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is it safe to seek asylum

# hotel risks for asylum women

**W**OMEN for Refugee Women has just published a new report *Coercion and Control: the treatment of women seeking asylum in hotel accommodation*. It shows that women who have fled gender-based violence are subjected to coercion and control in hotel accommodation, akin to patterns they have experienced in previous abusive relationships and situations.

The shocking findings include that women in hotels are:

- Routinely monitored and surveilled
- Subjected to humiliating, degrading and dehumanising behaviour by hotel staff, including sexual harassment, room intrusions and voyeurism
- Punished and threatened with eviction
- Isolated from social networks and sources of support.

The impact of hotel accommodation on women's mental health is extremely damaging. Of women surveyed:

- 91% felt anxious or depressed
- 75% felt hopeless
- 67% felt like less of a human being
- 46% were suicidal.

As it enmeshes women in layers of controlling, restrictive and threatening practices, hotel accommodation perpetuates the patterns of coercion and domination that women seeking asylum thought they had escaped. Consequently, women who come to the UK in search of safety are not being supported to heal and rebuild their lives; instead, they are being further harmed and retraumatised.

But there is now a clear opportunity for change.

The Labour government has promised to prioritise survivors of gender-based violence and ensure they receive the support they need, which we very much welcome. It is essential that the government includes asylum-seeking survivors within this promise – otherwise a two-tier approach will develop, with women seeking asylum, who are predominantly from racialised groups, treated as less deserving and left behind.

To address the harms of hotel accommodation and ensure that asylum-seeking women receive the support they need, we recommend the following changes:

1. End the use of hotel accommodation
2. Take immediate action to mitigate the harms of hotel accommodation
3. Provide safe and supportive accommodation for women seeking asylum, where they heal and begin to rebuild their lives.

This report is particularly important because it is the first of its kind to focus specifically on the treatment of women seeking asylum in hotels, and it was designed and carried out by a team of seven women with personal experience of the UK's asylum system.

The research team share:

- The treatment of women in hotels can be likened to putting a bird in a cage. The



bird is deprived of flying wherever it wants and living the life that it chooses.

■ Hotel accommodation has a lasting impact on women's self-esteem and mental health. It tells women they are not worthy of dignity and respect and prevents them from recovering from their previous trauma.

■ This ill treatment of women seeking asylum must stop now. Women deserve safe, supportive and healing accommodation, where they can start rebuilding their lives on their own terms. We urge the new government to take decisive action immediately.

Andrea Vukovic, Deputy Director of Women for Refugee Women says:

"The new government has inherited a crumbling asylum system which is actively putting women at risk. Nearly half of the women we spoke to said that hotel

accommodation made them suicidal.

"The government needs to urgently get a grip on what's happening in asylum hotels to prevent further harm. We urge the government to end policies which have put women in harm's way and ensure proper oversight of the private providers who are running hotels. Ultimately, the use of hotels for accommodating people seeking safety needs to end now.

"Failing to do so will undermine the government's ambition to tackle the national emergency of violence against women. It will create a two-tier approach to supporting survivors of gender-based violence, with those seeking safety in the UK left behind."

[WWW.REFUGEEWOMEN.CO.UK](http://WWW.REFUGEEWOMEN.CO.UK)

## statement from Women for Refugee Women

We are horrified and sickened by the recent violent attack in Southport and the senseless loss of lives. Our thoughts are with the families and loved ones of Bebe King, Elsie Dot Stancombe and Alice Dasilva Aguiar.

Violence against women and girls is endemic. Tackling violence against women and girls must be a top priority for the Government.

We are extremely concerned and appalled by the subsequent riot in Southport and many other communities across the UK since. Fuelled by the spread of racist disinformation online – propped up by tech platforms who financially gain from the virality of extremist content – the riots are Islamophobic and racist.

Words matter. The effects are now visible in the violence we have seen this week.

Dehumanising, divisive and racist language has become normalised. This anti-Muslim, anti-asylum-seeker and anti-migrant hostility has not emerged from a vacuum: it has been shaped and fuelled by successive draconian asylum policies and laws and stoked by some politicians and elements of the media. This harms us all.

