

The Other Windrush Scandal

Deconstructing the Windrush Industry

Professor Gus John

There are those who argue that the Windrush scandal which was the product of Theresa May's 'hostile environment' tarnishes the name 'Windrush' and should rightly be called the 'Home Office scandal'.

But, on matters to do with immigration, border control and policing, the Home Office is the engine room of government.

So, what is the relationship between Windrush and government?

I suggest that there are two definitions of the Windrush scandal. One is the Home Office scandal and the other is the scandal of what has become the Windrush industry.

'On 13 May 2025, the prime minister, Keir Starmer, borrowed from a playlist that has stood the test of time in British politics and remains living testimony to systemic racism and to how embedded the racialisation of immigration actually is. As I put it in a recent blogpost:

'By 13 May 2025, in response to Reform's electoral gains in local elections and in a by-election earlier that month and Nigel Farage's jingoistic claims about the same, Keir Starmer

speaks to white Britain and especially to those whom he feared would desert Labour and throw their lot in with Reform, telling them that they should not give up on Labour just yet. Instead, they should give him time because he shares their anxieties that Britain risks becoming 'an island of strangers' and was going to show them evidence of Labour taking action to make sure that does not come to pass'.

By 18 June 2025, Keir Starmer, anticipating Windrush Day on 22 June, had gathered a good number of those 'strangers', calling themselves the Windrush generation and their descendants, in 10 Downing St, to tell them how much he valued them and how much the nation was grateful for 'the contribution' they had made to building Britain.

They were clearly the right sort of strangers, even though all of them most probably know someone who had suffered detriment, if not loss of life, as a consequence of being caught in the hostile environment dragnet. Indeed, some of them had been and are still actively involved in providing legal representation for Windrush victims seeking compensation from the Home Office for heinous deeds of injustice, including wrecking their lives.

The playlist Starmer dipped into started with demands in 1948 that Clement Attlee, the then prime minister, should order the Empire Windrush to turn back and not bring that boatload of 'coloured immigrants', descendants of earlier human cargo forcibly transported by British ships, to colonial Britain itself. Those descendants of enslaved Africans and of indentured labourers from South Asia were citizens of the United Kingdom and its colonies and had their dark blue British passports to prove it.

11 Labour MPs led by J.D. Murray wrote to Prime Minister Clement Attlee complaining bitterly about the 'discord and unhappiness' this wave of Caribbean immigrants would cause:

Dear Prime Minister,

May we bring to your notice the fact that several hundreds of West Indians have arrived in this country trusting that our Government will provide them with food, shelter, employment and social services, and enable them to become domiciled here...Their success may encourage other British subjects to imitate their example and this country may become an open reception centre for immigrants not selected in respect to health, education, training, character, customs... The British people fortunately enjoy a profound unity without uniformity in their way of life, and are blest by the absence of a colour racial problem. An influx of coloured people domiciled here is likely to impair the harmony, strength and cohesion of our public and social life and to cause discord and unhappiness among all concerned.

(David Muir, Christian Today, 21 June 2021)

Muir continued:

'Although two-thirds of the passengers on the Windrush were ex-servicemen who fought for Britain ('for King and Country') during the Second World War, these Labour MPs felt that in peace time, post-war Britain, people like these from the Caribbean

were totally unsuited to settle in the very 'Mother Country' they had recently fought for. Undoubtedly, the Labour MPs displayed the type of prejudice and fear that would set the tone for the discrimination and struggles that the Caribbean community would subsequently face'

What those Labour MPs and all those clamouring to keep Britain white considered to be of no consequence was that the 'influx of coloured people' they were seeking to keep out constituted a reserve pool of labour that Britain had left unskilled and undeveloped in terms of their human potential.

The material conditions of their existence were such that constantly fighting for survival was their existential reality. As such, migration for work in order to support their families and communities and build a better life was routine, especially for workers and peasants in villages in practically every island. This forms the historical context of that trope of 'absent fathers' in Caribbean communities.

Theirs was an existential reality that gave rise to emigration from 'the islands' in search of work, for example:

- In the Oil and Gas industry in South Trinidad
- In the Oil industry in Aruba and Curacao
- In the Panama Canal
- In the sugar industry in Cuba
- In seasonal employment in the agricultural sector in the USA.

