Rudd tells MPs: we were wrong over Windrush citizens
documenting a growing scandal over the past five months affecting an unknown number of people who arrived legally in the Caribbean as children (often on parents’ or siblings’ passports) but never formally naturalised or applied for a British passport.

Because new immigration rules mean individuals are increasingly required to show documents proving to be in the UK before they can take up work, rent properties, access benefits, open a bank account, or travel, many have lost their jobs or been made homeless or refused urgent healthcare. Some have been denied immigration removal centres or threatened with deportation.

Rudd’s announcement came after the immigration minister Caroline Nokes, earlier appeared to suggest people had been deported in error back to countries they left as children. Rudd said she was unable to confirm whether this was the case and had asked Caribbean diplomats whether they were aware of mistreated deportees.

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So far this year, some 13,000 people have been sent a letter to May, expressing concern about the incorrect classification of many Commonwealth-born, long-term British as “illegal immigrants” and calling on her to find a swift resolution of this growing crisis.

The communities secretary, Sajid Javid, was “deeply concerned” about the Windrush scandal, adding “this should not happen to people who have been longstanding pillars of our community.”

Rudd’s announcement came in response to an urgent question called by Labour’s David Lammy, who said it was “inhumane and cruel” for so many in the Windrush generation “to have suffered this way.”

“Today is a day of national shame and it has come about because of a hostile environment policy that was begun under her prime minister. Let us call it as it is. If you lay down with dogs, you get fleas, and that is what has happened in this far-right rhetoric in this country,” he said.

The shadow home secretary, Diane Abbott, praised sceptics who wanted to know whether the new Home Office team would really resolve the problems facing hundreds of people. “How much confidence can people have in the special team when people with lawyers have been unable to resolve their situations?” she asked.

Sathir Singh, CEO of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, welcomed the new team. “The Home Office must commit to a system which treats affected people with fairness, humanity and flexibility,” he added.

“We’ve witnessed the culmination of years of government policy explicitly designed to turn us into a hostile society and which have made the Home Office an island of inhumane and incompetence,” he said.

How the story unfolded, pages 6-7 — Journal David Harewood Page 4 —

Refugee turned volunteer among first Obama fellows

The Obama Foundation has announced the first 20 Obama fellows, including two from the UK, who will take part in a two-year residential programme aimed at bringing together leaders who are “creating transformative change on many of the world’s most pressing problems”.

The announcement, made via the Guardian, is the latest in a string of Barack Obama’s policies after he stepped down as president last month, as he aspired to create a presidential memoir. Obama has also written a presidential memoir.

The Foundation will facilitate hands-on training, leadership development, coaching and personalised plans and strategies to help these leaders scale up the work they have already started.

One of the fellows is Larashal Halaimzai, who came to Britain as a refugee from Afghanistan aged 11. After training in psychotherapy, she visited the Calais refugee camp and was struck by the lack of volunteers who could speak refugees’ languages.

She is the co-founder of the Refugee Trauma Initiative (RTI), which helps psychological help to refugees traumatised by war, torture and displacement.

The Obamas had been a personal inspiration, she recalled. “When he was elected it was the first time I felt, as a minority in the UK, that I could speak up, expressed because the president had been set. Their commitment to empowering people and changing things through a creative way is great.

The foundation said selection weighed factors such as geographic diversity, commitment to the Foundation’s work and existing work.

They also included Alex Smith, who is founder of North London Cares, a group that helps people from Afghanistan who have been 입안 by connecting elderly people and young professionals.

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