

Concerning victimisation of the family of Sayed Alwadaei by the Bahraini authorities

The recent growth of labour movement support for political reform in Bahrain is well known within our branch. Indeed it is fair to say that UCU London Retired Members have played a significant role in facilitating that development, having originated the Bahrain motion passed at UCU May 2015 Congress. That motion in turn led to the inter-union joint statement on Bahrain published later the same year.

The purpose of this leaflet is to remind branch members of, or draw their attention to, links recently made available on our website concerning Early Day Motion (EDM) 509:

<http://ucu-retired-london.org.uk/early-day-motion-bahrain/>

The EDM addresses the victimisation, in Bahrain, of the family of Sayed Alwadaei by operatives of the absolute monarchy which reigns in that country. Sayed is a widely respected fighter for human rights in Bahrain. In the course of his British exile he has raised the profile of that struggle and the role of successive British governments in sustaining the Bahraini dictatorship. Specifically he has been a key link in our own evolving Bahrain solidarity work.

Support is building for the EDM, which at the time of writing has secured 35 signatures. Obviously, the public impact is likely to be greater if that number is raised significantly. We can all make a contribution by emailing our MP, through our website link, to urge their backing.

A fuller account of the events behind the EDM, with further informative links, is available at the website of the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, where Sayed serves as Director of Advocacy:

<http://birdbh.org/2017/12/bahrain-court-upheld-three-years-prison-sentence-against-uk-based-rights-activists-family-in-reprisal-case/>

There is also Sayed's own account published in *The Guardian*:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/oct/24/daughter-stateless-uk-bahrain-torture-human-rights>

Of course many injustices compete for our attention, especially with the *quick click* ethos of digital media. With that said, I ask you to consider prioritising the campaign in support of Sayed's family, not least because of the centrality of British state actions to perpetuation of the Bahrain nightmare. The following article, which quotes Sayed, provides revealing insight into the deadly role of our rulers:

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/jan/13/human-rights-abuses-bahrain-cast-shadow-over-2m-uk-aid-support>

There is clearly still plenty to do as this parliamentary exchange, initiated by Kate Osamor, MP for Edmonton, demonstrates

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has discussed with the authorities of the Kingdom of Bahrain, the trial of relatives of UK-based human rights activist Sayed Ahmed al-Wadaei.

Which received this reply from Alistair Burt

We have raised these cases at a senior level. I understand that these individuals were convicted and sentenced to three years in prison on charges of planting a hoax bomb in early 2017.

What then can we do? As a start, please call on your MP to support the EDM. Beyond that, spread the word among friends and contacts regarding what key sectors of the British ruling class and their state are doing in Bahrain. It is important that we find ways to build on our previous solidarity actions, as far as we are able. Practical support for the family of Sayed is another step along that road.



**London
Retired
Members**