It was from that pool of labour that the West India Regiment was formed and was deployed across the battlefields of Europe.

After demobilization, they returned to even worse economic conditions in the Caribbean, many having to throw themselves on the mercy of their local community, especially the disabled and infirm. As a consequence, they decided to return to Britain and seek a better life.

The MV Ormonde, carrying passengers from the West Indies, docked in Liverpool on 31 March 1947. The passenger list for the ship reveals that there were 241 onboard, including 11 stowaways and six distressed seamen. It shows a diverse range of skills and professions. Due to an unofficial colour bar in Britain, many could only find employment with low wages and poor conditions.

A study by the sociologist Ruth Glass carried out between 1958 and 1959 showed that '55% of Caribbean migrants experienced job downgrading after their arrival'.

The Almanzora docked in Southampton on 21 December 1947. It carried 200 Caribbean passengers to the UK, many of whom were former RAF service personnel who had served during the Second World War.

The Empire Windrush docked in Tilbury, east London, on 21 June 1948, carrying some 1,027 passengers, many of them ex-service personnel. It offloaded its passengers in full view of Pathe News and other journalists, including the Guardian, on 22 June. 492 of those passengers were from Jamaica.

But those calling for the government to restrict entry to those coming on the Empire Windrush did not stop there. Those intent on keeping Britain white did not simply wait for government to act to restrict immigration from its former colonies, the Black Commonwealth in particular. They took matters into their own hands and exercised what they saw as their right to discriminate and to harass black folk.

There were race riots in Notting Hill and in St Ann's Nottingham in 1958. Kelso Cochrane, a carpenter from Antigua, was murdered in Notting Hill in 1959. No one was brought to justice for his murder.

In that same year, 21,550 people arrived from 'the New Commonwealth'. Once it was announced that Britain was planning to restrict the free entry of such citizens, there was a 'beat the ban' hike in the number of migrants

arriving in the UK in advance of the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. So, whereas in 1960, there were 58,300 new entrants, 125,400 arrived in 1961.

By the time the general election of 1964 was announced, immigration was dominating political discourse. In Smethwick, west midlands, the Conservative candidate Peter Griffiths was boldly telling voters in that constituency: 'If you want a nigger for a neighbour, vote Labour'. Griffiths won his seat with a 7.2% swing from Labour, thus unseating Patrick Gordon Walker, the sitting Labour MP and former Shadow Foreign Secretary.

The largest group of immigrants from the Black Commonwealth in Smethwick at the time were Punjabis, Sikhs predominantly. The Conservatives saw the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act as being ineffective and ran a campaign which focused on the growing number of 'coloured immigrants' and their impact upon jobs and housing.

The incoming Labour Government wasted no time in publishing the White Paper 'Immigration from the Commonwealth', which set out their intention to place further restrictions on migration from the Commonwealth, whilst also introducing integration policies for those already here.

Labour introduced the Race Relations Bill to Parliament in the spring of 1965, with home secretary Roy Hattersley emphasising 'promoting integration' as their rationale for limiting immigration.: 'Without integration, limitation is inexcusable; Without limitation, integration is impossible. It has not been an easy decision to take. The honourable, but mistaken, opposition to the 1961 Immigration Act....has made it much more difficult, but the cause of integration will be well served'

- Hattersley, 1965

The 1965 RRA made discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, or ethnic or national origins illegal in public places (except

in Northern Ireland). That was the first legislation in UK to tackle racial discrimination.

There was massive opposition to that legislation, on the grounds that it interfered with, indeed, took away the right of white folk to discriminate and choose whom they wished to 'tolerate'.

That legislation was repealed by the 1968 Race Relations Act which prohibited discrimination, additionally in housing, employment and the provision of goods and services.

The 1965 Act effectively positioned Britain on a spectrum with, at one end:

- the state ostensibly espousing liberal notions of the value and 'richness' of diversity while passing increasingly racist immigration legislation ...and at the other end:
- the Far Right wanting to 'keep Britain white', with the two major political parties oscillating between the centre and the Far Right

By 2016, UKIP had positioned itself firmly along that spectrum, acting as a fulcrum to determine the direction (always rightwards) of those two main parties, to the extent that it not only triggered Britain's exit from the European Union, but by the 2024 general election had inserted itself into mainstream parliamentary government.

