings, might seem of irrelevance to

[1076] Geiringer and Owens, 'Anglicanism, Race and'.
[1077] Geiringer and Owens, 'Anglicanism, Race and'.
[1078] Baker, 'The contagion of'; Garnett and Harris, *Rescripting Religion*, 16.
[1079] Catto and Woodhead, *Religion and Change*, 1.
[1080] Maguire, 'Diversifying British Political'.

mainstream political change. Yet as we have seen, both characters, in their own ways, became influential political actors, central to local campaigns with political repercussions relevant to the fate of thousands of British inhabitants.

One particularly important repercussion for diversifying political actors is also the rebuttal of tropes of refugees and people under threat of deportation as inanimate victims, speechless emissaries, or even puppets of the loony left.[1081] Gilroy has argued that central to racist reasoning is the positioning of the racialised subject as both problem and victim. The oscillation between these two nodes are what allows race (and racism) to efface its historical specificity.[1082] We have seen how deportation orders and migration restrictions are likewise deeply linked to racialisation within state space, for these restrictions produce illegal immigrants and create them as an internal threat to the nation. Policy makers adjusted the system in response to the migration and families; movements that challenged their understanding of who possessed the legitimate right to enter Britain.[1083] Sanctuary and anti-deportation campaigns understood this inherent connection and built organic and pragmatic connections with wider forms of contemporary anti-racism, through groups such as the Abasindi Co-operative, AYM, the JCWI, the Black Peoples Action Group, and the Kings Cross Womens Centre. Individuals such as Vinod Chauhan, Afia Begum, Salema Begum, Anthony Brown, Anwar Ditta, Kaulwinder Kaur, Rajwinder Kaur, Renoubaken Lakhani, Amir Kabal Khan, Prem Lathar, Viraj Mendis, the Nicola family, the Adedimejis, the Manuels, the Ogunwobis were all actively on the frontline of British border formation and reformulation, pushing back at who was classed as a refugee, an illegal immigrant, or indeed a criminal. Their lives had become the test-cases for the long 1980s sweeping legal changes, but many regarded their resistance as an important moral, political and/or faith-based crusade.

And it is noticeable that those who took sanctuary already had their own networks on which to draw and defined themselves in relation to their individual experiences and political needs.[1084] Mendis, for example, drew on his alliance to communist groups such as the RCG, whereas Apetor relied on the support of her friendships with other activists from the Abasindi Co-operative and her local area. The Ogunwobi's drew strength from their faith-based sense of becoming, while Lakhani coopted the particularly visible support of her sympathetic MP Keith Vaz. The Eugeniou's campaign directly benefited from a funding grant issued by the GLC.[1085] And Idrish used the strength of his trade union NALGO trade union connections to raise the profile of his campaign at the national Labour Party conference. Such campaigns working to redefine who had access to the British state in

[1081] Mallikki, 'Speechless Emissaries'.
[1082] Gilroy, *There Ain't No*, 11.
[1083] Natarajan, 'The 'Bogus Child', 10.
[1084] Saima Nasar, '"We Refugees": Re-Defining Britiain's East African Asians', in *Migrant Britain: Histories and Historiographies* (Abingdon, 2018).
[1085] *Right To Be*, 59.

late twentieth-century Britain, were thus neither as strictly 'niche nor as special interest' as they might first appear.[1086] Although small, they were deeply intertwined with wider networks that were actively (re)formulating forms of belonging in multicultural Britain. Their public resistance through imaginative, collaborative, and invariably time-consuming combinations of legal channels and community action, made a traceable difference to the debate surrounding British immigration control.

