

The « Solidarity offence », so named by militants, is a law that declares : "any person giving help on French territory to a person in an illegal situation will be persecuted or will have a prison sentence". In December 2012, the French government announced the suppression of this offence. What is the situation now ?

Law 622-1 still exists. It states that "Any person found helping, directly or indirectly, the illegal entrance, or movement or stay of illegal foreigners on French territory will be punished with a 5 year prison sentence and be susceptible to a fine of 30 000 euros". In reality, the new text only clarifies some exceptions :

- family relationships,
- aid given by volunteers who provide food, legal advice,

NB Sentences in quotes are translated from the law text. This article has been taken from Philippe Wannesson's "La Marmite aux Idées"

JUNGLE TOUR

LAURENCE ROUSSEL

The aim of the Jungle tour for volunteers of associations for migrants was to have an overall view of the situation, to go and see « in the field »; to support associations and « people passing through » and to inform the local population of this unchanging situation.

In 2011 and 2012 these tours visited Belgium where the situation is hardly better : poverty and isolation of migrant people, police harassment, the suspicion of local inhabitants...

This year, the organization staff dared to use the route that so many illegal migrants try to use : Calais-Dover-Canterbury. There occurred a meeting of associations from both side of the Channel.

This Jungle tour is more for an exchange of ideas than "supportive tourism". Evening debates, difficult and permanent questioning throughout the trip: what legitimacy of continuing the fight for migrants, staying in camps for just a few hours in order to observe... and leave ?

Nevertheless, hopes were raised when listening to the debate on the Touquet treaty, some smiles on migrants'

DIARY

Friday 18th and Saturday 19th October at "la Maison pour Tous" (MPT) in Calais : United People Festival

A festival for solidarity to introduce newcomers (exiled people) to long term residents (people of Calais). On the programme: concerts, photograph exhibitions, witnesses and conversation around a cup of tea. Everybody welcome!

PSM is an action group of associations taking care of migrants on the Channel and North Sea coasts.
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accommodation or medical care to foreign people. The purpose of which is to ensure decent living conditions, dignity or the physical wellbeing of the migrant. Such help must be free and without any direct or indirect compensation.

The law extends and clarifies the exceptions, but punishment remains the rule. As in the past, French or foreign volunteers helping migrants can be accused by the police of being involved in an illegal immigration circuit.

In addition, one should not forget that part of police repression on volunteers relies on other charges such as verbal assault, rebellion, violence towards those representing public authority. ■

faces watching a show put on by passing artists... And so it goes on, with other thoughts, actions and demands. ■



DUNKERQUE STAGE CLAIRE MILLOT

It was a wonderful idea. There were of course cyclists who participated in the Jungle Tour, some migrants on bicycles too, some association volunteers and 18 musicians from Lille dressed in black and orange for the occasion. The plan was to highlight the existence and difficulties of migrant people on the North coast on a sunny July afternoon. Unfortunately the weather was quite different : it was overcast and the north wind was freezing. Happily, the memories of a warm and friendly atmosphere remain.

Journal des JUNGLES

Quarterly and free newspaper. Please dispose of it properly.

Plate-forme de Services aux Migrants jdj@psmigrants.org



EDITORIAL

CLAUDIE RAULT-VERPREY

Between 200,000 and 400,000 ; 29,000-32,900-36,800 ; 38,803-41,619-45,654-46,467...

These figures represent the number of irregular migrants living in France in 2012, the number of irregular migrants (registered asylum-seekers or failed appeals) taken back to the national borders, the number of asylum seekers...

But, whoever you are, migrants, exiles, irregular citizens, asylum seekers, non assisted or deportable, the charity workers who are trying to help, consider migrants as not just an-

other number in the statistics, but what you really are : human beings.

This human point of view guides our actions.

It is an honour for us to help you through your migrant's way of life for a day, a month or why not several years, to make you visible whenever you are relegated to unhealthy places of the outskirts of towns. And it is an honour to be able to allow you to express yourselves in this newspaper.