Less than 4 years after Peter Griffiths' alert to the Smethwick electorate, Enoch Powell, Conservative MP for Wolverhampton southwest delivered his 'rivers of blood' speech, in which he gave dire warnings to the entire British nation on the dangers of allowing the population of 'coloured immigrants' to expand.

The 'Windrush scandal' is commonly understood to be the barbaric and clearly illegal persecution by the Home Office of black folk from former British colonies resident in the UK, who could not provide evidence of having the right to remain and to work in

Britain. Irrespective of whether such folk had lived in Britain for 3 years or 63 years, once they were unable to provide documentary evidence of 'the right to remain', they were rendered undocumented, illegal and eligible for deportation.

People who had lived in Britain since the 1940s, even prior to the British Nationality Act of 1948, or had come to join the British armed forces in the second world war, or had come in the post-war years from that reserve pool of labour the British empire had created and abandoned to their fate, including the descendants of enslaved Africans in the West Indies, were all caught in that Windrush dragnet.

David Cameron as the then prime minister, a man who himself was a descendant of owners of enslaved Africans, and Theresa May, home secretary, in a country where the racialisation of immigration had become embedded since the early 1960s, were seeking to demonstrate to the British electorate that they were tough on immigration, they had control of their borders, despite being in the European Union and subject to the Schengen Treaty that allowed the free movement of labour across EU member states, so that there was no reason to desert the Conservatives and join Nigel Farage and UKIP.

That is why, in 2013, Theresa May saw fit to authorise a series of vans with billboards fixed to their sides, screaming 'Go Home or Face Arrest' and deploy them to drive around greater London in a bid to flush out 'illegal' immigrants and deport those who failed to leave voluntarily.

That proved to be a costly and useless exercise, which Farage himself ridiculed as a gimmick.

Not surprisingly, therefore, with a growing clamour among the electorate for Britain to leave the European Union and not be constrained by Schengen, Cameron's government passed even more draconian immigration legislation in 2014 and in 2016.

That legislation effectively placed immigration control duties upon a wide range of individuals, agencies and institutions. In the absence of compulsory identity cards, landlords, letting agencies, employers, banks, day nurseries, doctors' surgeries, DVLC, schools, colleges, universities, were all expected to apply filters and identify and root out 'undocumented' existing and would-be service users.

Whole families who had been registered with the same doctors' surgeries for half a century were suddenly required to prove that they were 'legally' in the country. Parents wanting to register their children in day nurseries, or in schools, were required to do likewise. Employers who had employed black staff for decades and valued their competence, experience and loyalty were having to get them to provide evidence of their right to work, failing which they were obliged to terminate their employment.

This led to thousands of people becoming homeless, jobless and penniless, with no recourse to state funds, despite decades of paying national insurance and paying into pension schemes.

State theft was thus leading to destitution, vagrancy, mental illness, general ill health and for many, death.

Where people were deported to countries that they had left as infants, or well before their teenage years and were dumped in some 30 to 60 years later, often with no family networks to lean on; or where there were families who decided that it was not their responsibility to be burdened with needy elders with whom they had nothing but a biological connection, destitution and vagrancy invariably resulted.

This is why I dubbed the 'Windrush scandal' Theresa May's pogrom.

This is why, when I was invited to join her, then as prime minister, in Downing Street in June 2018 to celebrate '70 Years of Windrush', in my letter declining her invitation, I said this:

'It may well be, Prime Minister, that you would have the good grace to take the opportunity to tell your invited guests how sorry you are for your part in all of that brutal, inhumane and racist treatment of former colonised Africans who have and had no interest other than to serve this nation and do their best by their communities and families. But, one of the uglier manifestations of whiteness in this society is an unassailable sense of in-your-face entitlement. I do not believe that you are entitled to the magnanimity of those misguided folk who might well be happy to receive your invitation and to attend your Windrush anniversary celebration. As far as I am concerned, I stand with those who suffered detention, deportation and mental ill health, some of whom even now face an earlier death as a result of being denied access to health services on account of your 'hostile environment' regime.