If one adverse consequence of these actions was that the 1988 Immigration Act – which limited the scope of appeals for those without UK citizenship and the right to appeal against deportation for asylum-seekers – another, as we saw in the cases Ditta and Mendis, in particular, was how the campaigns actually came at the expense of their own freedom and happiness. The personal emotional cost of sanctuary and anti-deportation campaigns is pervasive throughout their examination. Lakhani described the 'trauma and upset' surrounding the imposing threat of family separation. The Ogunwobi's described the toll of confinement. Mendis described a distinct lack of privacy and personal space. These were actions people did not take lightly, nor without substantial support. And because it was better than the alternative. Taking these emotional costs and drives seriously, can help us to better understand how and why these campaigns occurred. Thinking forwards, we might then trace a thread from the experience of sanctuary to the increasingly extreme risks risk asylum seekers have been forced to take from the 1990s to now.

Indeed, it became apparent that a further political actor across the narrative of these chapters is: 'emotion'. Not only were emotions a heavy factor upon those personally fighting their deportation orders, and emotional discretion a key factor in mobilising civic agents around the municipal state, but impassioned emotion was also repeatedly evident behind the actions and within the testimonies of grassroots activists found *throughout* the multifaceted layers of anti-deportation and sanctuary campaigns. Be that, via the faith-based bonds of protection, or the cathartics of collective empowerment found in marching, singing, shouting, or, simply writing an angry letter. Furthermore, if it was not direct emotion driving the decisions of Home Office ministers, it was certainly the register of emotion and its controlled use and perception, which was being exploited to engender their decisions. The state sought to deride the emotion of activists — as 'emotional', 'unreasonable', 'misguided', or 'deceitful' — while obscuring how fear — of immigration, of 'foreignness', of multicultural urban Britain, of youth, of lefties and the upset of 'their' established order — drove legislative change, Home Office, and political responses to sanctuary and anti-deportation movements.

At the start of this thesis, we asked why sanctuary campaigns were perceived as an "embarrassment" by the Home Office government minister. Ostensibly this was a reaction to the tactics we have seen deployed by campaigners, which were seen to be beyond the bounds of

[1086] Maguire, 'Diversifying British Political', 260.

proprietary.[1087] Yet 'embarrassment' is an emotion in itself, and can be seen as an emotional response to the way these campaigns were exposing the implicit emotional biases and politics of decision-making within the immigration system. Embarrassment also implies a level of over-emotionality and unreasonableness, yet as we have seen it is perhaps perfectly reasonable to be so when dealing with people's livelihoods, or when you are under threat of death, or family separation, via deportation. As historians we must then pay attention to such emotions, in a manner resonate to Lyndal Roper's recent approach of following their logic to understand why movements and ideologies trigger action — in order to fruitfully link them into political history.[1088] In particular, to expose how they are not only deployed on us by politicians but used by bureaucrats to sway us that a political decisions are neutral and to deride and marginalise.

We know that in the 1990s immigration and asylum is an intense emotional issue, so to understand the roots of this of this allows us to understand this development. Thatcher may have set the tone and pace for changes in migration policy, but the groundwork for the 1981 Nationality Act had arguably already been laid by Labour's white paper and the 1971 Immigration Act, and it was also a milieu of ministers and civil servants in charge of enforcing these tightening immigration and deportation regulations, in part, responding to wider geo-political shifts impacting British political priorities at this time.[1089] Seeing beyond the spectral bogey-woman of Thatcher and appreciating the deeper emotions that were actually underpinning and informing her administration's mobilisation of fear surrounding migration, might then help us to better understand both activists and central government into the 1990s and beyond.

Paying closer attention to how emotion informs both religious activism, political activism, and politicism in the cases looked at here, enables us on the one hand, to appreciate common motivators behind ostensibly wildly disparate political actors, and on the other, understand how disparate political actors were able to employ the same rhetoric of emotion with wildly different outcomes and meaning. It is paying attention to the importance of the emotional meaning of cockroaches, a shared pot of tea, a game of cards, or pack of cigarettes, alongside the implicit emotions within Home Office informant descriptions of a sanctuary's location next to 'slum flats' and a 'Caribbean Club' as being an 'ideal battleground', which permits us to get one step closer to Hilton's call to view politics as 'ordinary' — when located 'away from party, ideology and the central state … [and] in the everyday interactions of ordinary people with the world around them' — while further

[1087] Waddington, Idem.
[1088] Lyndal Roper, 'Emotions and the German Peasants' War of 1524–6', *History Workshop Journal,* 92(2021), 51–81
[1089] Maguire, 'Freedom of Movement'.

understanding how it is that such 'ordinary' politics can inspire, provoke, and co-opt people into doing extraordinary things.[1090]

[1090] Hilton, 'Politics is ordinary', 231.

