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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

**THE IMPACT OF THE STRUGGLE FOR RACIAL EQUALITY IN THE
UNITED STATES ON BRITISH RACIALISED RELATIONS FROM 1958 TO
1968**

by Nuala Sanderson

Doctoral Thesis
Department of History

October, 1999

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON
ABSTRACT
 FACULTY OF ARTS
 HISTORY
Doctor of Philosophy

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During the late 1950s and the 1960s America faced a high level of racial tension. At the same time Britain imposed racially discriminatory immigration controls and passed legislation to outlaw racial discrimination. This thesis asks to what extent the events in the United States had an impact on the response of British institutions to the development of a multi-racial society and increased rate of non-white immigration during these crucial years between the 1958 race riots to the Kenyan Asian crisis.

The first part of the thesis examines the background to British perceptions about both the 'special relationship' with the United States and images of African Americans in the period prior to the years under review. It explores the ways in which the white British population was more informed about African Americans than the inhabitants of the colonies, and subsequently the Commonwealth.

The following section examines ways in which the press and government drew on the activities of the Civil Rights Movement and the rise of Black Power in the United States during the 1960s to illustrate and support their arguments. It notes the high level of interest in Britain in American news and the increasing sense of concern within press reports and debates in the House that Britain was heading for an American style racial conflict.

The third part of the thesis examines four sections of the British population which could be said to have a special interest in this issue: the non-white immigrants themselves; anti-immigrants groups; the religious denominations and British Jews; and organisations which sought to promote racial harmony. The study examines not only the response of these sections of the population to American racial trouble but the ways in which their activities had an impact on British perceptions. As the most concerned sections of the population, their activities were those most frequently reported by the press.

In varying degrees, the responses of these sections of the population to the issues of immigration and racial discrimination reflected a growing concern that Britain was following the United States towards racial conflict. This perception was fed by both the press and government action and in turn had an impact on both public opinion and politicians and created a national mood in which debate over these related issues was coloured by the increasingly tense racial situation in the United States. 1967 and 1968 were the years in which this national perception was at its height and witnessed the passage of the Immigration Bill which excluded the entry of Kenyan Asians and the extension of Race Relations legislation. This thesis traces the development of this national mood, the significance of which has previously been underestimated.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study has only been possible because many people were kind enough to devote their time and share both information and ideas with the writer. I would particularly like to thank those who allowed me to interview them and answered all my questions with patience and interest. Information for some of the aspects of this work was hard to obtain and consequently I am particularly grateful to Dr. Ranjana Ash and Selma James who shared their memories of CARD with me. I am also grateful to Bishop Wilfred Wood, Dr. A. Sivanandan and all the staff at the IRR for their interest and time.

My gratitude also goes to Madge Dresser at the University of the West of England, Bristol, and Paul Stephenson, Guy Reid Bailey and Roy Hackett who gave me a greater understanding of the Bristol bus boycott and to Trevor Carter, Roy Sawh and David Udo who shared their memories of the more militant groups during the 1960s with me. My thanks are due to Professor Brian Klug, Aubrey Rose and Pansy Jeffries for their kindness and to Shirley Joshi at the University of Central England and the staff at the Udham Welfare Centre, Birmingham for their help in increasing my knowledge and understanding of CCARD. I owe a further debt to Dr. Edie Friedman and to Godfrey Hodgson and Charles Wheeler for sharing their memories of working as press correspondents in the United States during the period under review.

For academic support my thanks go to Marika Sherwood at the Institute of Contemporary History, to Tariq Modood of the Policy Studies Institute and to Brian Ward of Newcastle University. I also wish to thank Tony Kushner who advised me and supervised my thesis for one year and my special thanks go to John Oldfield on whose advice and encouragement I relied throughout this research.

Finally my thanks go to my husband Hugh and my family and to friends, Chris and Margaret, for their constant support and encouragement.

PART I - Introduction

This thesis examines to what extent and in which ways the developing racial struggle in the United States had an impact on the development of racialised relations in Britain during the late 1950s and the 1960s. It concentrates on two themes within British society. The first is the historic link between Britain and the United States, the 'special relationship'. The second is British attitudes to minorities. It focuses, in particular, on the challenge posed by the increase in immigration from the Caribbean, India and Pakistan during the late 1950s and the 1960s. Throughout this period the national debate on the possible responses to this new wave of immigration was set against news concerning the struggle for racial equality in America. At the same time Britain was faced with the problems posed by its reduced position in terms of international status. It was also a period in which Britain experienced a wave of American cultural importation.

Much research has been carried out on the 'special relationship' in general and there are many works dealing with both racialised relations in Britain and in the United States. Few examinations of domestic racialised relations appeared in Britain before the 1950s. Two early studies were Michael Banton's *The Coloured Quarter*¹ published in 1955 and the work of Ruth Glass under the title *Newcomers*² which was published in 1960. The first of these two works was an examination of Stepney and concentrated on this narrow area. The latter took a wider focus and examined not just the nature of the new immigrants but the attitudes of the hosts. Glass, through a comparison with the United States, argued that the situation was still much more fluid in Britain and marked by muddle, confusion and insecurity rather than the inflexible prejudice that prevailed in America. Like Banton, the conclusions of Glass were that there existed the possibility that these new immigrants could be accepted without any social disturbance but that future historians would judge Britain on the way in which it faced this challenge.

During the mid-sixties Paul Foot produced his highly readable work on the political response to New Commonwealth immigration, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*³ which gave an account of the introduction of the first immigration controls and the political debate surrounding the issue of racial discrimination legislation. The major study commissioned by the Institute of Race Relations and under the editorship of E.J.B. Rose, *Colour and Citizenship: A Report on Race Relations*⁴ went further and covered the 1968 legislation and highlighted the diversity of the New Commonwealth immigrants. In the same year, De Witt John⁵ produced his sociological study of the development of Indian Workers' Associations which provided further valuable information and again served to draw attention to the existence of different groups within these immigrants.

Works produced in the early 1970s reinforced the idea that the racial struggle in the United States had an impact on British responses to non-white immigration. The first of these

was a history of the Campaign for Racial Discrimination (CARD) produced by Ben Heineman in 1971⁶. Heineman was an American and possibly over-stressed the impact of the United States on the development and progress of CARD but his thoughts were supported by the work of Dilip Hiro⁷ in the same year who included a chapter under the title "Blacks Look West" which examined the impact of the rise of black power in America on British blacks. Although this work covered the political and social development of racialised relations in Britain during the 1950s and 1960s, his examination of transatlantic influences was restricted to the responses of immigrants from the Caribbean. Within these responses, however, he found that the struggle in the United States was a source of inspiration. This sense was supported by A. Sivanandan writing in the early 1980s in a chapter entitled, "From Resistance to Rebellion"⁸ and in the first hand impressions of Edward Scobie in his work, *Black Britannia - History of Blacks in Britain*⁹ in which he argued in a chapter entitled, "Black Power Reaches Britain" that the American struggle had an impact on non-white immigrants in Britain.

Studies during the 1980s have widened the area of research. The historian, Peter Fryer¹⁰ demonstrated that the impression that black Britons have only lived in the country since the 1950s was far from the truth and has shown in considerable detail that there have been black communities in Britain for a much longer period. In addition, the work of Colin Holmes¹¹ provided a clear overview of migration to Britain and Robert Miles¹² drew attention to the experiences of the various non-black migrants. Attention has also been drawn to the tradition of intolerance towards religious minorities, such as the Jews, by Tony Kushner and Kenneth Lunn¹³. The work of social scientists like Carter, Joshi and Harris¹⁴, with the benefit of previously unavailable government records, has demonstrated that the intention to limit non-white immigration had been part of government thinking within both the major parties since the war. In this way, they have challenged the idea that the events of the late 1950s and 1960s encouraged the Conservatives to bring in controls and frightened the Labour government into a reversal of policy. The work of Ben Tovim and John Gabriel¹⁵ and that of Anne Dummett¹⁶ shifted the focus from black and Asian immigrants toward British society in seeking an explanation for racism and Paul Rich¹⁷ examined the history of the development of imperialist and racial ideas in Britain. Thus by the end of the 1980s the debate around 'race relations' in Britain had shifted from one which focused on the arrival of New Commonwealth immigrants in the post-war period for an explanation of racism in Britain and recognised that tensions within black/white relations had a longer history and, indeed, were not confined to colour.

During the 1990s the debate has widened even further. Kathleen Paul in *Whitewashing Britain*¹⁸ explored the experiences of other groups of immigrants demonstrating that a non-white skin is not the only trigger for a racist response and used this historical perspective to illumine attitudes to more recent events such as the Falklands War and the handover of Hong Kong to the Chinese Republic. Robert Miles in *Racism after 'race relations'*¹⁹ also explored the ways in which the notion of race has informed responses to

earlier groups and demonstrated that they were not always negative and suggested that, although the colonial experience was important in these responses, the main source lay in the development of the nation state and has significance for current debates on the nature of national identity, the maintenance of a sense of national culture in this time of devolution and the increasingly divisive debate over England's role in Europe.

In the light of this literature it is now recognised that 'race relations' did not suddenly appear on the British scene during the 1950s and 1960s but that racial ideas have long been part of British culture. Most studies, however, have recognised the significance of the post-war period on this issue and the period between the mid fifties to late sixties as crucial because of the intense political activity it created, witnessing not just three pieces of control legislation but also two important attempts towards an integrationist strategy. As Sagar put it, "Whilst there is considerable controversy among liberal, radical and conservative writers over the merits of the race strategy pursued by the 1964-70 Labour administration, there is widespread agreement that key elements of political discourse about race were forged during this era."²⁰ Furthermore, it has often been commented that during this period there existed a perception that parallels could be drawn between Britain and the United States and lessons learnt (Miles 1993:15, Hiro 1991:218). In order to test how widely this notion was held, this thesis will examine responses in the press reports, the government debates and other interested groups, such as the non-white immigrants themselves, racist organisations, liberal and religious bodies. In this way, this study seeks to throw new light on the impact that the struggle for racial equality in the United States had on British institutions and examine ways in which these institutions responded to that impact in order to determine whether the situation in America contributed to the political responses.

The first chapter takes a broadly chronological view and examines British perceptions of the United States and the American people. Taking account of the relationship between the two countries on a diplomatic and political level, it explores the ways in which the British people saw the Americans and the channels through which information about American society arrived in Britain. Although the focus is on Americans generally, it pays particular attention to British perceptions with regard to African Americans and the post-Second World War issue of American cultural importation. It looks in greater detail at experiences during the war when the British were confronted for the first time with large numbers of United States citizens on British soil and learnt at first hand about the American system of segregation. This forms a background for the examination of the issue during the late 1950s and the 1960s.

Part II is an examination of the debate about racialised relations in Britain within the establishment. The first chapter explores the debate in the press, paying special attention to references to events in the United States which drew parallels with the developing situation in Britain and stories related to Britain which referred to America. In the second chapter debates within Parliament and at a party political level are examined with regard to possible responses

to the arrival of large numbers of non-white immigrants. The discussion centred on the imposition of immigration control legislation and the increasing concern that action should be taken to outlaw racial discrimination. These debates are assessed for evidence that an awareness of the American struggle had an impact on the development of policies.