It would be a shameful betrayal of them all to accept your invitation and join you in Downing Street to mark the arrival of the Windrush 70 years ago and the contribution to British society of those whom it brought and their descendants....'

One month after his disgraceful speech, a speech befitting Nigel Farage and Reform, those Windrushites were perfectly happy and honoured to be invited to Downing Street to be told by Keir Starmer just how special they and their generation are and how much they have done for Britain.

I suppose they too saw themselves as 'good strangers' - people whom some entitled white Brits might even tolerate as 'good niggers' - and not the strangers Starmer was talking about. So good, in fact, that the government's treatment of 'illegals' and of refugees and asylum seekers was no concern of theirs, nor was the message Starmer was sending out to Reform and to rabid racists and the growing ranks of neo-fascists and the far Right in the nation about how they should be regarded.

The fact that the British state had illegally rendered so many elders within their communities ‘illegal’ and had deported them, shortening the lives of many, presumably has nothing to do with Starmer and his incendiary language.

Indeed, Windrush Day and all the hype associated with it presumably have nothing to do with the state and its apparatuses and how the Black and Global Majority population is positioned within and experience Britain, nuances notwithstanding.

The Other Windrush Scandal

On 21 June, Paulette Simpson CBE, Executive Director of The Voice Media Group wrote this:

‘Join us in celebrating the Windrush Generation – a generation whose journey is the foundation of ours – we are deeply indebted to them.

Importantly, let us remember they are our parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. For others, they are neighbours, co-workers, and dedicated service providers that have contributed to our lives – their descendants continue to do so every day.

In essence, they have in countless ways enriched the lives of everyone in Britain – directly or indirectly. So why have they remained invisible for many decades? Why has their immense contribution and their stories not been fully woven into the fabric of British history?

In recent years, strides have been made to document their stories and honour their legacy – and that progress is welcome. But there is still much more to do.

The urgency is clear: in the past seven months [we] have lost more than four Windrush Pioneers: Alford Gardener, John Richards, Bernard Delisser, and Sir Geoff Palmer, to name a few.

Last week I was privileged to honour Mr Lessept Saunders who is 106 years old, yes the number is correct. 106 years of living, giving and inspiring. “From Jamaica to Hackney, he is journey is one of service and strength. From nursing war survivors to building support for elders”.

‘It was an emotional moment, one that visibility [visibly] moved everyone in the room. His story, like so many others, brought home the richness and resilience within the lived experience of the Windrush pioneers.

I am incredibly proud to have played a seminal part in initiatives such as the Windrush Monument at Waterloo Station, and Windrush: Portraits of a Pioneering Generation, commissioned by HM King Charles. These projects stand as lasting tributes to the strength, resilience, and enduring legacy of the Windrush Generation.

So, as we approach Windrush Day on Sunday June 22nd, I encourage you to be intentional to honour their memory – remembering those that we have lost and celebrating those who are still with us.

Please reach out to someone you know and/or attend one of the many events happening across the UK during the month of June and beyond.

Let us ensure that their stories are never forgotten – and their legacy lives on.

There are many unique stories in the June Windrush Issue of the Voice newspaper. We encourage you to access your copy via

[Click Here](#) 

or search online for voiceonline publications’.

Above that rallying cry was the cover page of that Windrush edition of the Voice, with the strap line: *Shaped by WINDRUSH – a tribute to the hands, hearts and hopes that helped transform a nation.*

Let us deconstruct this statement, which in essence summaries the consensual Windrush narrative:

'Join us in celebrating the Windrush Generation – a generation whose journey is the foundation of ours...'

Who and what constitutes 'the Windrush generation?' It is a late 20th century construct which is increasingly used to designate every Caribbean person over the age of 50 in Britain. It is also used more and more to refer to the offspring and grandchildren of that generation, as in 'the Windrush generation and their descendants'. Not so long ago, those same people were more loosely associated with immigration and with strangers, as in 'first, second and third generation immigrants'.

Mr Arthur Torrington and the Windrush Foundation have sought to reclaim the term and remove its elasticity by claiming that its originator was the late Samuel Beaver King and that he meant it to apply only to those who came on the Empire Windrush and their descendants. Clearly, such usage would make the term no less banal and meaningless.