Appendices

Appendix A: list of known public sanctuary cases: in order of commencement:

1.Vinod Chauhan 'sanctuary fast' held at Ashton-under-Lyne, Welbeck Street Baptist Church, 9 - 13 November 1984.

Chauhan was given leave to enter Britain for the purpose of marriage Bangladesh in August 1979. In 1980 his application to remain permanently in Britain was denied because the Home Office had received information his marriage had broken down. Chauhan was still hoping for a reconciliation with his wife however and appealed. His appeal was turned down in July of 1981, but he had settled and found a job, so appealed again. This appeal was turned down in April 1983, and he turned to Manchester based activists such as Paul Weller for help. They launched a leafleting campaign, organised a march, and in November 1984 undertook the 'sanctuary fast' at the Welbeck Street Baptist Church. Chauhan was deported after he had left the sanctuary and had gone back to work.[1091] However the campaign did successfully acquire the support of over 3000 signatures via petition, alongside statements of support from local councillors. The seed was thus sown for the development of prolonged sanctuary campaigns in the minds of activists such as Weller, who would go on to be involved in the Mendis sanctuary.[1092]

2. Katerina and Vassilis Nicola, sanctuary at St Marys, Somers Town, London, 28 February-12 July 1985.

On 28 February 1985, Katerina and Vassilis Nicola, two Cypriot refugees took up long-term sanctuary at St Marys after the Home Office refused to accept their claims to be allowed to remain in Britian. They had been living in Britain for several years following the seizure of their village during the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. Their sanctuary was organised and supported by members of the local Cypriot community, and achieved considerable publicity. However, the conditions they were living in, contributed to the psychological stress of living in a confined space. The couple lost hope after Katerina fell ill and left on the 12 July 1985 left Britain.

3.Pina and Arman Manuel, sanctuary at St Aloysius, Somers Town, London, 15 March-August 1985.

On 15 March 1985, a Filipino woman Pina Manuel and her son Arman took sanctuary at the Roman Catholic church just a few hundred yards away from the Nicola's sanctuary. Manuel had been working on a domestic worker's permit which had expired after her employer failed to make a proper application for its renewal. In August 1985 Pina and her supporters were able to hold a celebratory Mass at the Church, following the Home Office's decision to allow her to stay.

[1091] Weller, *Legalised Abduction.*
[1092] Ibid.

4. ‘Sanctuary’ offered in the form of temporary accommodation offered to Tamils, at the Hindu Shree Ganapathy Mandir, Wimbledon, June 1985.

The Ghanapathy Hindu Mandir gave shelter to a large group of around sixty Tamils who had come to Britain before the government imposed visa restrictions on entrants from Sri Lanka. The community gave their support by supplying mattresses and food until the local authorities finally brought pressure upon the Temple to end the sanctuary on health and safety grounds, and the Tamil refugees found homes within the community.

5. Viraj Mendis Sanctuary, Church of Ascension, Hulme, 20 December 1986 - 18 January 1989.

Mendis came to Britain from Sri Lanka on a student visa in October 1973, and was then granted further leave to remain until 1975. He failed his examinations however in 1975 and took up work to raise funds to continue his studies. He also became politically active in the Manchester area, as a member of the RCG, supporter of the Tamil liberation cause, and as an activist for other anti-deportation campaigns. In May 1984 he was interviewed by police and found to be an ‘overstayer’. His solicitors applied for him to be allowed to stay.

