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## Editorial

Co-ordinated, far-right violence was unleashed on British streets in August 2024. Its targets included hotels accommodating asylum applicants and refugees, mosques, and immigration and asylum advice services and solicitors' firms. The chants and violence made no distinction between regular migration, irregular migration, and the settled population of British Muslims, whose communities in the UK have historic roots. The motivations for violence were avowedly racist, xenophobic, and Islamophobic.

The use of rhetoric, law, and legal practices which have an Othering effect on one group, frequently bleeds into the targeting of others. This was one of the key lessons of the Windrush scandal and is highlighted by Luke de Noronha's academic writing about deportation, racialisation, and illegalisation. These are not the only examples. It's not that these lessons haven't been learnt, it's that they appear to have been strategically weaponised by those who hide behind 'just asking questions'.

Plans circulating online to target violence against those providing immigration and asylum law advice and representation were, thankfully, countered effectively by the police response and the presence in many places of hundreds of anti-racism demonstrators. The drip-drip of rhetorical attacks against the legal profession by British politicians had always been accompanied by unheeded warnings that it could ignite violence against its targets. The Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA) and Law Society have been prominent in the media making this argument. The editors are proud of the association between ILPA and the Journal of Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Law. We value beyond measure the contribution of practitioners to the Journal, especially those who contribute to its editorial board, but also those who write and peer review. They are in many ways the life blood of the Journal and make it such a vibrant interface between academia and practice.

There is tentative optimism that evidence-based approaches to asylum and immigration law and policy may now replace the performative cruelty of the outgoing government. The closure of the Bibby Stockholm barge has been announced, the Rwanda scheme publicly shelved, devastating plans to further increase the minimum income requirement for partner visas have been paused, and questions about the reliance of the engineering and IT sectors on migrant workers have been sent to the Migration Advisory Committee to investigate. This apparent willingness for government to again listen to experts is encouraging. The continued use of harmful rhetoric surrounding channel crossings, the stepping up of discriminatory

enforcement action and deportation, and the recommissioning of two detention centres are less so.

The new Labour government will also inevitably have its share of legal setbacks in UK courts and at Strasbourg, much of which will be driven by civil society, ILPA members, and the same legal representatives singled out for abuse by the far right. Whether it chooses to lash out, or engage constructively with the legal profession, will be one of the key tests as to whether or not it is willing to deliver the return to grown-up politics that it sought to project in its election campaign.