The communities that are being targeted by the racist far-right must be protected, and all those responsible for the deplorable violence held accountable.

We urge all politicians to immediately reject the dangerous tactics of dog-whistle politics and the scapegoating of marginalised communities, such as those seeking safety in the UK.

As always, we stand with all those affected by violence against women and girls.



# winter fuel allowance

THE WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCE IS MORE THAN A LIFELINE, SAYS JAN SHORTT, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL PENSIONERS' CONVENTION

**W**INTER fuel payments have traditionally been paid to all pensioners to help with their heating bills. The allowance was introduced in 1997 by the last Labour government and has been available to everyone in the UK who has reached state pension age.

However, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves, has announced that the winter fuel payments will no longer be universal in England and Wales, and only pensioners on means-tested benefits (such as pension credit) will qualify for it this winter.

As a result, 10 million people will no longer get the allowance – many of whom rely on the payment as a lifeline in cold weather. Scotland has also recently decided to take the same course of action. Northern Ireland have yet to say what they are proposing.

Winter fuel payments are worth between £200 (under 80 years of age) and £300 (over 80 years of age) – tax-free – with the basic rate paid automatically to anyone claiming the state pension fitting the criteria. For 2024, anyone born on or before 25 Sept 1957 is eligible.

The payment is made annually each winter. In the winter of 2022-23 there were payments to 11.4 million pensioners in 8.4m households. That year and in the winter of 2023-24, due to the escalated rises in energy costs, there were extra cost of living payments made to the poorest pensioner households – for some this increased the payment to £600. Apart from these cost of living payments, the winter fuel allowance has not risen since the winter of 2000/2001 despite frequent inflationary increases in energy costs.

The value of the Basic State Pension (full amount) is less than 50% of earnings for those on minimum wage. Basically, this means on the day you retire, your income halves. Yet for many older people costs increase year for year with their purchasing power getting less and less on a static income.

There are those who do not qualify for a full state pension, but who may have a small occupational pension that means they are just above the pension credit threshold. These are the pensioners whose budgets are squeezed from all sides with no access to financial support. They fall into 'silent' poverty – meaning they are not included in the government statistics as they are deemed to have enough money to live on. The triple lock (if it remains intact) will not be enough to ease the pain.

Today, two million older people live in poverty in the UK. This number will increase once the winter fuel allowance stops being paid. However, 800,000 older people who are entitled to access pen-

sion credit do not claim it and this must be taken seriously by the Department for Work & Pensions and the Chancellor.

The impact of restricting the winter fuel allowance payments goes much further for those now excluded. Older people already have to choose between heating their homes or cooking a hot meal in the winter. Cold, damp homes kill, cause ill health placing a further burden on the NHS and care services.

Older people face other dilemmas through the loss of the fuel allowance. These include reducing or stopping paying for their care (with all the consequences that brings); or exiting expensive broadband contracts, isolating individuals from everyday life; or cutting down on travel and other activities that help our well-being.

Keeping your home warm is vital for a comfortable, happy, and healthy later life and something we thought we could all take for granted. Today it remains beyond the reach of millions of older people as energy prices stay high, with little prospect of a return to the much lower bills of a few years ago. The government needs to face up to this reality, and to the distress and anxiety it causes millions of older people, who now view each coming winter with dread.

More than 6 in 10 over 65s (63%)\* want the government to introduce an energy social tariff so that they can be confident of staying warm at home during the colder months.

In the sixth richest country in the world, we will not accept that it is normal for an older person to have to make difficult choices that mean they shiver and become ill through not being able to heat their home or make a hot meal.

There are alternatives to the betrayal of older people. For example, the 50 richest families in the UK hold a combined wealth of £500 billion. Taking 1% of that wealth will not be missed by them, but it will make an important contribution to the economic deficit.