Central to the government’s decision to deport Mendis was their argument that the turbulent political situation in Sri Lanka did not warrant him asylum. Late twentieth-century Sri Lanka was witnessing ongoing civil disturbances between the Sinhalese and Tamil population. Mendis feared that as a communist and vocal supporter of the Tamil National Liberation struggle his would be in a danger.

By September 1984, Mendis’s local MP made representations on his behalf to the Home Secretary, referring to the existence of a Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign (VMDC).The campaign pursued legal avenues unsuccessfully and in December 1986, Mendis went into sanctuary at the Church of Ascension where he remained until he was forcibly removed in January 1990. After a year in Sri Lanka, he was granted a visa in Bremen, Germany where he lives to this day.

6. Rajwinder Singh, sanctuary at the Sikh Guru Nanak Temple, Bradford, 6 February 1987-1988

Rajwinder was a 29-year-old epileptic Sikh. His father, Gurdev Singh, had lived in Britain for twenty years, and with his other son Kulwant were well-known sportsmen in the Bradford area. Gurdev Singh came to the UK in 1987 and applied to bring his family to join hi in 1976. Rajwinder’s mother and brother were allowed go to join his father but he was refused entry. This was because he was nineteen years old. Rajwinder was left as a patient of Dr Sarbjit a consultant at a psychiatric hospital in Juliandur, India. The rest of the family spent thousands of pounds visiting him every year. Finally, on 19 April 1986 Rajwinder came to Britain without a visa and was allowed to stay on a temporary basis.

According to Dr J T Bavington, consultant psychiatrist at Lynfield Mount Hospital, Bradford, Rajwinder needed constant supervision and care, as the probable result of brain damage sustained in his early life. On 6 February 1987 Rajwinder took sanctuary in the Guru Nanak Temple on Wakefiled Road, Bradford. According to the campaigns literature, the family were driven to this because of 'inhumane treatment of black people by the Home Office', and subsequently the family were the subject of 'viscous smear campaign in the local press led by their local MP Geoff Lawler'. His case gained the support of over fifty temples and mosques.[1093] Exactly a year after Rajwinder took sanctuary the Home Office relented and granted Rajwinder permission to stay whilst his medical history was looked into.[1094]

7. Renouka Ben Lakhani, sanctuary campaign at the Hindu Shree Mandir, Leicester, 8 July-11 September, 1987.

Renouka Ben Lakhani had been seeking to marry her husband in Britain for some time but was refused entry, due to the 'primary purpose rule'. She obtained permission to visit Britian in 1986 and the couple married. She applied to stay and then became pregnant, but the Home Office refused. On 8 July 1987 she took sanctuary in the Hindu temple with her four-month-old daughter Riya. She gained local community support, including her local MP, Keith Vaz. Rantilal Ganatru, the chair of the Temple's trustees, and Gujurat Hindu Association told press:

> 'We have no powers to turn her out because this is a house of worship. She has not committed any crime … it is now up to the Home Office to reconsider the matter, and the general feeling is that it would be a grave mistake to split the family.'[1095]

On 11 September 1987 she ended the sanctuary after she was promised her case would be reviewed, and at the end of September 1987 the Home Office decided to allow Lakhani and her daughter to stay in Britian.

8. Salema Begum, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Chorlton Central Church , Manchester 18 – 30 February 1988.

Begum came to Britain from Bangladesh after her grandmother who cared for her since she was a baby died. Immigration officials questioned her status as one of the family of seven because her father, failed to declare her on his income tax returns. Supporters of the family were told Salema must go back to Bangladesh for a genetic blood test and then apply for an entry certificate, which could take three years.[1096] They also picketed the Home Office in London to draw the attention to the plight of other people threatened with deportation. She won the right to stay permanently in Britain in February 1988, after just two weeks in sanctuary following a 'genetic fingerprint test' conducted in

[1093] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/60.
[1094] VMDC, *Sanctuary- Manchester Perspectives* (June 1988), 34; Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity*, 152.
[1095] Bailey, Kapur, 'Mother flees to'
[1096] John Williams, 'Asian girl in church 'sanctuary', *The Daily Telegraph*, 23/10/1987.