The third part of the thesis examines responses to the developing racial struggle in the United States amongst four main sections of the British population who might have been expected to take a special interest in the issue. The first group is the new immigrants themselves and, towards the end of the decade, their offspring who were either born in Britain or had at least been raised there. The second section of the population centres on those that expressed racist views and fought against the development of a multi-racial society in Britain. The following chapter looks at the responses of religious bodies, seeking to assess the extent to which they took an interest in the issue of racial equality in Britain and whether their responses were coloured by the news from America. Although it could be argued that the Church of England might be seen as part of the establishment, it seemed logical for this body to be included with an examination of religious organisations in general. The final piece examines the attitude of liberal bodies, both white and multi-racial, which sought to press for an integrationist approach. The conclusion to the thesis then draws these various threads together to assess to what extent the increasingly dramatic racial struggle in the United States impacted on the development of racialised relations in Britain at these various levels.

Before continuing with the body of this work it is necessary to define the terms to be used. It is important in a study of this nature to be clear about what is being discussed and, therefore, within this thesis the term 'racialised relations' will be employed rather than the term 'race relations'. For as Stephen Small has argued: "The problem with a focus on 'race' and 'race relations' is that it assumes that 'races' exist and seeks to understand relations between them presuming what needs to be proven...But in fact, the problem is not 'race' but 'racisms', not relations between 'races' but relations which have been racialised, not the physical attributes of Blacks or their presumed inferiority, but the motivations of non-Blacks, and the obstacles that they impose."²¹ The term 'black' in this study will refer to those with African ancestry whereas those immigrants that came to Britain from India and Pakistan will be referred to either by their national origins or by the term 'Asians'. This will include those of Asian descent who came by way of the Caribbean or Africa. During this period the term 'black' came to be seen as a political label which implied a commitment to the struggle for equal treatment and was consciously adopted by some Asian immigrants. These were, however, a minority. Members of all these groups faced racialised discrimination, prejudice and were affected in Britain by immigration controls based on colour. In this way they were subject, regardless of the differences between them, to British racialised relations.

Chapter 1 - Transatlantic Perceptions.

Much has already been written on the diplomatic and political aspects of the Anglo-American 'special relationship'.²² It is not really the focus of this study which concentrates rather on British popular perceptions of Americans with particular reference to African Americans and American attitudes to racialised relationships. The notion of a 'special relationship', however, coloured general British perceptions and to some extent had an impact on their view of the position of African Americans. This relationship had existed since the time English settlers first stepped foot on American soil but the degree to which it was seen as 'special' has varied over time and between the two countries and even between individuals. The balance in this relationship during the twentieth century has seen a complete reversal. It has shifted from one in which the British was the dominant nation to one in which the United States has become the more powerful.

i. The 1920s and 1930s

During this period American interest in British news was far greater than vice versa. As David Reynolds found, "It was estimated that the New York Times, for instance, devoted nearly 20 percent of its foreign new coverage to Britain in the period 1933-41, double that allocated by its London namesake to America in 1936-39 and nearly four times as much as in 1939-41."²³ Images of the British would probably have been more positive amongst those who saw themselves as being of British stock. By the time of the Second World War some 25 million Americans or about one-sixth of the American population identified themselves as having a "British heritage".²⁴ Hyphenated Americans, on the other hand, largely identified Britain with the 'Anglo-American' elite and thus with their own struggle for acceptance. The fact that the term Anglo-American was not used as a descriptive term demonstrates that this section of the population was widely assumed to be the original Americans and needed no further clarification.

The British appear to have been less well informed about Americans at this time. According to a poll in 1942, sixty-five percent of Britons did not know any Americans personally as opposed to only 32 percent of Americans who replied "no" when asked if they knew any English people well.²⁵ Despite this a large proportion of respondents to the Mass Observation (M-O) Directive on 'Attitudes to Race' in 1939 gave America as their first, or at least second, choice when asked to list the countries with which they would prefer to collaborate.²⁶ This could perhaps be accounted for by the high esteem with which President Roosevelt was held in Britain or a consideration that a shared language would ease communication in any collaboration. These responses contrast with another survey carried out in 1940 which found the United States listed as one of the least friendly nations.²⁷ The reason

for this response was probably due to the widely held British view that the Americans, through their reluctance to come to British aid, were failing their greatest ally. The shared language and historic links between the two countries created a sense in Britain that Americans were in some way 'related'. This perception naturally was not shared by large numbers of American citizens who had moved to the United States from southern or eastern Europe.

A major source of information about Americans at this time came from the movies. In these days with no television, video or cable, people went to the pictures. Twenty-three million cinema tickets were sold every week and the majority of the films viewed were American. In an attempt to protect the British film industry and amid concerns about the Americanisation of British culture, the Quota Act of 1927 enforced the showing of British films but the demand was still for the American product. The result was that the British population learnt about Hollywood but not about the reality of American society. In this way most British people learnt about American attitudes to African Americans through American films. A M-O Directive in 1939 enquired about attitudes to 'negroes'. It is not clear whether the term 'negro' was intended to imply African Americans or simply 'blacks'. A further question in this Directive asked if the respondent would be prepared to be seen publicly with a 'negro' whom they knew, which would seem to infer that the object of the Directive was to test attitudes to 'blacks' in general. Despite this a large number of respondents referred only to African Americans giving the impression that, either the term 'negro' implied America to them or that, with no personal experience, they referred to African Americans because, at least, they had second hand knowledge through film. Although it is interesting to note that a later M-O Directive which inquired into attitudes towards 'coloured people' also elicited responses which referred to African Americans. In his 1948 study, the British anthropologist Professor Kenneth Little, chose to use the term 'Negroes' for the title of his work although it covered research in Britain. He justified his choice by arguing that in his experience, the use of the term in the United States caused no embarrassment, "despite their high level of racial consciousness, coloured leaders and writers took a good deal of pride in calling themselves Negro."²⁸ The black population of Britain at this time was small, probably no more than eight thousand, and these clustered around the main ports, Liverpool, Cardiff, London and Bristol. Thus the vast majority of British people had no contact with non-whites.

There is evidence among the replies to the 1939 M-O Directive on 'Attitudes to Race' of the impact of the movies. One respondent replied that she disliked the way the 'negroes' were portrayed in the films, "especially the American habit of making a Negro seem about one third intelligent."²⁹ She lived in Liverpool 8, an area with an long established black community, which possibly explains her response; she had personal knowledge. The films could engender a different response, however, as in the case of a twenty-five year old male who replied that he had, "never known any beyond the products of Hollywood but didn't like these."³⁰ One respondent, an 18 year old male with some self-insight, replied that he thought that 'negroes'

were inferior but "had no direct contact so that this is probably based on novels and films and probably not accurate."³¹ Many others mentioned their respect for Paul Robeson and distaste for the way in which 'negroes' were treated in the United States, using such terms as, "sympathy for the tremendous struggle they are having in the US"³² and "the bad treatment of them, particularly American lynchings fills me with disgust at the behaviour of supposedly civilised fellowmen."³³ This latter response hints at the notion that Americans were considered less 'foreign' than some other nations and consequently attracted stronger criticism. This idea was raised again during the 1960s when criticism of segregationists in the United States was voiced in Britain and the Americans complained that they were being judged more harshly because British expectations were higher.

Other respondents displayed an ambivalent attitude composed of a mixture of prejudice and, at the same time, theoretical support for racial equality, a distinction between the abstract and the personal. One respondent admitted to "liking them in the abstract, but instinctive repugnance at close quarters,"³⁴ a second that "They are delightful people but one never knows if their skin is really clean,"³⁵ whilst another stated that he did not think "negroes [were] racially inferior to white races," but that he "shouldn't like one as a lodger" and would "think twice before making friends, because of the detrimental effect it could have on me professionally."³⁶ A nineteen year old student explained his attitude with a degree of honesty:

I have two lots of feelings about coloured people - two attitudes. The one I adopt when talking about coloured people and discussing what I think about them. The other attitude forces itself on me willy nilly when I come into close contact with them. The former is a reasoned attitude which regards coloured people merely as other human beings...But when I meet coloured people a new situation arises. However irrational it is I cannot help regarding them in contact as somehow 'other'. The war has not made a difference.³⁷

The uncertainty demonstrated by these responses was a feature of British prejudice which differed from the more cut and dried American attitude. Ruth Glass, author of the thoughtful study, *Newcomers*, which was published in 1960, highlighted this difference:

When he [African American] meets a white man, he need not be tense and watch out for signs of animosity. Usually he knows at once whether the other man is for him or against him. Rarely can a dark skinned citizen say the same in this country. Neither the negative nor the positive attitudes towards colour are as definite here as they are in the United States; instead, ambiguity prevails. It is that which bedevils every single aspect of the coloured people's life in England; it is a corrosive factor in all their relationships - disturbing for coloured and white alike.³⁸

In the United States attitudes to African Americans had a long history based on slavery. Much of British power and wealth had been based on slavery. In contrast to Americans, however, the British population had had little direct contact with the source of this

wealth. In Britain prejudice, which could sometimes be expressed in discrimination, was a part of a general xenophobic, island mentality. Other groups, such as the Irish and the Jews also experienced prejudice but the 'badge of colour' marked the Asian or African in Britain as a 'foreigner' no matter how long they had been in the country. Despite the history of the Empire, the British were poorly informed as to the nature of its inhabitants. Little described how lack of interest and knowledge left the British with only an "extremely hazy" impression of the colonies.³⁹ He argued that the explanation lay in the school curricula which, whether it covered history, geography, literature or biology, did little to dispel imperial stereotypes. These prejudices carried a sense of the inferiority of 'colonials' together with a strong element of paternalism. Thus, in the abstract a Briton might strongly disapprove of exploitation of 'coloured people' whilst still experiencing feelings of aversion based on a sense of their inferiority when faced with personal contact

The replies to the 1939 M-O Directive displayed a wide variation as to the degree of knowledge about African Americans. Some appeared to have no views whereas others seemed quite well informed and often explained that their knowledge came from an interest in American music. Young clientele of dance-halls looked to America during the 1930s. In an article on the war time experience of a Warrington dance-hall proprietor who stood against segregation during the war, Janet Toole, observed, "dance-band music borrowed styles from a variety of ethnic sources, and...its celebrities were just as likely to be black as white (Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman) - a rarity for a mass entertainment medium at that time, when cinema, drama, sport and literature largely excluded black endeavour."⁴⁰ A twenty-two year old male M-O respondent wrote, "Negroes to me means jazz. I have been interested in jazz for 6 years. There is nothing like a knowledge of and admiration for personalities in Harlem for causing a broad-minded attitude to Negroes in general."⁴¹ Black music appeared to colour responses to African Americans in general, whether it was appreciated or not. In contrast to this reply, an older respondent answered in disparaging tones when questioned about 'negroes', using the term "slobbering American coloured crooners."⁴² The main influence on attitudes to African Americans, where there was no personal contact, was through the media of film and music and whether these evoked a negative or positive response was dependent upon the individual.

