The 74 illegals we should have sent back years ago

MILLIONS of pounds of taxpayers’ cash have been spent housing 74 illegal immigrants who should have been deported years ago.

Nineteen of the “limpets” have been in the UK for at least 10 years beyond their legal rights. One has been on the deportation list for 20 years.

Almost one in three is fighting to stay in the country through the courts, mainly on human rights grounds. Officials cannot remove a further 40 because they have no passports or refuse to reveal which country they were originally from.

Although the 74 have all been in detention for a minimum 24 months – at a cost of £6 million to the public purse – it is not clear if they have been in removal centres or prisons for the full length of their overstay in Britain. If they have, the cost of holding them could be as high as £22.5 million.

The alarming statistics were revealed by Immigration Minister Damian Green in Parliament this week. Five of the 74 have been removed since the figures were put together.

Critics called on the Government urgently to review the UK’s failing deportation system.

Conservative backbench MP Priti Patel, who unearthed the details, said: “The British public will be deeply concerned to see so many foreigners staying in Britain for these incredible lengths of time at huge cost to the taxpayer when they should be deported. Human rights laws need urgent reform.”

Jonathan Isaby, of the TaxPayers’ Alliance, said: “Taxpayers will be shocked to learn that the Government is spending tens of millions of their money each year simply to keep people in removal centres who should have been deported years ago. Cases should be processed quickly – within days or weeks, certainly not months and years. ‘The system is clearly failing and ministers should urgently review its operation.”

The row comes just a month after Tory Justice Minister Ken Clarke signalled he was poised to use Britain’s stint as chairman of the Council of Europe to reform the role of the European Court of Human Rights.

In November he said overhauling the Strasbourg court would end the situation where “everybody who’s just lost his arguments about deportation should be able to go there and get in the queue, wait a few years to get it all reheard again when he’s lost the argument three times already”.

The figures released by Mr Green detailed everyone in the country three years or longer beyond their original deportation date.

They show that 13 have been here five years longer than they should. Another 10 should have left eight years ago. A further 19 have been here longer than a decade, including two who should have been booted out 17 years before and one 20 years ago.

Mr Green also revealed it costs up to £110 per day on average to detain someone at a removal centre. The combined days spent in the country by the 74 listed people works out at 204,400. The cost of keeping them in a UK Border Agency detention centre all that time would be £22,484,000.

A UK Border Agency spokesman said last night: “Detention is a necessary part of the process. We always seek to remove as quickly as possible but if detainees give false or incomplete information it delays their return and extends their detention.”

By Anil Dawar

FEW IMMIGRANTS HERE THAN BRITONS THINK

MOST Britons believe immigration is a “problem”, with foreigners taking jobs that should go to UK nationals. But most people also think there are more immigrants in the UK than there actually are, a report revealed yesterday. Britons estimate that immigrants account for 31.8 per cent of the population – but just 11.3 per cent are actually foreign-born.

The Transatlantic Trends: Immigration survey found 68 per cent in the UK thought immigration more of a problem than an opportunity, compared with 53 per cent in the US and a European average of 52 per cent. And 58 per cent of Britons believe immigrants take jobs from UK workers, against 57 per cent in the US, 36 per cent in Spain, 30 per cent in Italy, 25 per cent in France and 23 per cent in Germany.
Court to rule on solar panel subsidies

CONTROVERSIAL plans to slash financial incentives for installing solar panels must be subject to a court challenge, a judge ordered yesterday.

Proposals to cut solar subsidies by more than half had put jobs in jeopardy, said Mr Justice Mitting in the High Court as he ordered the case to take place next week as a matter of urgency.

The Government plans to slash payments made to households and communities which generate green electricity through solar panels on any installations completed after Monday, December 12.

Charity Friends of the Earth and two London-based solar firms, Solarcentury and HomeSun, claimed yesterday the deadline is flawed because it comes two weeks before a statutory consultation into the cuts is due to be finished.

Friends of the Earth executive director Andy Atkins said: “We believe Government plans to abruptly slash solar subsidies are not only unfair, but illegal. These proposals have already had a disastrous impact.

“Fledgling clean businesses have had the rug pulled from under their feet and a shadow hangs over thousands of jobs.”

“Ministers must change direction and put the solar industry at the forefront of building a clean, safe future.”

By David Jarvis

Abandoned

The charity says the move could cost tens of thousands of jobs and bankrupt businesses and has already led to unfinished or planned projects being abandoned.

As protesters demonstrated against the cutback outside the court in London yesterday, Mr Justice Mitting said the application for a judicial review against Energy Secretary Chris Huhne should be heard next Tuesday and Wednesday because an immediate “economic risk” had been created “for those who are installing solar panels after December 12”.

