

## PRESS RELEASE

# New 'xeno-racism' is destroying race relations, warns race thinktank

On Saturday 30 June, at a European civil liberties conference, the Institute of Race Relations launches its explosive investigation of the new racism, xeno-racism, and strips bare the myth that the UK government's treatment of asylum seekers has nothing to do with racism.

Co-authors IRR director A. Sivanandan and principal European Race Researcher Liz Fekete chart the emergence of a corrosive xeno-racism in the ways that European governments demonise asylum seekers as bogus, illegal and welfare scroungers. In detailed country by country case studies, the IRR examines how xeno-racism undermines race relations, leading to a growth in neo-Nazi parties, hotspots of racial violence and the convergence of the new racism with existing racist hostility towards older, settled black and migrant communities.

Most significantly, though, the IRR has provided entirely new parameters for future research into racism in the UK. In showing that racism today cannot always be colour-coded, directed as it is at impoverished white asylum seekers as well, the IRR challenges the government's attempts to pass this racism off as xenophobia, a 'natural' fear of strangers. As A. Sivanandan concludes:

"In the way it denigrates and reifies people before segregating and/or expelling them, it is a xenophobia that bears all the marks of the old racism. It is racism in substance, but 'xeno' in form. It is a racism that is meted out to impoverished strangers even if they are white. It is xeno-racism."

**Special report on Xeno-racism, Institute of Race Relations, July 2001; ISBN 085001 059 4; 33 pages; £3.50**

*Contents: The emergence of xeno-racism; How to measure racism; Racism and anti-racism – in 17 European countries.*

Report launch by Liz Fekete at conference: Statewatching the new Europe 2001, Saturday 30 June, 10am-6pm, at University of London Students' Union, Malet street, London WC1

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*The special report on xeno-racism* is available online at [www.irr.org.uk](http://www.irr.org.uk)

*Liz Fekete, compiler of report, is available for interview at University of London Student's Union*