The 'special relationship' during the 1920s and 1930s was not close. On the British part there was resentment about American declarations against colonialism; rivalries over trade and dissatisfaction over the American move towards protectionism and failure to assist Britain with its financial difficulties. America was experiencing a period of isolationism; a sense that involvement with Europe in the First World War had been a mistake and one not to be repeated. It also suffered its own more severe financial crisis. Although the depression hit the American economy very hard, it struck at a time when the country was generally experiencing

increasing prosperity. On the other hand, the slump in Britain, although less severe, was just one extreme instance in a general downwards slide in its position as world trader.

ii. The Second World War

The Second World War brought a period of unprecedented contact between large numbers of American citizens and the British population, but not before Britain had stood alone for two years. Reluctance on the part of the United States to become involved fed anti-American feelings in Britain. From the time of the fall of France, however, pro-British sentiments had been growing in America and the image of the valiant 'Brit' facing the might of Germany was reinforced by regular radio broadcasts by the anglophile, Ed Murrow. Nevertheless a poll carried out in October, 1940 found only seventeen percent of Americans in favour of a declaration of war on Germany.⁴³ The autumn of 1940 saw the signing of the 'Destroyers for Bases' deal and the following year Churchill and Roosevelt brought together the Lend-Lease deal. This agreement was a forerunner of American presence on British soil but as yet only in terms of goods rather than personnel. The price paid by Britain, however, was the Atlantic Charter which was quickly seized upon by American anti-colonialists as a sign that notice was being served on the British Empire and its Imperial Preference system.⁴⁴ The existence of American critics of the Empire probably added fire to British critics of the American system of segregation.

During these early years of the war the impact of the American film industry was even greater. Although attendance at the cinema was reduced slightly, a cinema survey in 1943 discovered that 70 percent of the population went at least once a month. At the same time the British film industry was badly disrupted. Technicians were called up and studio space requisitioned. During the years of 1941-42 only 46 films were produced and this dropped to only 17 during 1943-44.⁴⁵ Consequently the cinema-going public was fed a diet of almost exclusively American film. This is not to say that the film images of American society would have been accepted by their audience at face value. The M-O survey played down the impact of American movies on British perceptions of America but, as Reynolds has argued, the population would have been more sceptical when viewing British films as they had the experience of the reality against which to judge their content. This did not apply to the vast majority in relation to America.⁴⁶ The reality was to be tested, however, with the entry of the United States into the war and the arrival of large numbers of US troops.

On the eve of D-Day there were more than one and a half million American troops stationed in the British Isles. This situation created the greatest single encounter between ordinary Americans and ordinary British people and to some degree served to dispel previously held prejudices. The High Command on both sides were anxious to foster good relations between the troops and in general there was little trouble. The Americans were advised to play

down their much superior position in terms of pay and resources and to remember that the British had already been at war for three years.⁴⁷ The discrepancy in their relative positions did lead to some sense of resentment, as did the Americans 'late' arrival. As one respondent to the 1984 M-O Directive on 'Attitudes to America' recalled:

It wasn't till the American troops arrived in England during the war that I had any real idea what the Americans were really like. I think that whilst everyone was glad to see them join the war on our side, there was at the same time, an inward feeling of pique that they had left it until they had been forced into it when the worst was over.⁴⁸

One aspect of American society which was a source of tension was segregation and the treatment of African Americans. The impact of the arrival of large numbers of black GIs in Britain - over 100,000 at one point⁴⁹ - was felt not only by the black GIs themselves, but by the white British population, the resident black population, black troops from the colonies and by the white GIs. Initially Government policy was to avoid the use of black colonial citizens as had been the case during the 1914-1918 war, but this policy was reversed as a result of black pressure groups. After the fall of France when manpower was short some 800 workers from the West Indies were recruited to work as technicians in England and as foresters in Scotland. The same desire to avoid racial tensions led the Government to oppose the entry of black GIs to Britain but their efforts were rebuffed by Washington and the first of them landed in May 1942. The Government was concerned chiefly about friction between white Americans and members of the British population who were more welcoming to the black GIs. As Anthony Eden, the Foreign Secretary explained, "our people showing more effusiveness to the coloured people than the Americans would readily understand."⁵⁰ Another concern was for the attitude of white Americans towards the small black resident population and those newly arrived colonial volunteers and workers.

United States troops were strictly segregated and this policy was rigidly applied overseas. This presented the British authorities with a dilemma for such a policy could have serious repercussions on relations with the colonies. It would have been neither acceptable nor practicable to impose such restrictions on black citizens in Britain. There was also evidence that many of the white population would have had strong objections. This is not to say that there was no prejudice against non-whites as has been shown, but there was resistance to the overt display of such prejudice. Indeed, for the British white population there were grounds for a more tolerant attitude towards black GIs than towards British blacks. Their stay in the country was seen as a temporary phenomenon and they were not in competition for housing or employment, although there could be tensions over relationships with British women. A certain resentment towards white GIs could prompt a stronger feeling of approval for the African Americans. As one M-O respondent argued, "the colour bar has been made against the wrong colour."⁵¹ This view was supported by another male respondent in his forties who observed

that, "They seem a great deal more acceptable to the British public than are the American whites."⁵²

The Americans attempted to educate their white troops in the British approach and did respond to concerns that were voiced over friction between white GIs and black Britons. They sought to minimise contact between white and black GIs by using separate bases and on leave accommodation and a system of 'rotating passes' which resulted in different establishments and even towns being designated as off limits on the basis of colour. On the other hand, according to Smith, "the British War Cabinet acted in a dilatory manner over the question [and]...because of its anxiety about relationships with its powerful ally, did not pursue a more vigorous line."⁵³ Complaints about American treatment of British blacks were not always followed up. A memorandum issued by Southern Command advised avoiding contact with black GIs and a 'whispering campaign' to persuade British women not to enter into relationships with the African Americans was widespread.⁵⁴ These tactics appeared to have limited effect on some, as one respondent to the 1943 M-O Directive described:

When Negro US troops first came here there seemed to be growing up a nasty situation. To read the *New Statesman* you would have thought that the friction of negro troops and white US forces' attitudes to them had the makings of a grade A situation, a potential flame in allied unity. But my experience in East Anglia, Cornwall and the North tells me that friction of any kind has been very rare. What is certain is that US coloured troops have behaved so excellently over here that everybody has good words for them. They like their cheerful grins behind the steering wheels of a convoy of US trucks, they like the well behaved little swagger of negro troops off duty. During the summer of 1942 there was that army order about keeping aloof from coloured troops to avoid the risk of rows with white US troops. That I'm glad to say was very unfavourably received by the troops...It savoured of 'Hitlerism'.⁵⁵

The idea that the war was being fought to maintain freedom and human rights was a factor in the British response to black GIs. With a certain lurking resentment of the white Americans' greater wealth and resources, the opportunity to take the moral high ground must have been attractive to many of the British troops. Despite this attitude and the activities of both American and British commands, long term friendships were forged during the war. Between the years of 1941 and 1950, about thirty-two thousand British women married Americans, though it is not known how many of these marriages were successful.⁵⁶ Inter-racial marriages also took place but a black GI was not permitted to marry a white woman whilst still in uniform and so was obliged to return to the United States to be demobilised before such a marriage could take place. This was the experience of one couple, Pat and Louis Edmead, who after Louis' return to England settled in Bristol. Their marriage lasted 43 years and as Pat significantly recalled they experienced only the occasional insult, "Only when Enoch Powell was going on about blacks in the sixties did we have a bit of trouble."⁵⁷

The experience of the war left its mark on many black GIs. For many, particularly those from the southern states, it was their first experience of how life might be lived without segregation. This knowledge, together with a sense that their war contribution was under-valued in the post war years, fed African American determination to fight Jim Crow. Godfrey Hodgson, the *Observer's* Washington correspondent during the 1960s, interviewed the parents of some of the first individuals who participated in the Greensboro lunchroom sit-ins in 1962. He recalled that, "the most articulate of the ones I talked to was a man who told me that he had joined the NAACP and devoted himself to the struggle for civil rights and racial equality because he had been amazed to find how much better he was treated in Britain and even in British India than he had been in North Carolina."⁵⁸ A black Liverpoolian woman recalled that her father discussed racism with black GIs who were invited to their house. When they expressed surprise at the lack of racism in Liverpool, her father told them that although American racism did not exist in Britain, the British "do not treat blacks fair...It is harder for a black man to get a ship, or do most things that make a difference. Now the war is on, things are a little different."⁵⁹ In this way African Americans saw not only an absence of structured Jim Crow racism but they may have gained an impression that the position for British blacks was even better than it was during normal times because of the war.

Official policy attempted to station black American units in areas where British black communities already existed, and many black GIs were welcomed into the homes of British blacks. This led to a two-way identification of interest. African Americans were impressed at the self-assertiveness of some West Indians, "There was war on the streets of those northern cities, because, especially the Jamaicans, they didn't think twice about putting the Americans in their place."⁶⁰ On the other hand, through these meetings many of the black GIs would probably have been educated in the more subtle ways of British discrimination. American officials were alarmed when some black GIs became members of a Soho club run by British blacks and became concerned that "they are stirring up the colored American soldiers."⁶¹

By the end of the war both the British and the Americans had a clearer idea about each other. Due to the patchiness in the way in which American troops were stationed, however, many British people had only minimal contact with Americans and even where contact existed it did not necessarily engender respect or dispel previously held national stereotypes. As Reynolds noted:

The extreme right and extreme left remained antagonistic to the United States: the old tended to be more sceptical than the young...Those favourably disposed mentioned traits such as energy, enterprise, generosity and efficiency. Those who basically disliked the United States cited boastfulness, immaturity, materialism and immorality - what the M-O called 'the less pleasing qualities of adolescence'. Individual Americans could be grist to either mill.⁶²

Through the war experience the British learnt more of American racialised relations with African Americans. One result of this was to create a certain sense of complacency, a notion that even if the Americans were richer and stronger, at least the British knew how to treat their 'coloureds' fairly. For non-whites, the war experience encouraged a sense of comradeship based on colour. It helped to create a recognition of a black Diaspora. Graham Smith cited an illustration of this sense when he described the Pan Africa Congress of 1945:

A fitting symbolic gesture to the new rapport between Americans, Africans and West Indians was the Pan-African Congress, which was revived by George Padmore, the Caribbean journalist, at the end of the war. The Congress was opened by Mrs. Marcus Garvey in Manchester in October, 1945, and among the participants were Dr. Du Bois from the USA, a black American Red Cross worker, and the future African leaders Kwame Nkrumah, Hastings Banda and Jomo Kenyatta. The topics at the meetings included the colour bar in England and the illegitimate children of black American fathers.⁶³

The Congress was significant due to the presence of future African leaders and also because it was attended by West Indian and African settlers in Britain so that control over the proceedings was no longer restricted to diasporic intellectual leaders.⁶⁴ This sense of a common African heritage persevered into the 1960s. African American leaders such as Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael drew on images of a black brotherhood. They both linked the struggle for freedom in emerging African countries with the struggle for equality in the urban industrial setting of the United States and through this connected their struggle with that in Britain.

