

Detention Enquiry invites Written Evidence.

Coventry Trades Union Council submits its Views.

Coventry TUC notes that when migrants into Britain are incarcerated in detention centres, there is no limit on how long that detention may last.

CTUC notes that in the legal history of the UK terms of indefinite detention, at Her Majesty's pleasure, have been reserved for serial killers or child murderers who have tried in a court of law and been found **GUILTY** of their crimes and therefore duly sentenced.

Inward migrants subjected to indefinite detention have not been tried, never mind found guilty. Their incarceration overturns the long-held practice that a person is innocent until proven guilty.

What is the "crime" that migrants have committed? They have fled multiple forms of persecution – religious, political, ethnic, sexual orientation and so on – and have sought refuge or sanctuary. And how have they been treated? They have escaped from one kind of prison of persecution and have ended up in a physical prison under indefinite detention.

It is of little wonder that so many migrants end up mentally scarred from their experiences and that in some cases this mental scarring has led to suicides, self harm and other actions such as setting fire to cells that have not only endangered the lives of those who take such drastic action but also others in the same detention facility.

The recent case of a detainee in Campsfield House who cuts his wrists and set fire to his room is one example amongst many. We therefore understand the reaction of many detainees who indulge in various forms of protests, including destruction of property, when faced with the suicides of fellow detainees or when forced to live with never knowing how long they will be kept in prison.

We believe that detention of any kind should not be used for refugees and asylum seekers who have committed no crime and whose sole reason for being here is to seek a better life free from persecution.

Darrall Cozens

President, Coventry TUC

12th September 2014.

COVENTRY TUC
KOCO BUILDING
THE ARCHES
SPON END
COVENTRY