



Standing on the Shoulders of Fascism
from immigration control to the strong state
Steve Cohen

The state is always authoritarian – it is just that the forms of authority change. But since New Labour came to power in 1997 the state apparatus has been significantly strengthened. Identity cards, the so-called anti-terrorist legislation and the development of Anti Social Behaviour Orders as a form of social control are all manifestations of the move to a strong state. And this has been accompanied by a plethora of further immigration restrictions – of which the 2006 Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act is the latest instance.

Steve Cohen argues that there is a linear ideological and political connection between a century of immigration controls and the formation of the Blairite strong state, and that the popular acceptance of the brutality and repression of immigration controls has been part of the softening up process that enables other authoritarian legislation to be enacted. But he goes beyond this equation to draw another: between immigration controls and fascist activity. He shows how immigration controls are unique in that at two critical periods (controls against Jews and then against black people) it was organised fascism that forced the law into being.

New pieces are interspersed with a few old – and hard to find – essays. Together they offer a critical examination of the history, law and politics of immigration controls – including resistance to controls – in the UK and internationally today.

Steve Cohen is an immigration lawyer and a long time activist against immigration control. This worthy successor to his acclaimed *No One is Illegal* is essential reading for lawyers and others working in immigration.

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