A recent report commissioned by Friends of the Earth and an alliance of solar firms and consumer and environmental organisations estimated the cuts could cost up to 29,000 jobs and lose the Treasury up to £230m a year in tax income.

Last week construction firm Carillion warned 4,500 workers that their jobs are at risk as a result of the slashed subsidy.

Solarcentury’s company secretary John Faulks said: “The legal challenge is only part of the wider campaign to get the Government to recognise the strategic value of solar energy and build a successful industry. A cut of over 50 per cent that occurred in just six weeks and before the end of a consultation period is cynical and irrational.”

A Department of Energy spokeswoman said it would be defending the cut.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

‘They should start by downgrading the UK, which has a bigger deficit, as much debt, more inflation, weaker growth and where bank lending is collapsing’

CHRISTIAN NOYER, THE GOVERNOR OF THE BANK OF FRANCE, ESCALATES THE FINANCIAL WAR OF WORDS WITH BRITAIN
Blighty will yet be free of EU chains

WHAT a stupid, near-hysterical furor has been generated by David Cameron’s decision in Brussels to finally stop the sell-out of British interests. He backed off on repatriation of sovereign powers (the original reason for being there, or so many thought) and objected only to a specific and targeted Franco-German attack on a vital British asset, our globe-dominating financial services industry.

In the Commons the impossibly daft young Ed Miliband refused repeatedly to say whether he would have agreed to it. Blair certainly would. Miliband just rambled on about the UK having “no voice” in Europe. Alas, he is years behind the curve. Franco-Germany has relentlessly overruled the “British voice” since Maastricht 20 years ago. It is all down to something called qualified majority vote.

QMV was introduced because, as the EU grew in number, it became impossible to legislate on the basis of unanimity. So each member country was given a number of votes in the Euro Council depending on size by population. From the UK, no objection to democracy. But there was one major danger.

If any one, two or three (in this case two) nations could lock themselves in an unbreakable axis and then recruit enough others to their unquestioning obedience, that duumvirate could create a permanent voting majority bloc. It could then control all Europe. That is exactly what France and Germany have done, embodying one iron-clad French demand: exclude Britain.

TANKS in large part to the mediocrity of our own Foreign Office over the years, Franco-Germany has succeeded in achieving an ambition they have both shared, usually in opposition to each other, for hundreds of years. Now, united, they have it at last. To dominate Europe.

It is tempting for London to say: game, set and match. The Left, the FO, half the media, the BBC, the civil service and the Lib Dems say: no, let us go on appealing and capitalizing so we will have “influence” — that myth so pleasing to no-hopers because influence stems only from strength and never from weakness.

So, for those of us with no taste for British self-abasement, is all lost? Not at all. For one thing, what came out of Brussels was not a new treaty but the proposal for a new treaty. There is a procedural chasm between the strutting Sarkozy and a treaty signed and ratified by 26 EU nations. That means 26 parliaments, 26 heads of state. Now will the proud Dunes, Swedes, Pims and Poles take to being told the wonderful news that, in future, their budgets will have to be read and approved by Berlin first? I foresee roaring objections to this. How will they like being told that Germany will now have to agree any new taxes in their countries because they were responsible for wrecking the euro when they weren’t? And what about the euro? If Greece defaults in February the dominoes start to fall. To save the euro after that will need a minimum of €600 billion by June. The Central Bank has 200. Who is going to fork out the other 400? No one is contributing a single euro penny, including France and Germany. Already Brazil, China, India and South Africa have said: “Dream on.” The US has humungous debts of her own and a forthcoming presidential election.

Sarkozy may well fall in the French election next spring. His beloved new treaty will take many months more than that, including one or two referendums (but not here... yet). So what will happen until the Queen’s diamond jubilee? Old Macmillan got it right. “Events, dear boy, events.”

And Cromwell: “Put your trust in God and keep your powder dry.” Blighty is not finished yet. Sarko. Not by a long chalk.
Our country will rise again freed from yoke of Europe

I WISH politicians would stop trying to convince us that we cannot survive outside the EU. We do not believe them.

It is their continued and misguided support for the EU that is alienating the public from the political classes who believe we are incapable of understanding the current situation.

The UK survived alone for centuries and can achieve great things again if freed from the yoke of Europe.

The British people will fight tooth and nail to get this country back on its feet outside of Europe just to prove that we can. The saying ‘Give us the tools and we will finish the job’ can be adjusted to ‘Give us the freedom and the UK will rise again’.

J Hill, Spalding, Lincs

Letter of the day

Britain’s trade will flourish if we quit the EU

MEMBERSHIP of the EU is not good for Britain, never has been nor ever will be (“We must pay £30bn to bail out the euro”, December 15).