– a generation whose journey is the foundation of ours – we are deeply indebted to them.

Did those people who came on the Windrush and on other carriers by sea and air after 1948 lay foundations just by arriving in Britain? How different is what sustained them from what sustained us? What did they do on their journey, or on arriving in Britain that could be classified as laying of foundations?

In essence, they have in countless ways enriched the lives of everyone in Britain – directly or indirectly. So why have they remained invisible for many decades? Why has their immense contribution and their stories not been fully woven into the fabric of British history?

Who are 'they' and how have they enriched our lives? This homogenising is utterly meaningless and for a number of reasons. For one thing, it rather suggests that everyone in that period had a common purpose, related to Britain as a former coloniser and to racism in Britain in the same way and saw themselves as sharing some sort of group identity.

The reality is that the newcomers were a diverse body of people, diverse on the axis of gender – of course –, ethnicity, class, education, politics, ideological orientation, parenthood and religion. Some drew upon their activism in the struggle against colonialism and for national independence in their home countries and had a focus on civil and human rights, while others were opposed to political activism and saw activists as troublemakers; some believed and expressed their belief that 'when in Rome, you do as the Romans', that it was 'the people's country' and one should be grateful for the opportunity to come here and therefore you shouldn't cause trouble for them. In other words, you should be of good behaviour and be suitably deferential in the 'host community', irrespective of whether you experienced and were treated to welcome and hospitality. Some believed that to join trade unions and to agitate for workers' rights and for health and safety at work was to 'cause trouble'. Some became magistrates and were proud to be justices of the peace (JPs) and to demonstrate, with offensive pomposity, that they could be even more brutal in their punishment of black folk, especially young people, than their white counterparts. Others were clear about the distinction between the racist conduct of individuals and the systemic/structural racism of the state. Clear about the importance of the worker's movement among the white working class, about the gains of that movement and about the need to acknowledge that their historical struggles had created space for our own political activism against capitalist exploitation, state racism and against the miseducation of our children.

Crucially, some of us built social movements because we believed fundamentally in the power of collective action to bring about change.

We built the Keskidee Centre, the Caribbean Education and Community Workers Association, the Black Supplementary School Movement, the Black Parents Movement, the Caribbean Artists Movement, the Black Liberation Front, Grass Roots, the Black Panther Party, the West Indian Students' Centre, the Organisation of Women of African and Asian Descent, the Black Audio Film Collective, the Race Today Collective, the West Indian Standing Conference, the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination, New Beacon Books, Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, the International Bookfair of Radical Black and Third World Books, the George Padmore Institute, the New Cross Massacre Black People's Day of Action, the Notting Hill Carnival, the Mangrove Restaurant, the Black People's Information Centre, Karia Press, the Caribbean Teachers Association, black film collectives, Ceddo films, black theatrical agencies, theatre companies, theatre workshops, dance companies, black businesses....and more.

The history of the black presence in Britain after the second world war did not begin when Sam Beaver King and Arthur Torrington decided to reinvent the Empire Windrush and iconise the passengers it brought on that single voyage it made from the West Indies to Britain. Nor was that history disconnected from the longer history of Africans and people of African descent in Britain.

Windrushites will do well to remember that the first PanAfrican Congress was held in London in 1900, a mere 15 years after the Berlin Conference had carved up Africa, and that one of the main organisers of that congress

was Henry Sylvester Williams, a barrister from Trinidad.

They will also do well to remember Learie Nicholas Constantine – who would become Baron Learie Constantine. Wikipedia tells us that Constantine toured England as a member of the West Indies cricket team in 1923 and 1928 and pursued a career as a professional cricketer in England, gaining a contract with the Lancashire League club Nelson, for which he played with distinction between 1929 and 1938, while continuing as a member of the West Indies Test team in tours of England and Australia.

'During the Second World War, Constantine worked for the Ministry of Labour and National Service as a Welfare Officer responsible for West Indians employed in English factories. In 1943, the manager of a London hotel refused to accommodate Constantine and his family on the grounds of their race in an instance of the UK colour bar; Constantine successfully sued the hotel company. Commentators recognise the case as a milestone in British racial equality. Constantine qualified as a barrister in 1954, while also establishing himself as a journalist and broadcaster'.

