

Fascist anti-migrant riots spread as UK Prime Minister Starmer outlines clampdown on “all violent disorder”

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Several more days of riots by far-right forces have taken place in British towns and cities utilising the excuse of the stabbing deaths of three children in Southport on Monday. Asian workers have been beaten up, mosques attacked, and asylum seeker hostels laid siege to by mobs chanting anti-migrant and anti-Muslim slogans.

On Tuesday, several hundred fascists travelled to Southport and laid siege to the town, attacking a local mosque. The fascists, seeking to whip up anti-immigrant sentiment, claimed Monday’s murder of the three children and hospitalisation of others was carried out by a Muslim immigrant. The 17-year-old accused was later named as Axel Rudakubana, a Christian who was born in Cardiff, Wales, of parents who emigrated from Rwanda to Britain.

Presiding judge Andrew Menary stated that continued anonymity risked “allowing others who are up to mischief to continue to spread disinformation in a vacuum”. Rudakubana is remanded in youth custody, charged with three counts of murder, 10 counts of attempted murder and one of possession of a knife.

On Wednesday, several thousand fascists mobilised in London, rioting outside Downing Street under the slogan “Enough is Enough”. Among their chants were “Rule Britannia”, “Stop the boats”, and one directed at police, “You’re not English any more”.

Far-right protests also took place in Hartlepool, Manchester, and Aldershot. In Aldershot, around 200 were present and in Manchester just 40 as the fascists surrounded hotels accommodating asylum seekers, while a mosque was targeted in Hartlepool. Among their placards were “Deport them, don’t support them” and “No apartments for illegals”.

Fascists running rampage and attacking police have been treated in the main with kid gloves, despite the

police having huge powers at their disposal to crack down on and disperse protests. As of this writing just nine have been arrested following the Southport riot. In Hartlepool eight were arrested, in Manchester two. No arrests were made in Aldershot, with police instead issuing photos of seven of the mob they wanted to question.

The only exception was in London, where 111 were arrested after police reported that “Bottles, flares, and other objects were thrown at officers. Five officers were injured: one of our colleagues was punched in the chest, one elbowed in the head, one kicked in the back, one kicked in the wrist and another kicked multiple times, all received injuries.”

One of those arrested for possession of offensive weapons had seven knives, one catapult with ammunition and nunchucks.

Ahead of the demonstration, the Metropolitan Police enacted Public Order Act restrictions and 60 people were arrested for failing to comply with these conditions on the protest.

At least 19 far-right demonstrations are set to go ahead on the weekend—with as many as 35 advertised—including in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Lancaster, Blackburn, Newcastle, Birmingham, Sunderland, Dover, Middlesborough, Leeds and Hull. Mosques have announced that security is being stepped up.

The riots prompted a speech and press conference by Labour Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer Thursday, centred on announcing a new national policing unit “to tackle violent disorder”.

Starmer said, “I’ve just held a meeting with senior police and law enforcement leaders”, and “we will establish a national capability, across police forces, to tackle violent disorder. These thugs are mobile. They move from community to community. And we must have

a policing response that can do the same.”

These units would access “shared intelligence” and there would be “wider deployment of facial recognition technology”.

That all such powers will be used against the working class in future struggles was implicit in Starmer’s statement. The meeting with senior police was “A response both to the immediate challenge, which is clearly driven by far-right hatred. But also all violent disorder that flares up. Whatever the apparent cause or motivation. We make no distinction. Crime is crime.”

Labour MPs have joined a media-driven witch-hunt of protests against the Israeli genocide, denouncing them as “hate marches” and slandering participants as antisemites. Individuals involved in Just Stop Oil environmental protests have been spied on and handed sentences of between one and five years in prison.

Moreover, these measures are proclaimed by a prime minister who is intent on waging war against Russia, backing genocide in Gaza and imposing austerity on behalf of the most “business friendly” government in history, staffed by self-proclaimed admirers of Margaret Thatcher.

The working class must reject Starmer’s law-and-order agenda and come to the defence of immigrants and asylum seekers. This must be organised independently of the Labour Party and the entire repressive apparatus of the state, which Starmer is whipping into shape on the understanding that his government must confront the social anger of millions of workers.

Starmer’s claim that far-right rampages are somehow alien to the body politic are lies. The fascists’ mobilisations and their ability to spread their poisonous filth is built on the flammable material of lumpen elements bred under conditions of desperate levels of social inequality after 15 years of savage austerity measures.

Above all, the fascists, though small in number, draw strength from a noxious political and cultural atmosphere centred on a whipping up vicious anti-immigrant sentiment that has been central to the political agenda of the main parties of the ruling class—Labour and Conservatives—for years.

Islamophobia, in particular, has been cultivated for decades now with the Labour government of Tony Blair playing a central role alongside the US Bush administration in the so-called “war on terror” that accompanied the illegal war against Iraq, and passing legislation such as Prevent demonising Muslims.

In 2015, Labour’s campaign in the general election under Ed Miliband promised a policy for “Controls on immigration” (inscribing it on a stone tablet), including recruiting an extra 1,000 border staff.

This was Labour’s response to then Conservative home secretary, and later prime minister, Theresa May, who announced in 2012, “The aim is to create, here in Britain, a really hostile environment for illegal immigrants.” This included vans driving through cities with large immigrant populations carrying the threat, “In the UK illegally? Go home or face arrest.”

In 2017, under its nominal “left” leader Jeremy Corbyn, Labour’s general election manifesto emphasised, “Labour believes in fair rules and reasonable management of migration.”

Starmer came to office on a manifesto emblazoned with the Union Jack, promising a government based on “country first, party second.” Labour and the Tories competed as to who would be toughest on “Stopping the boats” of desperate asylum seekers fleeing to Britain via the perilous English Channel.

Within 48 hours of taking office, Home Secretary Yvette Cooper followed through on manifesto commitments to set up a Gestapo-like Border Security Command and form a “returns and enforcement unit, with an additional 1,000 staff, to fast-track removals to safe countries for people who do not have the right to stay here.”

Labour has also pledged to end the temporary accommodation of asylum seekers in hotels, a long-time demand of the far-right.

While fascists go on the rampage denouncing immigrants and demanding their deportation, this takes place alongside a “summer blitz of illegal immigration raids” announced by Cooper on July 20 and involving over 1,000 “Immigrant Enforcement” officials.



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