the church proved she was the biological daughter of her claiming parents.[1097] The tests were said to have cost her parents £500.[1098]

Supporter Mac Andrassa said: 'We celebrate Salema's victory as an advance in the struggle for the rights of black people in this country… Salema's case is an example of how the church and community can successfully respond to such a threat.'[1099]

9. Adedimeji family, sanctuary at City Road Methodist Church, Birmingham, 28 April- June 1988.

Mr Adedimeji came to Britain from Nigeria in 1977 to study at Birmingham Polytechnic. In January 1983 he was joined by his wife Felicia, and they had two children, Oluwabori and Abayomi. Mr Adedimeji was then threatened with deportation due to overstaying his student visa. He appealed, representing himself at the Tribunal, on the grounds that God wanted him to minister in Britain. He had set up Christ Apostolic Church, which met on the premises of City Road Methodist Church, Birmingham. The deportation was delayed when Felecia became pregnant until after the birth. Oluway was born with the sickle-cell anaemia, a disease which requires hospital treatment. The Home Office again informed Mr Adedimeji he was to be deported in 1988. The family went into sanctuary at the church for several weeks. The Home Office agreed to delay deportation until April 1989, until Oluway 'reached the critical age of two.'[1100] Their case won the backing of Ladywood Labour MP Clare Short who approached home office to stop deportation on medical grounds. In 1990 the family was granted the right to stay on compassionate medical grounds.[1101]

10. Amir Kabal Khan, Birmingham Central Mosque, 3 January – 9 February 1989.

Khan's father came to Britain from Pakistan in the early 1960s. In 1968 Amir applied to join him but was refused on the basis that 'he was not related as claimed'. His family had arranged a marriage to Zahtoon Begum, a British citizen, and in 1978 Amir applied to come and marry her. His application and subsequent appeal were turned down. In 1983 Khan got a visa to visit and married Zahtoon. They went to their local MP he advised him to return to Kashmir and reapply as Zahtoon's husband, they did so but the application was again refused. Zahtoon returned to Birmingham to have their first child. In 1986 he was given 'temporary admission' to the UK. He then went into hiding with his wife and child, and had another child. In January 1989 immigration officers arrived at the family home to deport him. Khan escaped thanks to his family's interventions, and the help of local cab drivers who diverted the chasing officer's cars as they fled to Birmingham Central Mosque.[1102] His family mounted a campaign and coopted the support of local shop stewards and the city's Trade Union

[1097] Tom Sharratt, 'Sanctuary girl allowed to stay', *The Guardian*, 16/02/1988, 2.
[1098] Patricia Roberts, *Manchester Evening News*, 15/02/1988, 13.
[1099] 'Victory for Salema', *The Advertiser* (Oldham), 18/02/1988, 1; AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/17.
[1100] *Why Sanctuary?,* 3.
[1101] *Why Sanctuary?,* 2.
[1102] Hussein, author interview.

Council members who marched past the mosque and into the city in support.[1103] After several weeks he was promised his case would be reviewed and he left the sanctuary. On 8 March 1989 the Immigration Officers announced he could become a permanent resident on compassionate grounds.[1104]

11.Victoria and Stephen Apetor, 'community sanctuary' Whalley Range, Manchester, 9 August - 25 October 1989.