Thankfully, as far as I am aware, no one has done him the indignity of claiming him as a member of 'the Windrush generation'.

So, when Ms Simpson asks:

So why have they remained invisible for many decades? Why has their immense contribution and their stories not been fully woven into the fabric of British history?

It is not clear who she is talking about. Does she mean that the Empire Windrush passengers remained invisible until Sam King and Arthur Torrington began to focus upon them? While not being named or enumerated, they were written about by, for example, Sam Selvon, Sheila Patterson, Andrew Salkey, Trevor Carter, Donald Hinds and John La Rose, among others, including myself.

Additionally, to shed some light on our interface with the British nation, our development as part of it and our trajectory in the struggle to change the society, the George Padmore Institute hosted two series of interviews in which political and cultural activists narrated their 'life experience with Britain'. Among them were pioneers in our movement, such as: Pearl Connor-Mogotsi, Alex Pascall, Colin Prescod, Courtenay Griffiths QC, Garth Crooks

(Changing Britannia: Life Experiences with Britain – 1999)

Althea McNish, Bishop Wilfred Wood, Dr Aggrey Burke, Yvonne Brewster, Dennis Bovell

(Building Britannia: Life Experiences with Britain – 2009)

In 1971, I co-authored *Because They're Black* (which won the Martin Luther King prize that year). In 2023, I wrote 'Blazing Trails – stories of a heroic generation', a book which profiled 22 heroic individuals who were all movement builders.

In October 2021, *Nursing A Nation: An anthology of African and Caribbean contributions to Britain's health services* was published. Compiled by Jak Beula of the Nubian Jak Community Trust, the book profiles 32 nursing pioneers, many though not all of whom were among the first nurses to be employed by the newly established NHS in 1948 and after.

Reviewing the book, the Camden New Journal noted:

'The book also examines the contribution made by doctors and nurses of the African diaspora long before the advent of the NHS. They include fascinating but little known 19th century figures like Guyana-born James Risien Russell, who carried out groundbreaking neurosurgery at the National Hospital in

Bloomsbury, and John Alcindor from Trinidad whose GP surgery in Paddington was open to all comers whether they had money to pay for their treatment or not. Another popular GP was George Busby, father of publisher Margaret Busby, who worked in Walthamstow in the 1920s before setting up shop in Ghana.

Among several pioneering nurses mentioned are two princesses: Tsehai Haile Selassie, a daughter of Haile Selassie, who began her training at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children in 1936, and Omo-Oba Adenrele Ademola, scion of a Yoruba royal family whose nursing career began in 1938 and took in Guy's and the former New End Hospital in Hampstead'.

There can be no doubting that British historians have largely erased our story and with a few notable exceptions, Hakim Adi, Peter Fryer and James Walvin foremost among them, have presented British history as if there was no black presence, even in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Little is taught, for example, about the 1945 Fifth PanAfrican Congress in Manchester, let alone the First Congress in London in 1900.

We have been decolonising the curriculum and striving to decolonise educational institutions since the 1950s. But even now, there is not a body of literature, or audio-visual records that could teach today's generation about the movements and institutions I listed above.

In building the supplementary education movement over the last seven decades or so, we made use of the Heinemann's African Writers Series, Penguin, Allison & Busby, New Beacon, Bogle L'Ouverture, Race Today, Race and Class, Black Scholar, Women's Press, Virago, Peepal Tree Press, Karia, Karnak and more. The International Bookfair of Radical Black and Third World Books (1982-1995) provided a rare and unique opportunity for discovering and sampling new literature, restocking, listening to authors, discussing curriculum and pedagogy and much else besides.

Nobody mentioned Windrush throughout all of that. And those people associated with Windrush, in whatever capacity, that saw themselves as actively joining with others in pursuing change and freeing ourselves from the vestiges of colonialism, joined with us in movement building, rather than seeing themselves as historical icons, by virtue of having come to Britain on a particular day that captured the attention of the British media.

In order to ensure that *'their stories (are) fully woven into the fabric of British history'*, Windrushites should join with us in doing something about the erasure and not compounding it by failing to acknowledge that we did not sit around for decades, waiting for Sam King and the Windrush Foundation to start a 21st century crusade to iconise Windrush.