The government should deal with tax evasion and tax avoidance – money that goes out of the economy never to return. They should invest in retro-fitting older homes to bring them up to decent homes standard; fast-track a programme of insu-

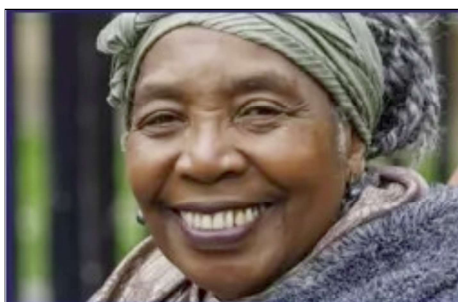


lation to all homes; genuinely commit to working faster towards more affordable and sustainable fuels; and regulate the profits of the energy companies in favour of hard-hit customers.

The answer to the economic failures of the past is not through targeting older people whose own economy relies on government decisions about the indexing of their pension, and a plethora of means-tested benefits after a lifetime of work and contributing to our country. This is not what retirement should be.

**\* AGE UK REPORT: COLD AT HOME: HOW WINTER COST OF LIVING PRESSURES CONTINUE TO IMPACT ON OLDER PEOPLE**

**NATIONAL PENSIONERS CONVENTION:  
WWW.NPCUK.ORG**



**Monica Taylor, chair**  
*Unite Retired Members Committee*

*"The energy price cap announcement is confirmation of something we have known for weeks; millions of pensioners will suffer this winter thanks to Labour's decision to cut the winter fuel payment."*

*"Pensioners on as little as £220 per week will be missing out on the winter fuel payment this year. Labour must urgently reconsider its policy choices."*



# a new deal for workers?

CAROLYN JONES, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF THE INSTITUTE OF EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ASKS: THE NEW DEAL FOR WORKERS: WILL IT WORK?

**R**ECENTLY I found a great quote about the impact of the New Deal on women, which referred to it as:

“a revolutionary era, opening up a vast new space of opportunity and benefits for women, one that tapped into their leadership abilities, wide-ranging skill sets, and life experiences like never before”.

Unfortunately, the New Deal referred to in the quote dates back to Roosevelt's 1933 New Deal and not the current New Deal for Workers (NDfW) currently being discussed across the labour movement. So, what is the New Deal for Workers and is this the dawn of a revolutionary era?

In 2022 the Labour Party Conference adopted the New Deal for Workers, a policy document drafted with the help of trade unions. The Deal – or a new version of the Deal called Make Work Pay – formed part of the Labour Party's 2024 election manifesto and would, it was promised, be delivered within the first 100 days of a new Labour government.

## employment rights bill

True to its word, an Employment Rights Bill was announced in the King's Speech and is expected to come before Parliament in October. If implemented in full, the Bill will make a significant difference to the rights of UK workers and their unions.

The main elements of the proposed Bill include:

- employment rights from day one
- banning zero-hours contracts
- banning “fire and rehire” tactics
- improving statutory sick pay
- improving carers' and bereavement leave
- ensuring workers have the right to switch off
- extending full employment rights to all workers
- introducing sectoral collective bargaining in the social care sector
- Removing the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act and the 2016 Trade Union Act
- Improving trade union access to workers in the workplace

The above proposals, while not in themselves revolutionary, promise to usher in a new worker-friendly era. Add to that the fact that trade unions are being invited to meet with government Ministers to discuss not just the implementation of the New Deal, but broader economic and industrial issues and the transformation from the bad old Tory days starts to look a little radical.

## devil in the detail

However, the devil is in the detail and we are yet to see the details. More will be known when the Employment Rights Bill



is published. Rumours already abound about some of the promised policies being watered down or abandoned completely. Others suggest not everything can be included in the first Bill so some issues may have to wait.

What we do know is that some major policies did not transfer over from the NDfW to the current Make Work Pay document. In their excellent analysis of current policy proposals, Keith Ewing and John Hendy have highlighted at least three NDfW issues that should not be allowed to fall from the policy agenda.

## employment status

First, is the issue of employment status. Too many workers continue to be denied employment protections because they are deemed not to be ‘employees’. The NDfW included a commitment to “move towards a single status of worker” to help simplify the law and make rights universally applicable. However, this policy is now to be subject to a “full and detailed consultation” which will delay implementation and have a knock-on effect on new proposed protections against fire and rehire tactics and controlling the use of zero hour contracts.