iii. The 1950s

At the end of the war American troops were fairly quickly sent home but it was to be only five years before US forces were once more on British soil, albeit in much smaller numbers. The difference in the fortunes of the two countries was even greater in this period. As the United States enjoyed the results of the war-time boom, Britain fought with two conflicting demands: the need to regain some financial stability through strict monetary control and the desire to introduce expensive social reforms. Britain further faced a dilemma concerning its future as a world power. Victory in the war prevented Britain from freeing itself from a perception of being a world leader and looking to the future as other European countries did. The sense of isolation felt after the fall of France was a factor in British reluctance to tie its future to Europe, despite American hopes, and as Henry Kissinger argued in 1964:

Britain has always considered itself primarily a world power and not a European power. Its sense of identity was bound up with relations across the sea, not across the Channel. Its emotional ties were less with Europe than with the 'special relationship' with the United States....But the 'special relationship' lasted long enough to bring about a number of illusions in Allied relationships. Where Britain tended to exaggerate its

special influence in Washington, the United States may have overestimated the extent of Britain's pliability.⁶⁵

These mutual misapprehensions led to tensions between the United States and Britain during the 1950s. Strains surfaced over: American financial assistance to Britain; collaboration over atomic weapons; perceptions about the cold war and British colonies. The British notion that America needed Britain persisted. The half-American Churchill stressed the idea of kinship, speaking of "the fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples"⁶⁶ in 1946 and telling Eisenhower in 1953 that his "hope for the future is founded on the increasing unity of the English-speaking world."⁶⁷ This perception was not restricted to Conservatives nor to those with close American ties. The war historian, M.L. Dockrill, described Cabinet thinking during the Korean war as one which perceived the Americans as: "relatively inexperienced in world affairs, [who] would be willing to listen to the sage advice of a more mature, if somewhat weaker, Britain." As an illustration of this attitude Dockrill quoted Bevin who told Nehru in 1951, "the United States is a young country and the Administration was too apt to take unreflecting plunges. We had made it our business to try to restrain them."⁶⁸ Even as late as 1963 this perception was apparent. *The Economist* recorded that Americans were less than pleased to hear after President Kennedy's death that Alex Douglas-Home, the then Prime Minister, was being urged to offer himself as adviser on foreign affairs to the new and inexperienced President Johnson.⁶⁹

The notion that America could still benefit from collaboration with Britain, however, was less certain during the 1950s as the strength of the post-war United States became clearer and recognition of British failing influence grew. With this declining confidence came fears that Britain might be developing too great a dependence on America. In 1948, Lewis Douglas, the American Ambassador to Britain, recorded his view of the British position: "Britain has never before been in [a] position where her national security and economic fate are so completely dependent on and [at] the mercy of another country's decisions. Almost every day brings new evidence of her weakness and dependence on [the] US. This is a bitter pill for a country accustomed to full control of her national destiny."⁷⁰ The Oxford Union debate in January, 1951 was on the motion that the government's foreign policy displayed too great a dependence upon the United States. Although the motion was lost it was only by a slim five votes.⁷¹ The American response to the disastrous Suez crisis, however, greatly increased concerns that Britain's capacity for independent action was much reduced. The premiership of Anthony Eden was particularly damaging to the 'special relationship' as he underestimated the calibre of President Eisenhower.⁷² Eden resigned in 1957 and was replaced by Harold Macmillan who succeeded in rebuilding some sense of mutual respect with both Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy.

British perceptions concerning the United States were not only based on diplomatic relations although they had an impact on the way in which Americans were seen by the general

public. During the 1950s there was much debate in Britain about the importation of American culture, the invasion of American investment and the 'brain drain'. On the other hand, for many British people the United States held numerous attractions. Britain during the 1950s was a drab place, rationing was still in place, the evidence of bombing was still visible in the cities and there were shortages of raw materials. Despite a certain confidence that things would improve and, naturally, relief at the end of the war, there was a sense that life was not much better for the average civilian. At the same time, America appeared young, dynamic, rich and exciting. This could produce two responses. The first was a certain resentment, particularly when it appeared that the United States was prospering at the expense of Britain or attempting to influence British policy. The second was a wish to join the party. Through film and magazines it seemed that every American possessed a gleaming white refrigerator, a television and at least one long car with white walled tyres to drive in the sun, which shone every day. Of course not every American benefited from this boom but this was not recognised by the average American, and far less so by the average Briton. 1954 saw the launch of commercial television which Anthony Sampson described as projecting, "a classless, Americanised, competitive world, full of mid-Atlantic accents and sleek cars, into the remotest villages where TV aerials stick up with the regularity of chimney pots"⁷³ thus expanding the range of the American image.

In the United States, military production for the Korean war had fuelled an economic boom that fed consumption. Britain, with its shared language and based on the assumption that it would be a key figure in Europe, was seen by Americans as both an easy target for export and as an entry point to Europe. Britain's post-war dollar shortage put a limit on its capacity to import and this encouraged American firms to set up in Britain but following the easing of exchange controls in 1958 the way was open. This led to a wave of American consumer goods appearing in Britain, everything from frozen foods to computers. Heinz, Kodak and Hoover became household names. By the 1960s concerns were raised about 'economic imperialism'.⁷⁴ Articles appeared investigating the American 'take-over' of Britain. An example of this was a four page in-depth piece entitled "America Invades British Industry" in *New Society*.⁷⁵ This article highlighted the perceived dangers of American over investment in Britain, referring to the "increasingly hostile attitude of the British press as a whole to what the *Daily Mail* has dubbed the 'chequebook conquistadores' but argued that the dangers were overstated. The report judged that Britain was actually the beneficiary of this investment. A letter in response to this article, however, expressed a contrary view. The correspondent argued that,

The trend in American corporations of international standing may be towards geocentricity, but with technological and capital resources increasingly in American hands the remainder of the western world can look towards something like second class citizenship. Britons being particularly vulnerable because the common language facilitates American infiltration at all levels of industrial society.⁷⁶

On the other hand, the United States held a special attraction for the younger generation. The arrival of *Rock Around the Clock* in 1956 produced a moral panic in older, more conservative Britons. Bill Haley, Elvis Presley together with the film stars Marlon Brando and James Dean brought a message that it was the time for youth. These symbols of rebellious youth raised questions about the 'stuffy' establishment but with money in their pockets the young were more able to make choices which would have been impossible for their parents. For the more intellectual, jazz and the ideas of the 'beat generation' through Kerouac and Ginsberg spread a sense of disdain for all that was seen as 'square'. A respondent to the 1984 M-O Survey who was born in 1949 recalled that he was very much influenced in his youth by the 'blues' and gospel music and was an avid reader of *Mad* magazine.⁷⁷ The attractions of the United States were also felt by those who became part of what came to be known as the 'brain drain'. These attractions may not have been just the higher wages. The opportunity to work in an environment in which money was being poured into new development would have been exciting, coupled with the chance to enjoy some of the good life as portrayed in film. During 1966 Britain experienced a net loss of 2,700 engineers, technologists and scientists.⁷⁸

Since the arrival of the B-29 bombers during the Berlin crisis of 1948 the presence of US air bases on British soil was a reminder of American military might. From the early 1960s there were between sixty and seventy thousand American personnel and their dependants stationed in Britain. These were concentrated largely in East Anglia, which American personnel began to call the '49th State'.⁷⁹ Generally relations between the visitors and the local population were good though occasional incidents could reveal anti-American feelings. In December 1957 two GPO workers were held briefly at gun point by US Air Force security guards when they attempted to carry out some maintenance work at the Scunthorpe base in Norfolk. This gave rise to such reports as the piece in the *Daily Telegraph* which declared that a stop must be made to "this Chicago-gangster style of behaviour".⁸⁰ This continuing contact also helped to perpetuate a sense of the greater power and wealth of the Americans. A respondent to the 1984 M-O Directive on 'Attitudes to America' who lived in the North West recalled that as a child he regularly watched baseball matches between teams from different bases. Although he enjoyed the experience, he recorded that he came to think of "America as the wealthy prosperous country and ourselves as the poor relatives."⁸¹

During this period all ideas and innovations seemed to stem from the United States. Fear of Americanisation, however, was greater than the reality and was a function of insecurity in a changing world and increasing recognition of reduced world status. Britain was particularly vulnerable to this process. The same wave of popular culture and American investment also hit other countries in Europe and the English-speaking countries, such as Canada and Australia. In these places the impact was not so great. There was less insecurity in Canada and Australia and in other European countries the language difference served to

muffle the message to some extent. Furthermore, Britain with its tightly packed and more centralised society made cultural importation easier. A leading article in *The Guardian* in 1960 dealt with the issue of anti-Americanism and stated that it stemmed from the culture rather than politics and was a reaction to the extreme materialism:

In most countries intellectuals have watched the encroachment of US culture with shudders of disgust, if not outright hostility...the best allies of the Kremlin are Hollywood and rock and roll, closely followed by tail fins and supermarkets...This is not really American life-style but 20th century life-style in its most extreme form. American culture is as creative as any European but social democracy doesn't put intellectuals on a pedestal, that's the American way of life and why it is so insidious.⁸²

In this way it was seen as something from which almost everyone could reap the benefits, if indeed they were seen as benefits. For those who looked favourably on images of American culture there was a sense that it was more democratic, that its rewards were achievable by any individual, the 'American Dream', and not determined by class. Moreover it was felt that if the maxim, 'America today, Britain tomorrow' was true then this was a vision of Britain in the future.

During the mid 1950s to early 1960s, however, this view of the United States was an innocent one. The image was as yet untarnished by later excesses, assassinations, Vietnam and urban riots. Although it is clear that many of those who had experienced the war had a greater understanding of racialised relations in the States and that perceptions of them were generally negative, most of the news during this period was about positive change, even in this most difficult and intractable area of American society. From the Brown Decision in 1954 which declared the end of segregation to the height of the Civil Rights Movement in 1963, the news as seen from the British perspective was largely one of progress. The majority saw these developments as evidence that the Americans were dealing with this blot on their reputation as upholders of democracy.

iv. Conclusion

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed a reversal in the status of the United States and Britain. This had a major impact on perceptions of the 'special relationship' although most British people still believed in its existence. Whilst the idea in Britain that Americans were somehow, in the term used by Daniel Snowman, 'kissing cousins', the notion had less credibility in the United States. Their population had been transformed by the influx of new immigrants who were not from north west Europe, although the elite was still largely dominated by WASPS. The British were largely unaware of these changes. The shared language was a factor in this perception and in the way in which Britain appeared to be facing a process of Americanisation during the 1950s.

This British notion that the United States was family, albeit a younger and somewhat disrespectful member, led to a sense of rivalry. During the Second World War this could create a feeling of resentment as British people began to sense they were losing the competition. The more personal contact during the war served to some extent to dispel these stereotypical ideas but also introduced many to the American style of racialised relations. During the late 1950s when Britain began to recognise its new, less prestigious position in relation to the United States many felt they could take some comfort in the race struggle developing in America. It provided an opportunity to be critical of this seemingly over confident and stronger ally. Furthermore, the dignity and restraint of the non-violent approach of the Civil Rights Movement supported the generally favourable war-time British impression of African Americans.