Jdj N°2 will talk about accommodation. So, wherever you come from, nearby or far-away, start using your pen or a keyboard ! ■

THE SECOND MSP FORUM

MARTINE DEVRIES

Saturday 25th May, 70 volunteer workers from several associations and jungle places took part in the Second MSP Forum at Oye-Plage near Calais. We worked hard all day and the atmosphere was friendly. Everyone was happy to exchange and communicate about each other's experiences no matter what their task.

Everyone was worried about exiled people's difficulties.

The topic chosen for the day was expression, words and speeches. The verbal expression of volunteers trying to relate to others, the conditions in which exiled people live and what can be done, the discussions they exchange with migrants, and also the remarks they receive that are sometimes hurtful.

The speech of the sociologist Jessy Cormont allowed everyone to understand the great importance of words and expression and the necessity of improving the political arguments of our fight for the 2014 local elections. The day ended with the reading of abstracts from Haydée Saberan's book "Ceux qui passent" with music. The abstracts were ably read by Les Anonymes/Le Petit Théâtre Utile. ■

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« In Calais, a person is not innocent if he is coloured or an alien

Interview with NAN SUEL

I am 30, I come from the Sudan. I studied literature and foreign languages in Khartoum University. I was involved in a student organization that collected funds in order to help the poorest Darfour students. National Security services suspected us of being linked with political opposition groups. We were arrested and had to stop some of the association's activities.

I finished my studies in 2008, then went back to Darfour. There, whilst waiting for a job, I did some unpaid English teaching. With some friends, we created an association to make the public aware of the damage caused to society by the forced marriage of young girls, sexual mutilations and polygamy. We collaborated with important associations which were preparing a project for a law against all that. The security services suspected us of being in touch with rebel groups.

In 2010 I was arrested. To go free, I had to sign a form saying that I would stop all my associative activities. I became a French and English teacher. I had a normal life. I got married. I used to translate for foreign NGOs and also I translated CVs and applications letters for Sudanese people trying to get a job with these NGOs.

Why did you leave ?

Young people can't avoid being interested in political matters. That's all. We were in an unfair situation and we wanted to change things. Security services considered that we were too closely involved with foreign NGOs. I couldn't find a job anymore. I was under police surveillance. I phoned a friend in England. He told me to join him and then he could help me.

How did you get here ?

I have been very lucky. It took me only 24 hours by road to get Libya. The boat journey to Italy took 3 or 4 days. I was very lucky there too: nobody died. But, before getting in the boat and whilst in it I heard terrible stories and I was very afraid. It is a very trying situation.

I am well aware that my journey was very quick. It was due to good luck but also money. The more you pay, the quicker you get through.

In Italy, I was even luckier because my fingerprints weren't taken. Friends there told me to keep away from the police to avoid my prints been taken. Otherwise, I would have had to stay in Italy and life is too hard in that country. I stayed 5 days in Rome before leaving for Paris.

In Paris, I was welcomed by friends. I stayed 3 days and visited the town. I liked it very much. There weren't too

many surprises for me, as I had learned about Paris and France during my foreign civilization lessons. There exists a large Sudanese community in Paris.

Nevertheless, I don't want to settle in France. Asylum seeking takes too long here. I have met asylum seekers who live in the street. In England, asylum formalities are easier and I speak better English than French.

How do you see your future?

I left so that I could help my country. I would like to study human rights at university. I should like to work for the UN or for an NGO. I have experienced injustice in my own country and now I am living as a refugee. These experiences have helped me decide about my future.

What do you think of the way you are being treated here presently?

I hadn't expected a lack of human rights here. I thought they would have been respected. Before coming to this camp, I spent a few days in Calais in the "No Border" squat. There, I personally experienced what the police can do, I was shocked and revolted. Normally when a fight starts, the police break it up. Not in Calais. They let things get worse, and then they arrest everybody, even innocent people.