## sectoral collective bargaining

Second, while plans to introduce sectoral collective bargaining in the care sector are to be welcomed, particularly as the care sector predominantly employs women workers, the obvious question is why stop at the care sector? Women workers in many other sectors of the economy would benefit from the improved terms and conditions collective bargaining would deliver. They would also gain a voice at work and a level of workplace power denied them over recent decades. It is vital therefore that

the Labour Party returns to the original proposal for a gradual and strategic roll out of sectoral collective bargaining as the most effective way of expanding collective bargaining coverage across our economy.

## collective rights at work

Third, improved access and recognition rights together with electronic and workplace balloting will start the process of rebuilding collective rights at work. Similarly, the repeal of the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act and the 2016 Trade Union Act are to be welcomed.

But so much more needs to be done. Hendy and Ewing highlight that in the recent P&O case, the ILO Freedom of Association Committee noted that the restrictions on trade union freedom did not begin in 2016. The UK's trade union laws have been criticised consistently by the ILO supervisory bodies and the European Social Rights Committee since 1989.

The NDfW originally promised to “ensure that UK law complies in every respect with the international obligations ratified by the UK”. That promise needs to be resurrected. The heavy restrictions on industrial action imposed in the 1980s must be reversed if the power imbalance in the workplace is to be redressed.

## conclusion

Taken as a whole, the development of a new framework of individual and collective rights at work, with trade unions sitting at the policy-discussion table, can only be seen as a welcome change in political direction. But the Bill's content will inevitably be measured against the backdrop of more than 40 years of anti-trade union legislation. Let's hope that the progressive policies promised are delivered and then built upon. Now that would indeed be revolutionary!

INSTITUTE OF EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS  
WWW.IER.ORG.UK





# fighting for the bakers' dozen

**A**S we prepare for the first TUC congress in 14 years where a Labour government is in place, many unions and delegates will be looking at the motions and their potential to drive change in this post-election world we find ourselves in, because we are at a pivotal moment for workers' rights in our country after 14 years of austerity and our rights being systematically stripped back we have an opportunity for change, I know there are mixed feelings around just how much change there will be under this particular Labour government, but one thing is for sure, they can't be any worse, disappointing at times probably, but not worse than what we have lived through for the last 14 years.

The election and subsequent events around the UK, particularly in the North of England has shown us that the fight for justice and fairness in the workplace and our communities is far from over, and now more than ever, we need to unify our voices and our efforts which needs to begin at Congress. We need unions working together to improve the lives of our members, their families and communities together, without the historical fighting over the 5-6 million workers that are already in the movement. Seeing five Reform candidates being elected to Parliament, should be a concern to all and should be a wake-up call that infighting in the movement is doing nothing to pull in the 26-28 million working people in the UK who are being pulled towards Reform, Robinson, Tate and the right, rather than the trade union movement.

Our union, the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU), recently conducted a comprehensive survey to understand the concerns and priorities of our members. The results highlighted the urgent need for political and economic transformation and we will be voting as such at Congress this year.

Whilst many in our communities would argue there is no difference in the main political parties and ask what the point in politics is, our members are politically engaged and determined to see change. We know the issues they face are not unique to our sector but reflect broader societal challenges. The cost-of-living crisis, which makes it difficult for families to afford basic necessities like food, energy, and housing, unsurprisingly was the main concern. A crisis certainly in our industry that has been compounded by low pay, poor management practices, and insecure working conditions.

In the workplace, our members are grappling with low wages, bullying management styles, unsafe working conditions, and insufficient staffing. They are asked to do more with less, often under the strain of unsociable hours and insecure contracts and our survey results clearly outline what our members believe is necessary to address these challenges. Their voices have shaped the



Bakers' Dozen, a manifesto of 13 key demands that we will continue to advocate for tirelessly with this new Labour government:

- £15 an hour Minimum Wage: because every worker deserves a living wage, regardless of age. This will end the unfair youth limit on the national minimum wage.

- Abolish Zero-Hour Contracts: We demand job security and predictability for all workers, and this should be all Zero Hour contracts because they can all be exploitative.