Part of the legacy of imperialism was a belief that a liberal tradition on race still held on British soil. This notion was supported by the experience of contact with American attitudes to racialised relations during the war. As the American scholar, Carlton Wilson, observed:

One of the long term effects of the war had been to make the English feel more comfortable with their own brand of covert and customary racial prejudice in comparison to America's overt and statutory racist policies. And in the long term, this had a negative impact on the status of blacks throughout the country.⁸³

Against this background the British faced the challenge of increasing numbers of non-white immigrants during the late 1950s and the 1960s. The immediate public response in many white British industrial centres revealed that notions based on a hierarchy of races were still widely accepted. These ideas carried an inherent antipathy to mixing of the 'races' and miscegenation. The multi-racial Commonwealth ideal based on a colonial setting was not strong enough to counter these sentiments. These new immigrants, against a new industrial urban background, did not conform to the traditionally held racial stereotypes.

When examples were sought against which to set concerns over a domestic 'colour problem' a possible source was seen in the United States. Throughout the late 1950s and the 1960s comparisons were drawn stressing the similarities and the differences. Those that argued at the time, with some justification, that the differences between the position of the African American and that of a non-white immigrant in Britain were greater, did so from a background of knowledge. The question that is still left unanswered, however, is whether the validity of these arguments was recognised. At this crucial time did individuals in a position to affect policy make assumptions about the presence of a non-white section of the population based on their knowledge of racialised relations in America? Did the fact that many had very limited knowledge about the other nations within the Commonwealth mean that they were in no position to counter arguments which likened the American and British conditions? Did the idea

that what took place in the United States provided a future image of Britain have an impact on racialised relations in Britain? These are the questions which this study will address.

Throughout this period images of American racialised relations were presented in the British media. The next chapter will examine the way in which the press dealt with the two issues of increased black and Asian immigration and the concurrent struggle in the United States.

PART II - The Establishment

Chapter 2 The Press

i. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine British press coverage of the struggle for racial equality in the United States and the issue of racialised relations in Britain between 1958 and 1968. Throughout this examination particular attention will be paid to reports where comparisons and links are made between the two situations in order to evaluate the impact that the issue in America had on the development of British racialised relations. Before embarking on this examination, however, it is necessary to consider the particular issues that are raised by the reporting of news stories that involve racial questions.

The freedom of the press to report on issues of the day is regarded as a right and a symbol of democracy. The idea, however, that facts are sacred and that, even though they may be ugly, the journalist has a responsibility to report them, raises more questions than it answers. All facts cannot be reported and this raises the issue of selectivity. The process is also a two-way one, for the press may influence public opinion but it also reflects it. In the context of selectivity the term 'public' is a limited one for it refers to the public served by a particular journal. When an editor considers selection, therefore, choices must be partly based on audience or potential audience. Most people prefer to be presented with stories that confirm rather than challenge their opinions and circulation figures are never far from the minds of proprietors and editors. The majority of issues pose little problem for the readership who will generally have chosen a paper based on this premise; or if choice is based on some other aspect, for example the quality of its sports reporting, readers are unlikely to continue to support a paper if they disagree strongly with the line taken by the editor. This had particular relevance to the issue of racialised relations at this time when opinions were still being formed. Thus, the press had a crucial role to play in these early days of uncertainty as the nation faced an increased number of immigrants from the New Commonwealth.

ii. Press in Britain - 1950s and 1960s

The British press during the nineteen fifties and sixties had the widest circulations in the Western world. In 1961 573 newspapers were sold per 1,000 population, as compared to 327 in the United States.¹ A further factor which added to the importance of the press in Britain as an opinion former and reflector, was the compact and homogeneous nature of the country which meant that the same item of news could be read across the whole country on any morning. There was nothing fixed about this situation, however, as the newspaper industry was subject to new pressures during this period. Up till 1957 newsprint had been rationed and

a kind of truce existed between competing papers. When rationing was lifted it heralded a period of far greater competition. The combined pressure of the increased capital expense, the restrictions of the printing unions and competition from television led to a greater reliance on, and competition for, advertising.

It also led to a series of mergers and take-overs, bringing to the fore, such new press tycoons as the nephew of Lord Northcliffe Cecil King, who took control of the *Mirror* and the Canadian, Roy Thomson, who built up an empire based on *The Times*. These newcomers brought a more commercial attitude to the industry. In 1962, Anthony Sampson gave his view of Thomson, "Thomson has only one obvious political aim, which is to give the majority of his readers what they want."² and in reference to King's view of the business, "When politics interfere with circulation, circulation always wins."³ Circulation meant revenue through advertising. These pressures were felt throughout the industry, even the *Sunday Times* depended on advertising for three quarters of its income in 1962. This was not a new situation, the quality press had always relied to a greater degree on advertising whilst the popular press was more dependent upon sales. Changes in income distribution during the 1960s had an impact on this balance as advertisers began to recognise that they could reach their target audience without paying premium rates to the quality press.

Although television was making an impact on the nation, and with the introduction of commercial television in 1955 this was to increase, this study will concentrate on the press and the most widely read periodicals. The daily papers chosen for examination in this study were *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mirror*, the latter chosen for its wide circulation, which was four and a half million in 1959 rising to over five million in 1965.⁴ *The Times* was considered the 'journal of record' and gave the impression that it was read by everyone who mattered. It saw itself as the journal of 'the establishment' with close links to government. But like every other paper it had to pay its way and during this period it was under pressure from both *The Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Telegraph*, which was cheaper and appealed to the growing managerial class. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s *The Times* was losing ground and money. In 1966 the Astor family sold it to Thomson who gave it a more popular approach and increased its circulation by 60 per cent in three years.

The *Manchester Guardian*, had a distinct character linked to the British liberal tradition of dissent. It placed a strong emphasis on liberal causes and gave more space to women's issues and the Third World. As stated by the late 1950s, it was rivalling *The Times* for circulation and had a loyal readership. It changed its name to *The Guardian* in 1961 when its headquarters moved. In contrast to the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Daily Telegraph* was unwaveringly Conservative. It was less demanding than *The Times* but was recognised as a quality paper and its circulation rose by 200,000 during the period between 1959 and 1965. Circulation figures for *The Times* on the other hand were more or less stationary.⁵ Sampson

described its success as "a monument to the continuing conservatism of the British middle-class."⁶

Since the end of the war the *Daily Mirror* had been the top selling popular daily but its dominance of the market was beginning to fade by the mid 1950s. After Cecil King acquired it in 1951 and began to recognise that the wave of working class radicalism on which its popularity was based was receding, he shifted it to a more left of centre position. As Curran and Seaton described it:

The class divisiveness of the paper's 'us' and 'them' rhetoric of the 1940s softened in the 1950s and early 1960s into the more inclusive and acceptable rhetoric of the 'young at heart' against 'the old', the modern against the traditional, 'new ideas' instead of 'tired men'. The *Daily Mirror's* commitment to the Labour Party remained but it changed in character. Increasingly it took the form of opposition to the Conservative Party rather than positive advocacy of a socialist alternative.⁷

It was exactly this tone which the Labour Party used to good effect when it was elected in 1964.

This study also looked at two Sunday papers, *The People* and *The Observer*. *The People* was selected as the Sunday paper with the widest circulation (just over five millions in 1959 and rising to five and a half millions by 1965⁸). It was a popular tabloid paper with a largely working class readership. At this time, due to the pressures previously described, its contents became dominated by reports of human interest rather than public affairs in an attempt to draw in a greater female and younger audience. The trend was to cater for the 'lowest common denominator'.⁹ *The Observer* which was chosen, not for its circulation figures but as a Sunday paper with quite a different outlook and one which proved to take a particular interest in the issue of race. It was under the single editorship of David Astor, the grandson of the American Lord Astor who also owned *The Times* until 1966. According to Sampson, "David Astor made the most of his independence, championing liberal causes and taking the side of black leaders in Africa against their British rulers".¹⁰ During the period under review this paper slightly increased its circulation but was under increasing pressure from competition from its main rival *The Sunday Times* under Thomson.

iii. Special problems related to press coverage of race issues

Since the end of the war there had been reports of black/white racial tensions, but they were generally few and irregular. They included the arrival of the Empire Windrush in June 1948, which caused a stir of curiosity, and small items on colour bar problems, including two strikes in the Midlands in 1955 involving the employment of blacks.¹¹ There were also occasional calls for immigration control legislation by members of the House and Fenner Brockway, a Labour member and early advocate of anti-discrimination legislation, regularly raised the issue

of racial discrimination. By 1958, however, the English were quite accustomed to reading about racial conflict through reports which emanated from Africa and the United States and, as reports on the situation in Britain often reflected, the language of the American scene had been absorbed into the English language.

The press does not attempt to tell the public everything, but an issue which is judged to be of interest to only a minority of the population can be forced by a single event or an effective campaign onto the centre stage. If the press then run with the story it takes on greater significance in the minds of the readers and it then becomes a prominent issue of the day. This process can of course be reversed as a new drama competes for news space and forces yesterday's concern off the page. The riots of 1958 pushed the issue of black/white relations in Britain to the forefront. Although this led to a new level of interest in the topic it could not be described as a new issue, for editors and journalists all brought with them the prejudices and ideals they already held. This could lead to a reasoned quiet editorial appearing in the same issue in which an emotive report appeared on the front page. In reporting racial stories the press were beset by a number of problems involving selection, use of language and treatment.

The issue of selection centred on the problem of whether to report a story or not; the responsibility to inform the public and the temptation to exploit a story to enhance sales balanced against the danger of being accused of stirring up racial tension. Nicholas Deakin described the press as "Fascinated by the exotic overtones of the subject and constantly anxious about the extent to which colour could legitimately be exploited to sell newspapers".¹² This could often lead to the practice of reporting incidents simply because a West Indian or Asian was involved. Items that might normally go unnoticed, such as a pub brawl, would appear to have added newsworthiness.

Race is not a self-reporting issue; the facts do not necessarily speak for themselves. When writing for a largely white audience with little knowledge of the implications of racialised relations, a journalist must be precise about the use of words. Furthermore, a report that does not give adequate background information can create a false impression. This is, of course, true for all press reports but reports on racial issues require careful handling. The reporting of other issues such as housing statistics could be considered emotive if a journalist played up a housing shortage but the report could never be accused of creating a housing shortage even if it might have added to anxieties about it. A report that stresses the importance of racial tensions can be accused of creating them by exacerbating the very fears and prejudices on which racialism is based.

This was further complicated by the one-sided nature of the sources available, most of which were white-dominated: the courts and the police, the House of Commons, local councils, schools and medical services. This usually resulted in the majority of reports being negative rather than positive, highlighting a connection between crime, housing problems and health issues. Seeking out the views of minorities is more difficult and time-consuming. The result of

this was that any comment, whether of a positive or negative tone, was always from a white perspective. It might give advice as to how to promote integration or views on immigration but the underlying message was how to deal with 'them'. This process reinforced a sense of the foreignness of the immigrants from the new Commonwealth and the view that they were not members of the general public. It is interesting to note that neither *The Times* nor *The Guardian* had a special correspondent with responsibility for race during this period and yet it is an issue that demands a certain amount of expertise in order to judge the importance of a potential story. Items on race were generally dealt with by those with responsibility for Home Affairs, who would have also covered such issues as the police, prisons, education, housing and social services.