In Calais, a person is not innocent if he is coloured or alien.

In any other country of Northern or Eastern Europe I would have better understood such an attitude. But we are in France !

Both France and Great Britain have compelled African countries to respect human rights but they don't do it themselves. If one teaches somebody else, one should apply what one teaches.

Refugees are illegal citizens, I agree, but it's not through choice, they are not criminals ! They don't want to harm anybody, they are mere victims.

You should look at the state of the squats in Calais. They are in such poor condition that my friends would never believe me if I sent them a photo saying I was in France. You have to be very strong and convinced to resist. Some of us start to drink or to use drugs and I can understand that: how can we help our families who depend on us when we are living in the street ? ■

EXILED PEOPLE IN NORTH OF FRANCE, REFERENCES (2)

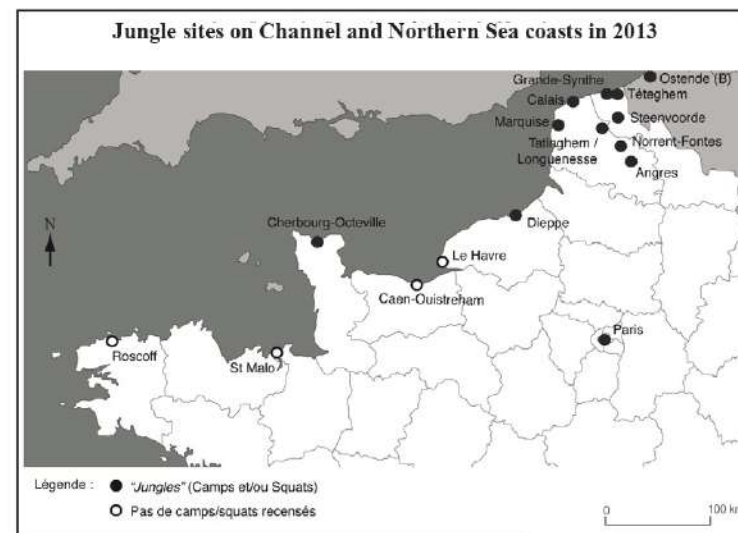
OLIVIER THOMAS

Since the late 80's, thousands of men, women and children passed through Channel ports to reach Britain or Ireland. The informal settlements that exist in the middle or the outskirts of northern towns (in forests, ditches...) are the direct consequence of this migration. These sites are transit areas where migrants wait before crossing the border. Among them, the luckiest stay a few days but most have to survive in such places for several weeks or even months.

For the public authorities, these places are the centre of the illegal migration problem. For more than 20 years, public authorities have destroyed camps and evacuated squatters as if this sort of action was the best solution for

this phenomenon. However, experience has shown that no sort of police action, even violent, has ever stopped the setting up of squats or informal camps. Police activity may force exiles to move elsewhere but never to disappear.

Different reasons are put forward to legalize actions of destruction or evacuation such as: insalubrity, public health or public security. Above all, authorities react through fear of a new Sangatte. The "draught theory" is the politician's main argument, widely put out by national and local media. Nevertheless, recent history proves this is unfounded. In Cherbourg, Norrent-Fontes ou Steenvoorde, as in all towns and villages concerned with illegal immigration, the permanence of a camp or squat does not attract large arrivals of migrants.



This map shows the local position of informal camps and squats occupied by migrants along the Channel and Northern sea coasts. It shows them at a single point in time but the situation is constantly changing. Some camps may appear or disappear, depending on police evacuations and on clandestine travellers' own desires. The exact locations of camps and squats are moving all the time.

In addition, the list of settlement areas for illegal migrants is incomplete. It results from the testimonies of volunteers and active associations members on the ground. There are probably squats in Calais, Dunkerque, Le Havre, Caen and Paris that are not registered here. Some temporary camps, sometimes built by migrants near the Channel ports such as Roscoff, Saint-Malo, Ouistreham and Zeebrugge (Belgium) are not included on the map. ■

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