The British monarch is already handing out gongs in recognition of 'services to the Windrush generation'. This will no doubt become a staple.

What is beyond dispute, however, is that such gongs won't be given out for activism in support of the rights of hostile environment victims, or for efforts to neutralise that damaging Windrush narrative and to tell the children the truth.

I am incredibly proud to have played a seminal part in initiatives such as the Windrush Monument at Waterloo Station, and Windrush: Portraits of a Pioneering Generation, commissioned by HM King Charles. These projects stand as lasting tributes to the strength, resilience, and enduring legacy of the Windrush Generation.

What story does the Windrush monument tell? The iconic pictures that are dusted off and used to depict Windrush passengers disembarking, accurately depict patterns of migration that were current then. They are all noteworthy for the absence of women and children. Seldom did men travel with their wives/partners, let alone with children. So, to have a monument depicting a typical

nuclear family as representing 'the Windrush generation' is historically absurd and an egregious form of mythmaking, if not of sanitising.

Similarly, the portraiture. The people in those portraits have a vast repository of stories to tell, blessed with long life as they are, or were. The wrinkles on their faces and foreheads bear testimony to life experiences with Britain both under colonial rule in their home countries and in this country. In both settings, however, they had a group identity, i.e., as African descendants whose legacy is the struggle for self-reclamation and for human liberation.

As John. La Rose famously said: *'We did not come alive in Britain.'*

It means, therefore, that we cannot be disconnected from our past, as if we are powered by some sort of electricity supply that we turned off on leaving the Caribbean and turned on again, with the same or different voltage, on arriving in Britain; as if what we do here in Britain, irrespective of what our relationship is to the British state, has no bearing on how we were and what we did in the countries from which we came to Britain.

What we leave, we carry!

This is the backcloth and indeed the cornerstone of the second definition of 'the Windward scandal'.

The Windrush brand increasingly separates the so-called Windrush generation from their past. It peddles the myth that 'they called and we came'; the myth that we came 'seeking adventure', as if we were bored with sun, sea and rum; the myth that migration to sell our labour and develop our families and our communities was an unknown experience, until we came as 'Mayflower pilgrims' to rebuild post-war Britain, even though we were not allowed to lay claim to any part of it.

The Windrush narrative presents 'the Windrush generation' as a body of people who

have shown strength and resilience in the face of adversity and who built modern Britain despite whatever the society threw at them.

Individuals triumphed and made a massive 'contribution'. Their resilience enabled them to do that.

Windrushites seemingly love to be pat on the head, patronised and be praised for their 'resilience', meaning their capacity to withstand oppression, exclusion, brutality, denial of opportunity, as well as racism in its myriad manifestations. So, rather than taking your jackboot off my neck and giving me the freedom to breathe, straighten up and stand on my own two feet, you keep your jackboot in position, pat me on the head and congratulate me for not dying from asphyxiation. I in turn, grin from ear to ear, even as I pray: don't let me die.

It suggests a passive and insouciant approach to their experience of the society, an approach that eschews struggle in defence of rights, including the right to human dignity; one that is focused upon being good servants and of course, good servants do not rebel and seek to dismantle the master's mechanisms for containing and controlling, especially controlling the mind of the oppressed. Good servants get rewarded with royal ribbons, pinned on their lapels by monarchs that acknowledge their loyalty to all things Empire.

The current monarch, while still King-in-waiting, even gave the Voice newspaper a gong by doing it the unprecedented honour of editing its 40th anniversary special edition (August 2022).

Finally, over the decades, we have relentlessly campaigned against the lack of inclusion in British social history and in the school/college curriculum, of the record of all we have ever done in pre- and post-war Britain.

The Other Windrush Scandal compounds that erasure and effectively rewrites British social history, through the blinkered lens of Windrush.

Not surprisingly, the British state has funded the Windrush Foundation to blitz schools with free material on Sam King and Windrush, schools that have little or no knowledge of and show little interest in the history and the social movements such as I have outlined above.

For the sake of this and future generations, we each have an obligation: a) to put an end to this Windrush scandal and its active falsification of our history and

b) to arrest the growth of the Windrush industry.

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