Given the problem of sources, the 'band-wagon' effect, whereby papers feed off each other for reports, was greater than in many other instances. Michael Malik pointed to this in his biography. He argued that in Notting Hill there was little that was unusual about violence on the streets but as the papers were full of 'race riots' in Nottingham so the Notting Hill 'race riots' were reported as such and this exacerbated an already tense situation.¹³ Another aspect of this 'band-wagon' effect was the subject of criticism of the press by Rose et al:

By giving prominence to the views of extremists they may appear to sanction them and to confer a respectability and importance on their holders which they could not otherwise achieve. A chain reaction is then set in motion. Prominence in one medium leads to attention by another. By this kind of cross-fertilization between newspapers and broadcasting the demagogue becomes a public figure.¹⁴

The cumulative result of the band-wagon effect was further increased by the practice of adding the race of individuals appearing in reports if they were not white; reports where the addition of "British" after the individual's name would have been surprising. It does, however, serve to explain why some reports were included at all.¹⁵

As interest in the issue grew editors felt obliged to report events which highlighted racial tensions and were then faced with the problem of treatment. Some attempted to rise to the challenge of responsible treatment and follow the line espoused by Charles Wintour, Editor of the *Evening Standard* in the 1960s, who argued that the media can contribute to social harmony by the adoption of a 'quiet' style when reporting racial topics.¹⁶ An editorial that takes a subdued, well-reasoned tone, however, has less effect when it appears in the same edition which contains startling reports on the front page. It is not sufficient to argue that a report is balanced if its headline highlights the most emotive aspect of the report and this was often the case. The aim of a headline is to attract attention and when threat and disaster are two major criteria for establishing newsworthiness then these are the aspects of the report often chosen for the headline.¹⁷

A further issue that deserves attention in an examination of the effect of the press on perceptions about race is the quantity and cumulative effect of reports and in this must be

included the added impact of foreign news reports. Throughout the period under consideration foreign news was shot through with the problems of race. The future of the Commonwealth was uncertain, as the British faced the problem of finding a new place in the world order. Should they ally themselves with Europe or continue to rely on the 'special relationship' with the United States? This question had been brought into particularly sharp focus as a result of the Suez crisis.

Africa was in a state of transition as more and more countries demanded and claimed their independence and the British were faced with constant reports of disturbances and civil strife. It should be remembered that when the Montgomery Bus Boycott began it was only four years after the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya had filled the press in Britain with horror stories of diabolic rituals and ferocious atrocities on the part of the rebels although only thirty white settlers lost their lives whilst over 10,000 Kikuyu died. Towards the end of the fifties two scandals threatened ministerial resignations, the first was the massacre of prisoners at the Hola camp in Kenya and the second was the death of fifty-two nationalist prisoners in Nyasaland both at the hands of security guards. In 1960 Macmillan talked of "the wind of change blowing through Africa" during a speech in Cape Town and caused a sensation.¹⁸ At home right-wing politicians responded by forming the Monday Club. Some felt that holding on to the Empire was still possible, the question was - was the price worth paying. In 1960 Sharpeville increased concern about the regime in South Africa and the issue of Rhodesia was to cause much concern through the mid-sixties.

Over all this came the long shadow of America's racial troubles and throughout the discussion of racial problems in Britain it was the situation in the United States that was often referred to in an attempt to make sense of the situation and seek some solution. This would seem to be a logical connection given the recognition of the 'special relationship' and that America, for most of the population, was not really considered 'foreign' in the same way that Africa and Asia might have been perceived, at least to those without direct experience of colonial life.

Throughout the period it is possible to see a development of ideas and a variety of responses. In the early years the responses to the Montgomery Bus Boycott and events at Little Rock were generally one of sympathy and respect for the African American struggle, disapproval of the segregationists and a certain complacency, if not Schadenfreude. After the riots in Britain in 1958, however, more consideration was given to the possibility that the situation in Britain could develop into one that was not dissimilar to that in the United States. When this idea was discussed, however, it was often in terms that argued that this could not happen, thus clearly giving the impression that it was being suggested as a possibility. Throughout the decade this argument gradually gave way to the perception that 'it could happen if no action is taken' and complacency gave way to fear. The question centred on whether Britain should simply reduce the threat through immigration control, an option not

open to the United States, at least as regards African Americans, or follow their lead and pass legislation against racial discrimination.

Prejudice in Britain was ambiguous and largely based on ignorance and insecurity, coloured by tales of the Empire and feelings of superiority. Tolerance towards the stranger was widely held to be a English virtue. The historian, Colin Holmes, has questioned this widespread view of Britain as a centre of liberty and toleration and highlighted the relative dimensions of toleration:

Hostility did not occur at all times, on all occasions, against all groups. The diversity of responses has been recognized. However, even if opposition was not universally persistent the cumulative evidence of expressions of hostility cannot be ignored....It resulted sometimes in discrimination. It influenced outbreaks of collective violence. The weight of such evidence qualifies the widely-held view of Britain as a tolerant country.¹⁹

There were, however, no repressive statutes and no figure of authority in Britain would have openly advocated a Jim Crow or apartheid line. During the Second World War the arrival of large numbers of black GIs presented a new challenge to British authorities as they sought to accommodate the wishes of their ally whilst avoiding the charge of introducing segregation.²⁰ The arrival in Britain of significant numbers of black immigrants was a new challenge. Would notions of British tolerance be adequate to meet it? Would the message that racial mixing brought conflict feed British insecurities and result in a determination to avoid such a situation or would it strengthen belief in a British tolerance and determination to uphold liberal traditions? Throughout the 1960s this question hung in the balance.

iv. Pre-1958 Reports

In the years immediately prior to the 1958 riots reporting of the situation in the United States was wide. This was specially true in 1956 which was, of course, an election year for Americans and one bound to generate extra interest. *The Times*, in particular, gave much space to American issues throughout the year, providing eighty-one leading articles, five of which dealt with race. In the same year the *Manchester Guardian* also produced five leaders on race and a series of articles by Alistair Cooke which were later published as a pamphlet under the title *The Ordeal of the South*.²¹

The leaders in *The Times* dealt with the issue of segregation in the Southern States and particularly the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the entry to Alabama University of Autherine Lucy. A clear line was taken in support of the African American right to equality and support for the law as interpreted by the Brown decision. One leader in January highlighted the strength of white resistance by giving the example of Virginia where the State legislature allocated funding to private schools to avoid desegregation. This meant that whites would be

called upon to make some sacrifice in terms of higher taxes to provide this funding and acceptance of teacher and classroom shortages in order to accommodate the new white children who could not have previously afforded private education. This, the leader stated, demonstrated the division between the races, better-off whites being prepared to support poorer whites rather than accept mixed schooling.²² A further leader in February, however, took a more positive tone. It pointed out that although Lucy had to leave the University after three days of disturbances there was evidence that not all were so segregationist. Many students had given her their support and in Montgomery some white bus drivers had been offering lifts in their own cars to blacks involved in boycotting the buses.²³

Later on in the year two leaders dealt with the effect of the situation in the south and the Presidential election. Both downplayed the issue to some extent and concluded that as neither party had a strong plank on the question the result might well be that voting would not be affected by desegregation either way, voters tending to stick to their traditional party. Despite this an article in November which dealt with the problems facing Eisenhower suggested that one of the main issues would be race. It stressed that segregation was bound to end and that changes were taking place throughout the South, but that [prophetically] there could still be a rise in racial tensions before the issue was resolved. It did, however, make the point that although most news coverage tends to concentrate on the dramatic it should also be recognised that "there are scores of places where thousands of Negro children have been peacefully and successfully integrated."²⁴ Thus, the reports were mixed, some indicating the possibility of a positive outcome whilst others seemed to threaten further tension.

In 1957 *The Times*, again, gave wide coverage to events in the United States. The struggle over desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas, became particularly 'hot' during September and October and during this period *The Times* printed reports on the situation on twenty-nine days, plus three leading articles. The increased tension and violence was reflected in these, though they also praised African Americans for their determination and dignity. There was also support for Eisenhower in finally using troops to police the implementation of the law. This approval was tempered, however, by comment that he had shown considerable patience but that if he had left it much longer it could have been seen as neglect of duty.²⁵

During this period *The Observer* also gave much coverage to Little Rock, many of the pieces appearing on page one. In a long article in September the author, Patrick O'Donovan, stated that it was "wise and right" for the Administration to leave the dispute largely to the courts.²⁶ In a further article, however, on 4 October, after troops had been brought in and the situation had become much more intense, O'Donovan stated that he approved of the action of the Administration in sending in troops, thus demonstrating the increase in the gravity of the situation within a couple of weeks. In this report he also gave his impression of the two opposing sides, describing the segregationists as "poor, ill-educated and pathological" whilst he described the blacks as "brave, poised and sophisticated".²⁷

In a leader in September, the *Observer* considered the importance of the situation. It stated that the events at Little Rock were of great significance because: firstly, it was in the United States; secondly, because of the unusual Constitutional situation in the U.S.; and thirdly, because it dealt with the issue of race which was of great importance throughout the world. It also went on to state that a similar situation "could not happen in Britain" but that it could in places where Britain still had responsibilities, like Kenya or Central Africa and that "before adopting a 'holier-than-thou' attitude we should make sure we discharge our own comparable responsibilities."²⁸ After this fairly confident assessment of the situation in Britain it is interesting to discern the element of doubt that crept into reports after 1958.

Not surprisingly there was little coverage of events at Little Rock in either the *Daily Mirror* or *The People* though both papers mentioned the issue briefly under world news. Given the low level of attention tabloids generally heed to international news, particularly in cases where Britain is not involved, this demonstrated the level of interest. The general tenor of the reports was one of support for the African American cause. The *Daily Mirror* reported, at the end of August, [just before the situation in Little Rock reached its height] the attempt by Ramsgate Council to ban American GIs from the town, as did *The Times*. The report stated that an Alderman who was interviewed pointed out that this ban would largely affect 'coloured' GIs, as white GIs tended to visit Margate. According to the report, there had been fears expressed in Ramsgate for the safety of young white women, though apparently there had been no report of trouble.²⁹ This report, seen in contrast to the sympathetic reports on blacks in Little Rock, highlighted the ambiguous nature of perceptions about racialised relations in Britain.

Not only was the general public in Britain ambivalent about race but the Government, particularly Eden, demonstrated during 1956 a reluctance to accept a post-imperial attitude during the Suez crisis. This and the crisis in Hungary dominated the news from the summer of 1956, and given Eisenhower's response increased British concerns about its place in the world order. It also raised questions about the Commonwealth as many members had been among those who voted against Britain on Suez in the United Nations. At home the repercussions were great leading to severe economic problems, for which Eisenhower refused assistance, and finally to the resignation of Eden and a new Prime Minister. The Autumn of 1956 represented a low point in the 'special relationship' and contributed to the slight feeling of Schadenfreude which is apparent in reports of the race troubles beginning to affect American society. It also accounts for the fact that the majority of reports on the race issue in America appeared in early 1956 and again after the Spring of 1957. Despite this the English public were certainly aware of the situation in Little Rock by 1958 as is demonstrated in the reports of riots at home.

v. 1958 - The Immediate Response

Through 1958 events at Little Rock continued as an on-going story in the broadsheets, being given particularly wide coverage during the summer. *The Times* carried twelve pieces during July and August and two leaders, although the number of reports was to increase to twenty-two plus four leaders during September and October. The general tenor of the reports was still one of support for the African American cause but there was an increasingly critical tone with regard to Eisenhower for lack of leadership. *The Times* argued that he must accept some of the blame for the violence of the situation "for not anticipating the explosive nature of the situation".³⁰ The *Manchester Guardian* also took this line arguing that "Eisenhower has shown understanding but that is not enough" and calling for "clear moral leadership".³¹ This demand for political leadership was also to be heard repeatedly in reports dealing with the situation of racial tension in Britain throughout the decade.