The problem with modern politicians is that they are all too young to remember how much we achieved before the Seventies, when we embarked on membership that has blighted our national wellbeing.

Those over the age of 50 will know it was not such a long time ago that Britain was Great and not a subjugated enclave of Germany and France.

Scaremongers who claim our trading position would suffer should we withdraw from this mess need to look at the open lucrative markets outside the EU.

The world is crying out for British innovation, inventiveness and quality. Forty per cent of exports heading to Europe still leaves 60 per cent outside Europe.

I fully support efforts by the Daily Express to force a long-overdue referendum. Keep up the good work.

P Kirk, Waterloo, Hants

EXPORTS: Lucrative markets exist outside Europe
France: Strip UK of its credit rating

By Macer Hall Political Editor

FRANCE angrily demanded that Britain be stripped of its AAA credit rating as the bitter row over the euro crisis intensified yesterday.

But as the French launched their attack, a bid to build a new EU economic bloc without the UK looked to be unravelling as the Hungarian and Czech governments expressed doubts about closer eurozone union.

In high diplomacy outbursts, both the French Prime Minister and the governor of the Bank of France called on credit-rating agencies to reconsider the UK’s top rating.

The onslaught was spearheaded by bank chief Christian Noyer in reaction to growing speculation that France could lose its own prized AAA credit rating.

Ratings agencies Standard & Poor’s and Moody’s have threatened to lower it by two points amid concerns about the exposure of French banks to eurozone debt.

“A downgrade doesn’t strike me as justified based on economic fundamentals,” said Mr Noyer.

“If it is, they should start by downgrading the UK, which has a bigger deficit, as much debt, more inflation, weaker growth and where bank lending is collapsing.”

Later, French Prime Minister Francois Fillon conceded that his country was facing the European currency first and foremost because it was very indebted.

He added: “But we’re not the only ones. Our British friends have a higher deficit and more debt, and I would say that the ratings agencies have not yet noted that.”

A credit downgrade could have a potentially devastating impact on the cost of borrowing in the UK.

It could mean rapid rises in interest rates, adding crippling extra costs on mortgages and business loans.

But the provocative talk from France was dismissed at Westminster as sour grapes over David Cameron’s veto on EU treaty changes.

Tory MP Philip Hollobone said: “It sounds like the French are bad losers. They are looking for someone to blame when the root of the problem lies in the single currency and their own economy.”

The war of words came as International Monetary Fund head Christine Lagarde repeated her call for action.

She said: “The world economic outlook at the moment is not particularly rosy. It is quite gloomy. There is no economy in the world that will be immune to the crisis not only unfolding but escalating.”

It is not a crisis that will be resolved by one group of countries taking action. It is going to be resolved by all countries taking action.”

Meanwhile a new bombshell hit the coalition last night amid claims that Nick Clegg and senior Liberal Democrats hope to persuade business leaders to undermine David Cameron’s stand against a new EU treaty.

It has been alleged that the bosses of blue chip companies have been asked to sign up to a letter demanding that the Government “re-engages”, with Brussels.

The claims are detailed in a leaked email thought to have been circulated by City lobbyist Roland Rudd after a meeting with Mr Clegg, Vince Cable, Danny Alexander and Chris Huhne.

The email touts for signatures for a letter from business leaders backing the Deputy Prime Minister.

Euro recession fears

THE euro came under pressure again yesterday as worries about eurozone debt levels persisted. It fell against the Swiss franc and the Japanese yen but edged up against the dollar and the pound after heavy falls earlier in the week.

“The outlook for the euro remains dark with the unravelling of the treaty last week and the overall downside risks to global growth,” said Paul Robson, currency strategist at RBS Global Banking.

Data published yesterday showed that the eurozone is heading into recession, though the pace of decline was not as bad as expected.

The Purchasing Managers’ Index by researchers Markit, based on responses from thousands of firms, showed a majority of companies reporting contraction.

A separate study by Ernst & Young predicted a bleak winter for the eurozone and said a mild recession was likely in the first half of 2012 with growth of just 0.1 per cent for the whole year.

There was some relief on financial markets at the successful sale of Spanish government bonds in which the price of its debt came down. That followed Wednesday’s auction of Italian debt which saw its cost rise to record levels.

Cameron is winning support

Bank chief Christian Noyer

Has the euro been an utter disaster?

YES: 0901 030 8346
NO: 0901 030 8347
Yes text DXFRIES to 80088
No text DXFRINO to 80088

Calls cost 26p from a BT landline.
Lines close at midnight tonight. Texts cost 26p plus network operator rates