- Full Employment Rights from Day One: All workers should have their rights protected from the moment they start their job.

- Contractual Sick Pay at 100%: Employers must provide six weeks of sick pay at full wage to all workers.

- Repeal Anti-Union Legislation: Unions need the freedom to organise and advocate without restrictive laws.

- Maximum Workplace Temperature: Legislation is needed to ensure safe and comfortable working conditions.

- Accountability for Company Failures: Companies must not evade their financial responsibilities through administration loopholes.

- Public Ownership of Utilities: Water, energy, and Royal Mail should be publicly owned to curb excessive pricing and ensure fair access.

- Right to Food: A statutory right to food, free school meals, and a cap on supermarket profits are essential to combat food insecurity.

- Affordable Public Transport: Renationalise train companies, cap bus fares, and provide free public transport for young people aged 16-25.

- End Arms Sales to Israel: We must take a stand for human rights and justice globally.

- Abolish Tuition Fees: Education should be accessible to all, regardless of financial background and they must bring back a new and improved version of the Union Learn Fund in England, so everyone has the opportunity to upskill and develop themselves.

- Create a National Care Service: Providing dignity and care for the elderly and vulnerable is a societal duty.

These demands are not just aspirations; they are essential changes that will improve the lives of our members and the wider community. We must continue to organise, educate, and mobilise to hold those in power accountable. Just because they are now the Labour Party it does not mean we can rest on our laurels and allow them to fall back on their manifesto promises and forget who they are supposed to represent in Parliament. We need to send a clear message to our newly elected representatives: we will not accept empty promises or half measures. We demand real change, and we will not rest until we see it.

Together, we can build a future where every worker is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness, we can't rely on politicians to do that, we have to do it ourselves. We can and must push out the far right and stop Reform gaining any more ground, showing that they are not the mavericks that they claim to be, but to do that we need to be able to do our jobs as trade unionists, have access to workers and work together across the movement challenging their rhetoric and showing people that we are the ones who will support them, not Farage and his ilk and that we can work together as a movement to achieve it.

**SARAH WOOLLEY IS THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE BAKERS, FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS' UNION**  
[WWW.BFAWU.ORG](http://WWW.BFAWU.ORG)

# women speak out against war



THIS IS AN EDITED VERSION OF LIZ PAYNE'S SPEECH AT THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION WORKSHOP ON WAR HELD ON 29 JUNE 2024

**H**ORRENDOUS conflicts are being waged in Ukraine, Sudan and Gaza. The Palestinian people are being subjected to genocidal attack, with women, children, the elderly, aid and relief workers dying daily. Rumours of war, regional conflagrations and global catastrophe threaten the peoples of the world. Millions are made destitute as warmongers rake in £trillions.

But, at the same time, the streets of our towns and cities are filled time and again with mass protests, as hundreds of thousands march for peace, march against genocide, march for Palestine.

The NAW's 1952 foundation statement said: "We express our belief that there are no differences between the countries of the world which cannot be settled by peaceful negotiations." It also stated that because "a better standard of life, a happy future for the children and full opportunities for women can only be realised in a world of peace" the NAW would "make peace its first aim".

Since that day, the NAW has continued to place the struggle for disarmament and a lasting peace, free from wars and militarism, at the heart of what we do.

The struggle for peace in Britain is conducted deep in the heart of one of the most aggressive powers on earth. Today, Britain continues to play its role as number one ally of the United States in its quest to maintain hegemony, by any means, over the resources, labour, strategic supply routes and markets of the world. Britain's main military bases,

once honed for the colonial domination of a quarter of the planet, are now indispensable to the US for control of the resources of Africa and the Middle East, together with the vast wealth of the Indo-Pacific. Britain plays a leading role in huge military exercises with the armed forces of former colonies and, at home, prepares again to site US nuclear warheads on British mainland soil.

Currently massive upgrading work goes on at Akrotiri (Cyprus) at astronomic cost. The British base has long been used for the training of military personnel, secret surveillance of the whole Middle East, stationing state-of-the-art attack aircraft and launching operating missions which threaten the peace of three continents. Now military supplies for the Israeli government's genocidal assault against the Palestinian people are facilitated via this base, while the use of Cyprus as an arsenal and forward position for the forces of the US and its NATO allies exposes its whole population to retaliatory attack.