When rioting broke out in Nottingham on Saturday night, 23 August, it was not simply a spontaneous outbreak, racial tension had been present for weeks with many cases of black people being beaten and chased although these isolated events had not reached the national press. The following Saturday saw more rioting but this time there were no black faces to be seen on the streets where a mob had grown to about 4,000. Even more serious than the trouble in Nottingham were the disturbances in London which continued uninterrupted for several days. They began in the Notting Hill area and then broke out in several other districts of the city. 'Nigger-hunting' spread and as black people stayed in their houses some of these homes were attacked and one was set on fire.

All the broadsheets pointed out that the trouble was mainly caused by whites and most papers expressed concern about hooliganism, though often the term 'teddy-boy' was employed with its overtones of youth and, perhaps, even youthful 'high spirits'. Some early reports placed the blame on blacks such as one in *The Times* which pointed to irresponsible West Indians in Nottingham whose sudden 'hit and run' attacks were like a "match to gunpowder",³² and the *Manchester Guardian* which also placed some blame on West Indians whilst making the point that they had been under provocation.³³ Both these, however, were initial reactions before the subsequent riots in Nottingham and before riots broke out in London. Reports of later incidents stress that the perpetrators were in the main whites.

In the reports covering these events there are clear indications of an awareness of the situation in the States and in particular, Little Rock. In one report in the *Manchester Guardian* on the second clash in Nottingham the reporter stated that it "comes as a shock to think of the ugly phrase 'lynch him' being used in England, but it was, several times." This report also quoted one of those on the streets who told a reporter "Just tell your readers that Little Rock learned us a lesson".³⁴ Whether this is accurate or not seems of little importance. What seems most relevant is that the reporter chose to include this statement as the only direct quote from

the rioters presumably because the significance of the reference to Little Rock would not have been lost on the readers.

The fact that links were being made between America and Britain was borne out in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* which argued that "mere idealism will not save us from some of the social crises which have afflicted the southern US, a region it should be remembered with a white population of overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon origin." and argued that until "our more experienced cousins overseas" proved themselves able to solve the problem immigration should be stopped.³⁵ This correspondent from London clearly felt a kinship with Americans and that racialised relations in Britain would follow a similar pattern. A leader in the same paper two days later refuted this when it declared:

There is absolutely no comparison between what is happening here and developments in South Africa and the southern States of America. The significant difference does not merely lie in the far smaller proportion of coloured people to whites in this country than in other racial trouble spots...then there could be only one answer; prevent them rising...there is also a question of principle...whereas elsewhere discrimination is a deeply ingrained matter of faith, with us opposition to discrimination is a deeply ingrained matter of faith. They want a colour bar; we do not. Their Governors, police and public opinion support it; ours do not.³⁶

Coverage in *The Observer* in the general reports took a rather low-key tone. The front page report on 31 August, under the heading 'Police in New Clash', gave hardly a mention of race except to state that a number of 'whites' had been arrested. The editorial though did not shy away from the issue of race but termed British problems as 'comparatively minor'. It went on to advise that the British should look to the United States who were trying to remove fears through "leadership and education".³⁷

Both the *Daily Mirror* and *The People* gave fairly full and vivid descriptions of the events at Nottingham and Notting Hill. The *Daily Mirror* in a report on London had a major bold headline stating "400 Clash in Colour Riots" accompanied by an eight inch by six inch photograph of policemen leading away rioters. A second report the following day had a subheading in bold type declaring "one white stabbed by coloured". This was presumably seen as significant because the victim in this case was white whereas all the other violence had been directed at blacks. On the back page of the same issue quotes were included in the reports and, as in the *Manchester Guardian* report, these demonstrated the awareness of the United States' situation. One referred to the use of the phrase 'lynch them' and another to the use of the shout, "Let's have a Little Rock".³⁸ The following day, under the headline "Black v White" and a large photograph depicting a male face, half white and half black, it stated that every decent person should be ashamed and that this is the end of "smug satisfaction". The report went on to say that we have lectured others (United States, South Africa?) and "assumed it couldn't happen here, it has".³⁹ This is an example of reporting that could hardly be described as taking

the 'quiet' approach to the reporting of racialised relations for, although the words of the report itself are not inflammatory, the presentation emphasised the drama and threat of the events.

Like the *Daily Mirror*, *The People* did not feel shy about stressing the race issue and on 31 August carried the headline "Race Hate City Goes Wild Again" on a report on Nottingham. In the following week's issue there was another dramatic heading, which ran "Race Hate Victims going Home". In this piece it was reported that an official of the Afro-Caribbean Federation had requested funds to help people who wished to return to the West Indies because they feared a racist propaganda campaign.⁴⁰

Much of the reporting after the disturbances had died down attempted to analyse the causes. These were generally seen to be: the action of hooligans looking for trouble; fears concerning competition over housing, work or women and the activities of fascist groups. Two immediate responses to the events in Nottingham and Notting Hill were firstly, a call for limits to immigration and, secondly, concern for British international reputation. A demand for immigration control was not a new idea. The issue had been raised from time to time since 1948 and in 1953 the Cabinet set up a Working Party to look specifically at the possibility of controlling black immigration although no decision was taken based on its findings.⁴¹ The reason for this was a combination of concerns about the future of the Commonwealth, public opinion and legality. One result of the racial disturbances was that the debate was given a much higher profile. The bulk of the overt comparisons between the United States and Britain appeared in the broadsheets. This is particularly true where concerns are expressed for the international reputation of Britain.

The Times made an immediate link with the situation in the United States in its earliest reports on the situation in Nottingham. In a report from their Political Correspondent, which was given a six inch double column, the reporter quoted Sir Cyril Osborne, the Conservative member for Louth. Osborne argued that a failure to introduce immigration controls would be "sowing the seeds of another Little Rock" in this way playing on fears engendered by the American example. This phrase was also chosen for a subheading, thereby emphasising the connection. The report also presented the arguments of Norman Pannell, Conservative member for Kirkdale, who drew attention to concerns over 'immigrants' on National Assistance, the high level of convictions for immoral earnings amongst 'immigrants', and went on to quote Osborne who claimed that there were another five hundred millions who were entitled to come to Britain. The same issue reported on the reaction to events in Nottingham in the press in South Africa and Rhodesia which had stated, according to *The Times*, that it was a case of the "biter bit".⁴²

In a long leading article *The Times* again linked Britain and the United States when it argued that the disturbances in Britain should not be seen as insignificant. It gave four reasons why this was so: the whole modern apparatus of press and radio was concentrated on them; the growing 'coloured' population was bound to have an impact on British life; the disturbances

could form a threat to the confidence of the 'coloured' population of the Commonwealth; and that all these factors needed to be viewed in the light of current world events, linking Nottingham and Little Rock.⁴³

The *Manchester Guardian* also clearly connected the two events at an early stage. In a leader on Little Rock, which was published even before disturbances broke out in London, the editor advised that before "any in this country feel disposed to sneer at the way things are sometimes handled in the U.S....we should pause at this week's news from Nottingham". The report then went on to comment on the call for immigration control which it criticised as a response to the riots which lacked "magnanimity".⁴⁴ A second leader on the following day, dealing directly with the Nottingham situation, described the demand for immigration restrictions as "deplorable". It claimed that the "generous conception of granting British citizenship throughout the Commonwealth is far too important to be scrapped because of a few thugs in Nottingham". The leader then expressed concerns for Britain's reputation abroad and called for greater leadership from politicians, teachers and the clergy.⁴⁵ Another leader, this time on Notting Hill, commented on press reports in foreign newspapers on the disturbances, particularly in the Egyptian press, this being only two years after Suez. The editor argued that despite its colonial past Britain "must demonstrate that colour prejudice is no longer a British failing".⁴⁶

Fears for Britain's foreign reputation were expressed in *The Observer* in a leading article, entitled "On Trial", which not only stated that Britain would be judged on how it coped after the "nasty shock" of racial disturbances but also on the way it handled the issue of poor social conditions. These, the report argued, contributed to the situation, echoing many reports on the conditions experienced by the black population in the United States.⁴⁷ This was taken even further by the comment that Britain should recognise that most people immigrate to Britain in order to avoid conditions of poverty and that if these conditions existed then the responsibility for this situation rested with Britain. The editorial then criticised the Government for inaction stating that it was time R.A. Butler acted "to remove the deplorable impression made by the Government's first chilly communique" for at the stage of writing no Government minister had even visited the trouble spots.⁴⁸ Again this echoes many of the reports dealing with Little Rock in which Eisenhower was criticised for inaction.⁴⁹

In looking at the early press responses to racial strife at home and connections being made with the situation in the United States various incidences are apparent where the juxtaposition of ideas could also be seen as a factor in linking the two situations. Throughout the period in which reporting on racial trouble in Britain was at its height, August and September, there was another on-going story, which was covered by all the broadsheets which was the case of a fifty-five year old African American who had been sentenced to death for theft in Alabama. The amount stolen was paltry, \$1.95, but the sentence reflected the fact that the victim was an elderly white woman. The case attracted much attention in Britain. *The*

Times ran eight reports on the case in September which included a report on a letter which was sent to Governor Folson by a group of Labour M.P.s calling for clemency. One report in *The Times* seems particularly relevant in that it argued that actions of this kind, based on racial discrimination, were "abhorrent" and gave propaganda to "critics of western liberty and democracy",⁵⁰ the implication being that, not only would the United States be judged but, Britain, as a major defender of "western liberty and democracy", would also have its reputation tarnished by the judgement in the light of the cold war. The wide coverage given to the visit of Norman Manley, Jamaica's Chief Minister, to Britain raised the issue of the link between the United States and Britain formed by the Caribbean. He made a ten-day tour of the trouble areas in the days immediately following the outbreaks. The *Manchester Guardian* drew attention to this link with a quote from Mr. Manley in which he stated that the recent events were "...much more tragic than Little Rock for the West. Anything in England which enabled the leaders in Little Rock to boast and smirk is a disaster."⁵¹

Given that the racial disturbances in England occurred when Little Rock was still very much a live issue, there are naturally many instances where reports on both were to appear in the same issue, if not on the same page. One example was the *Manchester Guardian* where reports on both sat side by side, the top of page one being devoted to a report under the heading "Mr. Faubus seeks New Weapons" which was directly above an item headed "Two Nottingham M.P.s suggest limit on Immigration".⁵² Another example, this time from *The Times*, involved not Little Rock but the stabbing of Martin Luther King, after two years of sympathetic press coverage in which he was portrayed as dignified, courageous and principled. This report appeared on the same page as a long report, about twenty inches, on the Labour party's declared plan to debate anti-discrimination legislation at their forthcoming conference and a further piece on a rally which had been held the previous day in Trafalgar Square by the Movement for Colonial Freedom. This item also mentioned that there had been a few representatives of racist groups supporting immigration control, such as the Britain for Britons and the National Labour Party groups, and although they were, according to the report, "easily abashed by the approach of a policeman" the message was still there that this was an issue full of potential conflict.⁵³ The juxtaposition of reports would not necessarily link the events in the mind of a reader and naturally responses could be quite varied but, with the links already being made in many reports, the perception that the situations were similar and that the presence of blacks was a source of possible social disturbance would have been fed.