Ghanian Victoria Apetor came to Britain in 1986 with a friend who promised to take her to Canada where he was studying via Britain. She said he had deserted her with no money in Britain. She made a life for herself in Manchester, and had a child, Stephen with a Ghanian man. The relationship broke down and he was deported.[1105] She was then issued a deportation order herself and feared she would not be able to support her and Stephen if in Ghana, where she was working as a servant, and both her parents had died.[1106] In August 1989, after falling ill due to the stress of her imminent deportation she went into community sanctuary at her house with the support of her local church, activists, and women from the Abasindi Co-operative. Brother James from the neighbouring Church of Ascension, said: 'She is in the sanctuary of the community who will form a physical sanctuary round her at all times'. Supporters kept vigil outside her house, which became a focal point for prayer, the Bishop of Manchester Booth-Clibborn asked Hurd to extend the deadline for her deportation.[1107] She spent eleven weeks "in sanctuary", until Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd reversed the deportation order on compassionate grounds.[1108]

12. Kulwinder Kaur (nee Phull), Ramgarha Sikh temple, Small Heath, Birmingham, June 1991.

A twenty-four-year-old Indian woman took sanctuary in the Sikh temple in June 1991, after she faced deportation due to the breakup of her arranged marriage. Campaigners say she was ill-treated by her husband and his family. She was supported by the West Midlands Anti-Deportation Campaign.[1109] She left the temple after six weeks, after she was promised her case would be looked at sympathetically, but she was then told she must return to India.[1110] She remarried, and had a child with a British citizen however, in December 1995 the House of Lords refused her right to fight the Appeal Court deportation decision.[1111]

[1103] 'Mosque fugitive march support', *Sandwell Evening Mail*, 8/02/1989, 17.
[1104] Cyril Dixon, 'Mosque man aid pledge', *Birmingham Mail*, 3/03/1989, 5.
[1105] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/09.
[1106] Okojie, author interview.
[1107] Patrica Roberts, 'Victoria sobs in defiant battle to stay', *Manchester Evening News*, 10/09/1989, 4.
[1108] Laurie Bullas, 'Sanctuary Mum wins her fight', *Manchester Evening News* 26/10/1989, 1.; AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/09
[1109] 'Deport order woman takes refuge', *Birmingham Mail* 28/06/1991, 17.
[1110] Liam Tully, 'Sikhs plan new haven', *Birmingham Mail*, 30/10/1991,1.
[1111] Anita Hulm, 'Deportation splits family', *Southall Gazette*, 8/12/1995, 1.

.13. Ogunwobi Sanctuary Campaign, Hackney Down's Baptist Church, London March 1993-3 July 1997.

In the later case of the Ogunwobi's sanctuary campaign, the church already had a precedent of offering temporary accommodation for those in need, having housed dozens of Kurdish refugees over a period of six months in 1989.[1112] Sunny and Bunmi Ogunwobi had been living in Britain for thirteen years and had been active lay leaders in their own church – Stamford Hill Baptist church, which did not own their own building hence why they approached Pastor Latham at Hackney Downs. The surrounding area also had a history of multicultural resistance, manifest in the earlier campaigns discussed in chapter 4 organised by the Hackney Teachers Association. By 1984 the Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign was already organising a political campaign to foster 'unity in struggle', supporting those under threat of deportation and protesting against 'fishing' raids and passport checks. By 1985 they were organising an East London conference that brought together over a dozen Hackney based community groups with disparate groups across London, from the Tamil Refugee Forum to the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania. Collectively organising workshops on items such as 'How to Campaign and Fight Deportations'.[1113]

14. Alfred Tong, sanctuary episode, Wesley Methodist Church, Camborne, Cornwall, June 1996.

There was also the exceptional case of Alfred Tong, who under threat of deportation to Hong Kong took sanctuary in June 1996 in a Methodist chapel near Penzance, although the episode only lasted ten days. Tong had lived illegally in Britain for seventeen years after arriving on a one month's visitors permit. He ran to the local church after immigration officers raided his home. The Reverend Allan Bailey, said 'He was about to be separated from his wife and child and the church council decided on pastoral grounds that it could not let this happen.'[1114]

Tong's sanctuary ended abruptly however after he mistakenly opened the chapel doors to immigration officers. Reverend Bailey told press: 'It was appalling. He opened the chapel door of his own volition thinking it was me or another friend. He was grabbed and taken in the police car where he was sat on.'[1115] Tong suffered a heart attack in police custody and was thus placed under police guard in Treliske Hospital, Truro. Junior Home Office Minister, Ann Widdecombe, defended the way in which

