

# Labour: racist, immoral and likely to tear the country ...

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Yesterday, Keir Starmer described Reform's policy on the right to indefinite leave to remain (ILR) in the UK as "racist", "immoral" and likely to "tear the country apart" by stripping ILR from people working in hospitals and schools, or running businesses.

He was right to do so. The terms are accurate.

Today, Labour Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood will apparently say that migrants to the UK will be denied ILR and be forced to leave the country if they fail to meet a clear set of criteria in a new points system. The requirements are that:

- \* They must not claim benefits
- \* They must be paying National Insurance
- \* They need to speak English to a high standard
- \* Must have a clean criminal record, and
- \* They must be volunteering in their community.

Let me describe this. This policy is "racist", "immoral" and likely to "tear the country apart" by stripping ILR from people working in hospitals and schools, or running businesses.

Being unemployed is most often not a person's own fault. Nor is economic downturn a reason why a person should suffer deportation from this country. But the suggestion is that this will be the case for those with ILR. This blatantly contravenes their human rights.

Working in a job that does not pay a living wage is often a consequence of working for an abusive employer (including, on occasion, the UK state or a contractor to it) that does not reward work sufficiently to ensure a person can afford to live. It is not a person's fault. And it is a problem exacerbated in a country where all the odds are stacked in favour of landlords and regulated suppliers of monopoly services and against

families and children.

Meanwhile, every day, I hear poor English in our media, and it profoundly annoys me. So who determines what this means? And who allows for regional and country-based variations in how our language is used?

We also all know that the criminal justice system - even the likelihood of being suspected of a crime - means that the odds are massively stacked against migrants in our country. Is there going to be no allowance for this?

And what does volunteering mean? If it does not include service at your Mosque, Temple, or other place of worship, what is the purpose of this? This suggestion stinks of colonial attitudes, requiring service to the master.

Reform is racist, abusive and utterly immoral. But so too is Labour planning to be so on this issue. We do not need to choose one over the other. We need to reject both. Racism is racism, whoever offers it.