



The false narrative white supremacists have pushed about their own white riots

Description

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riots Belfast

When the [racist white riots](#) broke out in Belfast, youâ??d have thought the sky had fallen in â?? or at least that a small army of migrants had turned up unannounced and started stealing everyoneâ??s jobs, houses, and sense of â??identityâ?*, whatever that means.

Thatâ??s the [story](#) the pernicious far-right and their cheerleaders in certain corners of the corporate media were peddling, anyway. Itâ??s a [narrative](#) as old as it is ridiculous. Whenever things feel tough, blame the person who just arrived, the one who has less, the one whoâ??s already vulnerable.

Letâ??s be absolutely clear from the start: these were not protests or community unrest â?? they were [racist violence](#) stoked by white people who have spent years perfecting the art of distracting from the real issues.

Unsurprisingly, the [response](#) from those in power has been equal parts useless, hypocritical, and designed to avoid saying the blatantly obvious. The problem isnâ??t migration; itâ??s the [broken](#) system that lets the right [exploit fear](#) while doing less than nothing to help ordinary people.

The far-right would have you believe that [Belfast](#) is suddenly being swamped. They want you to believe migrants are getting priority housing, free everything, and living a life of luxury while local families sleep on the streets.

Itâ??s a great story if you donâ??t care about truth â?? and letâ??s be honest, the far-right couldnâ??t care less for the truth.

The white riots: based on supremacist lies

In reality (the bit the hateful knuckle-draggers don't bother with), Northern Ireland receives a [tiny fraction](#) of the UK's migrant population.

Housing is in crisis not because of new arrivals, but because successive governments - both Tory and the predecessors they love to pretend are different - have systematically underfunded [social housing](#) for as long as I have been alive.

Wages remain [stagnant](#) [public services](#) are still on their knees, and [young people](#) can't afford to put a roof over their heads. But why talk about that when you can point at someone with a different accent and yell "bloody foreigners, they're taking it all"?

It's almost impressive, in a depressing sort of way. The very [same people](#) who have spent years cheering on austerity, who told us there's no magic money tree when it came to [fair pay](#) for nurses or repairing [schools](#) suddenly find endless resources to complain about refugees. Suddenly, there is a pot of gold, but apparently it's all being handed out to people fleeing war and persecution.

Spoiler alert: it's not. It's still in the pockets of the billionaires and corporations who've been let off the hook for decades.

Ask yourself, who is really pulling the strings?

We need to be honest about who benefits from this chaos. The [far-right racist groups](#) organising these disturbances couldn't give a shit about Belfast, or about working-class people. They care about power. They care about [dividing communities](#) so that no one notices that the people at the top are still getting grotesquely richer while everyone else lives from one pay day to the next.

Who benefits?

These are the same people who, not that long ago, were [telling us](#) that the EU was the root of all evil. Now that we've left, and it didn't get rid of the Black and Brown faces like they hoped, they've had to find a new bogeyman - and migrants are the oldest, easiest target in the book.

It's a classic trick that the gullible, racist British people never fail to fall for. If you can make enough people angry at each other, they'll never get angry at the system that actually keeps them down.

Frustration is an understandable feeling. It's completely valid to be angry about the state of things. But anger should be directed at those who caused it - not at the person who arrived last week looking for safety. We are supposed to be better than that, right?

The Labour government's response has been a masterclass in double-speak and cowardice. [Ministers](#) have issued statements saying they condemn all violence - which sounds nice, if somewhat meaningless - but have been strangely quiet about the [racism](#) that fuels it.

Labour are terrified of saying the word "racist" out loud, in case they upset a handful of voters who've been fed [lie after lie](#) for years.

Theyâ??ll happily [use](#) migrants to fill labour shortages one minute, and then let them be [scapegoated](#) the next. Labour wants the [benefits](#) of migration â?? of which there are plenty â?? without having the courage to stand up for the people who move here.

There is a better way than riots â?? not that the racists realise

There is a better way. Justice and solidarity matter so much more than fear and division. We really donâ??t have to choose between supporting local people and supporting migrants.

In fact, we canâ??t have one without the other.

When we [fight](#) for decent housing for everyone, we fight for local families *and* for people whoâ??ve just arrived.

When we [demand](#) fair wages and good public services, weâ??re standing up for every worker, regardless of where they were born.

The far-right wants you to believe thereâ??s a limited amount of good things to go around â?? that if someone else gets a home or a job, you lose. Thatâ??s a filthy lie. The truth is, thereâ??s more than enough for everyone, itâ??s just been [hoarded](#) for far too long.

Honestly, migrants are not the problem. Migrants are our neighbours, our colleagues, our friends. Migrants bring culture, energy, and a willingness to [work hard](#) and they also bring [stories](#) of survival that should make us open our hearts, not close our doors.

Solidarity isnâ??t just a nice fluffy word but the most powerful weapon we have against those who want to keep us apart.

Remember, change does not happen by waiting for others to act. It begins when we stop looking away.

The [white riots](#) in Belfast were never really about migration. They were about fear [stoked](#) by those like Farage, Rupert Lowe and Tommy-ten-names who profit from division, enabled by a political class that would rather look the other way than challenge the status quo.

The far-rightâ??s fantasy of a pure society, untouched by change, is not just wrong â?? itâ??s utterly impossible. Migration is a natural part of our [history](#) and it will continue to be part of our future.

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By [Rachael Swindon](#)

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