[1112] 'Hackney churches find room for refugees from Turkey', *Third Way*, October 1989, 10.
[1113] AIURC SCC GB3228.028/01/173: Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign Conference, 16/11/1985. 'Report of conference', Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign. A list of organisations represented at the 1985 Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign conference includes: Hackney Advice and Law Centre, Hackney African Organisation, Hackney Asian Association, Hackney Asian Centre, Hackney Committee for Radical Equality, Hackney Deanery Community Relations, Hackney English Language Scheme, Hackney Trades Council, Hackney Trade Union Support Unit, and Hackney Women's Unit. 'Organise against deportations & all immigration controls', flyer, Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign, October 1985.
[1114] Victoria Combe, 'Church gives sanctuary to immigrant', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11/06/1996, 8.
[1115] Ibid.

the case was handled.[1116] His lawyers claimed the Home Office knew of Tong's health conditions and should not have sanctioned such an act. His case gained the support of his local MP, the Anglican Bishop of Truro, and Rev Michael Ball, and the chairman of the Cornwall Methodist district, who all appealed to the Home Office on his behalf. Divisional Police Surgeon Dr Steve Hindley wrote a letter of complaint to the Home Secretary Michael Howard.[1117] Tong and his family eventually moved to Ireland to avoid his deportation to Hong Kong.[1118]

Appendix: B 'The Primary Purpose Rule'

In 1980, the Conservative government tightened the rules of family reunification overall, and introduced the primary purpose rule:

> 1. An applicant had to fulfil all requirements in order to obtain entry clearance; failure on any one meant mandatory refusal. Discretion could not be exercised in an applicant's favour either at the time of decision or on appeal.
>
> 2. The applicant was obligated to satisfy the entry clearance officer both that the parties intended to live together as man and wife and that the primary purpose of the marriage was not to obtain admission to the United Kingdom; there were thus two distinct tests against marriages of convenience.
>
> 3. A husband could be admitted only if the female sponsor was a British citizen, who either had been born in the United Kingdom or had a parent who was born there.[1119]

The rule was widely viewed as arbitrary and unjust as it was so subjective to immigration/entry officer's questioning and judgement.

[1116] Emma Browne, 'Albert 'will be deported'', *The West Briton* 27/06/1996, 6.
[1117] 'Expulsion could be denial of human rights, West Briton, 27/06/1996, 6.
[1118] Emma Browne, 'Albert has come home', *West Briton and Cornwall Advertiser*, 22/05/ 1997, 6,
[1119] Pannick *et al*., *The Primary Purpose Rule: A Rule with no purpose* (London: Justice, 1993).

Glossary of terms

Dependent – A term used by the Immigration Rules to refer to the wife and children of a person settled in Britain whose claim to come to Britain depended on that relationship.

Deportation – Sending a person out of Britain by order of the Home Secretary.

Exceptional leave to remain/ enter - The second-class status granted to asylum seekers when the Home Office is not satisfied that they qualify as refugees under the Geneva Convention, but also does not believe it is safe for them to return.

Immigration appeals – A system set up in 1969 to appeal against decision of the Home Office, or British posts abroad, separate from the courts system. An appeal goes first to a single adjudicator and it may be possible to appeal on a point of law to the three-person Immigration Appeal Tribbunal. Until 1987 adjudicators were appointed by the Home Office, since then they have been appointed by the Lord Chancellor's department.

Patrial – Term used in the 1971 Immigration Act for people not subject to immigration control, mainly people who were UK citizens by their birth, naturalisation or registration in Britain, Commonwealth citizens with a parent born in Britain and Commonwealth women married to such men before 1983.

Right of abode – Being free of British immigration control and able to enter the UK freely at any time, however long the person has been away. Applies to British citizens and to those who were patrial Commonwealth citizens.[1120]

[1120] Bhabha and Shutter, *Women's Movement*, 268.

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