NATO's role in our contemporary world was prefigured 25 years ago when US General Michael C Short, the chief of the NATO assault on Yugoslavia, stated: "One cannot win a war without destroying the possibility of a normal life for the majority of the population. We must take away from them water, power supply, food and even the normal air to breathe." This heralded the horrific interventions yet to come in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Ukraine, Sudan and Gaza.

Today, the NAW says there is no reason for the wars in Ukraine, Sudan and Palestine to continue for a single day longer. Halt the arms supplies. Speak peace. Stop the genocide in Gaza now.

The NAW recognises that a primary focus in Britain must be to build a united peace movement that stands together to challenge the actions of the government, dissipate the powerful mass media narrative which supports it, and demonstrate to the people of Britain the integral connection between foreign policy and the austerity and privatisation that has starved our public services and left millions in dire need.

While more and more workers and

their families have been pushed into poverty and dependency on food banks, the government has used our money on wars and preparations for wars. This huge military spending should be used to meet people's needs, including those of the 25% of our children who are growing up in poverty, rather than lining the pockets of multinational arms dealers.

The forthcoming General Election will likely see a Labour government in Westminster. But Labour has affirmed its "unshakable" commitment to NATO, the US as "an indispensable ally" and to the "defence" economy. Therefore, an immediate priority for us all will be an even harder struggle for peace.

The NAW recognises the interconnections of gender, conflict and the environment and that women and children are disproportionately killed and injured by war and devastated by its destruction, forced displacement, and the perpetuation of rape and other sexual crimes. We condemn the massive distortion of humanity's resources and talents caused by arms production, military preparations and war, especially the upkeep of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and threat to use them. We call on the incoming government to establish a Defence Diversification Agency to support transition from the manufacture of armaments to socially useful production.

The NAW supports the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, the Stop the War movement, the Campaign Against the Arms Trade, WILPF and many other organisations that promote peace. Continuance of this work is imperative.

We are using the pages of our journal *sisters*, meetings and seminars, to inform and educate our members on wars and conflicts around the world and to expose the role played by Britain and how to challenge it.

We are committed to working even more closely together with the WIDF and all its affiliates to analyse and better understand the issues of war and peace across the world, to know more deeply about the struggle for peace and how to provide the most effective international solidarity with every organisation that is fighting for peace, justice and equality. Only by working together can peace prevail.

LIZ PAYNE IS PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF WOMEN

THE WORKSHOP WAS ATTENDED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS FROM 27 COUNTRIES INCLUDING IRAN, PALESTINE AND ISRAEL





# the struggle for justice in cyprus

## NAW PRESIDENT LIZ PAYNE REPORTS ON THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE IN CYPRUS 50 YEARS ON

**I**N 1960, Britain's colonial rule over the Greek and Turkish peoples of Cyprus, that began in 1878, finally came to an end. Cyprus, Britain, Greece and Turkey signed a Treaty of Guarantee in August that year. According to its terms, Cyprus was prohibited from forming an economic or political union with any other state, while Britain, Greece and Turkey undertook to guarantee the borders, independence, and security of the island republic. But instead of the hoped for peace and progress, years of strife and civil conflict followed, culminating in the disastrous inter-related events of summer 1974 and the dark shadow they cast over the people down to the present day.

In July this year, the people of Cyprus commemorated the 50th anniversary of those tragedies. A coup d'état on 15 July 1974 brought down the government. Reactionary Greek army officers in the Cyprus National Guard, who were behind the seizure of power, intended to destroy the country as an independent state and unite it with Greece, then ruled by a military junta. Turkey immediately invaded – just four days later.

The UK government completely failed to honour its treaty commitment and did nothing to stop the bombing, killing, pillaging and raping. There were thousands of deaths. People were mercilessly rounded up and executed. Huge numbers simply disappeared. Women and children were driven from their homes with just what they stood up in, fleeing for their lives. The military occupation of the north by troops from Turkey was soon followed by settlers who took over the homes and land of the Cypriots forced out. Formal partition of Cyprus soon followed.

This suited and has continued to suit western imperialist interests. In a powerful speech on 15 July this year, general secretary of the Progressive Party of



Working People (AKEL), Stephanos Stefanou, reminded the parliament in Nicosia that the partition served to trap Cyprus permanently in the West's sphere of influence. The aim was "to ensure the cohesion of the south-eastern wing of NATO" he told the house. "This had been decided at the NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting in Lisbon in 1971". The interests of the US, Britain, the EU and their allies remains the same; Cyprus must continue to function as a forward position for imperialism's control of the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean – whatever the cost to its people.

Fifty years on, many survivors and their families still live with the horrific trauma of that time. The extent of abuse of women and girls is only now coming into the open. Many have remained silent for five decades. Skevi Koukouma, a vice presi-

dent of the Women's International Democratic Federation and General Secretary of POGO, the Pancyprian Federation of Women's Organisations, together with women's rights activist, Dogus Derya, are collaborating on research to reveal the extent of the horrific use of rape of Greek Cypriot women and Turkish Cypriot women as a weapon of war.

More than 30 years after the coup and invasion, 2,002 people, 1,510 Greek Cypriots and 492 Turkish Cypriots, were still "disappeared". Today 951 have not yet been found. POGO stresses the importance of continuing the work of the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus (CMP) in locating, exhuming and identifying the bodies and returning them to their families for burial.

At the same time, there is no solution, no justice, no end in sight to the occupation. On the contrary, Turkey is proposing to open up and develop parts of the north of the island, for example the Varosha district of Fumagusta. The continuing Turkish occupation, the British bases and installations on the island now at the disposal of the US, the Turkish drone base at Lefkonoiko, flights from RAF Akrotiri to Tel Aviv to supply Israel's war machine and the docking of some of the largest warships in the world at Cypriot ports are placing all the people of the island on the front line of regional war. There have been no negotiations on the ending of partition since 2017 and the situation is sliding dangerously towards permanent division rather than the reunification for which all progressive, peace-loving Cypriots have been struggling.

The NAW stands in solidarity with the women of POGO and all Cypriot people who have steadfastly pursued justice for the wrongs committed half a century ago, who are unrelenting in their efforts to reveal at last the truth of what took place and who are struggling for the establishment of a reunified Cyprus as a bizonal, bicomunal federation. The latter is surely the only basis for a future of peace, justice and equality. With them, we say no to Turkey's occupation, no to British bases and no to partition.



SPEAKERS AT  
THE 2024 SYLVIA  
PANKHURST  
MEMORIAL  
LECTURE WERE  
SUKI SANGHA,  
PHILIPPA CLARK  
AND MARY DAVIS

# sylvia – speaking out on race the 2024 memorial lecture



## above

Sylvia Pankhurst: said "We are all comrades in the struggle for freedom, and we must cast aside all differences of race, nationality, and gender to fight for a better world."

## left

The NAW stall at the South Yorkshire Festival at Wortley Hall was a buzzing success as usual. We took hundreds of pounds for the NAW's funds and thanks to Mavis and Brian Clarke all the leftovers went to good homes – including to Action for Barnsley Homeless.

LEFT TO RIGHT: BARBARA SWITZER,  
CAD JONES, ANITA WRIGHT

## what's on...

**NAW Executive Committee**  
meetings are open to *all*  
members.

For more information about  
meetings please contact the  
Secretary, Sandra Durkin,  
on [naw@sisters.org.uk](mailto:naw@sisters.org.uk) or at  
NAW, 72 Beaconsfield Road  
Coventry CV2 4AR

## join the NAW now!

*I would like to join the NAW. Here is £20 for the annual subscription (£10 unwaged) which includes my subscription to **sisters**, the journal of the NAW.*

*Our organisation would like to affiliate to the NAW. Enclosed is:*  
£20 (local organisation/NAW branch), £45 (regional organisation), £60 (national)

Name

Address

postcode

Organisation

phone

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Send to: Carolyn Simpson, 13 Wren Gardens, Hornchurch RM12 4DT