If the broadsheets tended to give more considered responses to the events in 1958 than did the tabloids, this is even more the case in the periodicals. One of these was *The Listener* which was of particular importance as most of the articles were transcripts of broadcasts which went out on the Third Programme and thus it would have had a larger audience than other periodicals. One such article appeared in April 1958, even before 'race riots' were considered a possibility in Britain. It was written by Michael Banton and gave an in-depth description of

racial prejudice in England and how it affected its victims. It drew a distinction between prejudice and discrimination. In an analysis of the situation he described how the British were being faced with a new situation, one in which previously held social rules no longer seemed to apply. He stated that the British "lack the racist certainties of South Africa and the deep American south" but also the acceptance of racial minorities that is apparent in Brazil. He then argued that, in a situation like this, determined leadership can make the difference between the development of tolerance or intolerance.⁵⁴

In a later article Franklin Frazier, who was a noted black American sociologist, made it clear that the United States was being examined in relation to racial trouble in Britain when the writer stated that "During a recent visit to London I was asked by many people what I thought of the colour problem in Britain and how it differed from the situation in the United States." The writer then continued to give a review of two recent publications, "*Coloured Immigrants in Britain*" by the Institute of Race Relations and "*Newcomers*" by Ruth Glass, and concluded that he agreed with Mrs. Glass that there was a need in Britain for laws to protect the equal rights of 'coloured' people.⁵⁵

The Economist ran two articles in 1958 in response to the disturbances in England. The first, early in September and immediately after the events, stated that the argument that "it can't happen here" was wearing "perilously thin" and there was a clear need for action in the form of a large programme of real social reform to ensure that it did not. The writer also stated that simply to resort to restrictions on immigration would constitute a "real badge of shame".⁵⁶ A second item which appeared the following November examined the arguments for and against immigration control and pointed to the economic reasons why it would be a mistake to restrict immigration. It also called for a recognition that regardless of whether controls were instituted or not there was a need to consider the future of the children of immigrants settled here and the possibility of "harlemised" districts, thus making a clear connection with the United States⁵⁷ and drawing attention to a concern which was to become widespread in the mid-sixties.

The Spectator carried six reports on racism in Britain in August and September of 1958, out of which three made reference to the American situation. The first one in August was mainly a report on Little Rock but in it the writer stated that "British reporters in Arkansas are now apt to have the local citizens murmur 'Nottingham' at them."⁵⁸ In the second article in the same month the writer drew attention to the success of desegregation in many places in the United States which went unreported whereas "we hear about Little Rock". The article also stated that "the Nottingham episode came in time to prevent any holier-than-thou feelings about the latest turn in the Little Rock dispute."⁵⁹ The third of these articles, following the London riots, was entitled "Kensington, Kentucky". In this article the writer, Brian Inglis, stated that "There is little similarity between the conditions in Kentucky and Kensington: but there are plenty of lessons to be learned here from the way the Louisville people went about settling their

racial differences." The writer further stated that if conditions were not improved in Britain for these new immigrants, they would become associated with crime and poor housing and condemned for what was a British responsibility, as African Americans were in the U.S.⁶⁰

The riots of the summer of 1958 shocked the British public. They undermined its confidence in its reputation for tolerance to the stranger and of its special relationship with members of the Commonwealth. The press reports during the Montgomery Bus Boycott and Little Rock had expressed support for the African American claims for justice and equality and assumed that such a situation would not arise in Britain. When the riots broke out, however, this assumption was challenged and the press and periodical reports reflected that comparisons were being drawn and, in reports of events at home, fed concerns about racial conflict. As the Civil Rights Movement in the United States developed and confrontation increased over the following years so interest was maintained at a high level preventing the concern over the riots in England from fading and ensuring that the issue of black/white relations did not go away.

vi. 1959 - 1962 Towards Immigration Control

During the three years that followed the race riots the subject of racial affairs in Britain became one which, although never reaching the same high profile as in the summer of 1958, rumbled on and was a fairly constant source of news, until it again became a 'hot issue' in late 1961 and 1962 as the debate over immigration control legislation approached the statute book. Despite the reduced interest during 1959 to mid 1961 three particular events did serve to bring the issue greater attention and remind the British public that racial violence was not restricted to the other side of the Atlantic. The first was the death of Kelso Cochrane, 'the Whitsun murder', in May 1959, which again focussed attention on Notting Hill Gate. The second event occurred in July 1961 when a rent boycott was called in Smethwick because of Council housing of Pakistanis. A *Times* report on this included a subheading, "Like Little Rock" demonstrating that the idea was still very much current.⁶¹ Thirdly, in August of the same year Middlesborough was the location for race riots. Despite reports quoting the police who argued that they were not exactly race riots but that race was used as an excuse by 'louts' out to cause trouble, the headlines stated "Race Trouble" and the reports state that police advised local 'coloured people' to go and stay with friends and avoid the area for the time being.⁶²

These events were set against a steady stream of reports on the situation in the United States which appeared to be getting more and more tense as further areas of discrimination were challenged and the status quo was under threat. Reports continued to focus on events at Little Rock, particularly during the summer months, in the approach to the scheduled re-opening of schools for the new academic year. Thus, the British read of riots, arrests and even bombs but they also read of the determination and dignity of southern African Americans and of areas where desegregation had been achieved with less resistance.

Coverage of the United States was wide in 1960. It was an election year and events in various parts of the world proved damaging to United States' prestige: the growth of anti-Americanism in Japan led to demonstrations; the summer of 1960 brought the confiscation of American property in Cuba and an increase in anti-American sentiments in South America; and in May 1960 the summit talks in Paris, designed to decrease tension, were wrecked by the Soviet shooting down of the U2 reconnaissance plane. This last event was particularly damaging as the Administration initially tried to deny that the aim of this flight was a spying mission but had, after the truth was made clear, to accept that this was the case resulting in considerable embarrassment.

The United States was a major component of British news, *The Times* running over sixty leading articles on the U.S.A. through the year. Out of these editorials only three dealt with the issue of race. *The Guardian*, in contrast, ran six on the Civil Rights Movement during the year. The number of editorials, however, did not give an adequate indication of the news coverage for there were constant reports covering further trouble at Little Rock and desegregation of schools in New Orleans; the lunch counter campaign and the tactics of passive resistance; voter registration campaigns; and the impact that increased numbers of black voters might have on the election.

Press coverage in 1961 brought the trials of the Freedom Riders and the problems of desegregating the university in Atlanta which included riots and the use of tear gas. In March of that year *The Guardian* ran two in-depth articles on the problems of desegregation in Farmville, Virginia, where the State legislature had simply repealed the law on compulsory education and closed the state schools and where whites who took a more moderate line were being subjected to intimidation.⁶³ In May there were further reports of violence in Alabama when martial law was declared in Montgomery and these were followed by reports on the increasing impatience of African Americans and the growth in the support for Black Muslims.

Throughout this period although much tension was reported both *The Times* and *The Guardian* were clear in their condemnation of segregationists and their recognition that African Americans were justified in their actions and to be admired for their tactics. A leader in *The Times* in 1960 described students at a lunch counter waiting for service as "ostentatiously immersed in classical poetry or scientific textbooks while a flag-waving mob of whites shout threats and provocation outside".⁶⁴ *The Guardian* described civil rights campaigners in New Orleans as "splendid in their quiet dignity".⁶⁵ In 1961, again, in a leader in *The Times* the editor wrote that what stood out was the "remarkably restrained and sensible behaviour of the Negroes"⁶⁶ whilst a leader in the *Manchester Guardian* described the African Americans in Montgomery as behaving "with dignity and self-restraint" which the writer argued demonstrated the absurdity of their inferior status.⁶⁷

Two interesting examples of local responses in England to the situation in the United States demonstrate the concern felt amongst many of the British for this situation in a 'foreign'

country. The first can be seen in the report in *The Guardian* of a collection which was made in Newcastle to provide aid to single mothers in Louisiana who were being denied welfare. This response seems especially significant as the issue could hardly have been described as widely reported amongst all the reports that emanated from America.⁶⁸ The second response was reported in *The Times* and concerned the decision of Hull Education Authority to give grants to two black American students to attend courses at Hull University, Hull being the birthplace of William Wilberforce.⁶⁹

In 1962, however, the British press demonstrated that it could cause a moral panic about blacks and Asians in Britain without any help from the Americans. Towards the end of December, 1961 a nine-year old girl from Pakistan was diagnosed as having smallpox and throughout the first two months of 1962 the issue was a front-page main news story in the national press. *The Times* ran fifty reports on the issue and *The People* ran the headline "Smallpox Storm 'Keep out Pakistanis' Call by MPs as Thousands of Britons Queue at Clinics".⁷⁰ The outbreak occurred midway between the second and third readings of the Commonwealth Immigrants Bill and was used by supporters of the Bill to fuel their case. *The Guardian* in its issue on 15 January stated, in a leader, that it would be sensible to require vaccination certificates before entry to the country was permitted and argued for greater take-up of vaccination amongst the British but not before fuelling fears in a report in the same issue under the headline "Millions may be Vulnerable". *The Times* also called for greater need for vaccination but described the way in which the outbreak was being used to fuel the immigration control lobby "unsavoury" and argued that it was not "good enough to blame the Pakistanis" as the disease could have come from any part of the world.⁷¹ Soon after the outbreak was officially declared over on 11 February the Commonwealth Immigrants Bill was on the statute book with its clearly discriminatory message, having excluded the Irish from limitations on the grounds that control was too difficult to impose, thus giving discrimination based on colour official backing.

The press reports on the United States throughout this period stressed support for the African American cause and the local responses in Newcastle and Hull reflect this sentiment in Britain. The reports, however, of racial tensions which still existed in Notting Hill and were growing in the West Midlands show that not all the British nation were dedicated to equal rights for ethnic minorities at home. Calls for immigration control had used the situation in the United States to press for this legislation as is described in the next chapter. Despite the support of the British press for the African American cause, the message that the presence of non-white racial minorities could give rise to conflict, would have had its impact on British perceptions.

vii. 1962-65 Civil Rights Comes to Britain

These years were ones of uncertainty and growing fears and ones in which the debate as to whether to control entry or attempt integration, in order to avoid an American situation developing, was set against a steady stream of reports on growing racial tension in the United States. These reports affected the debate in two ways: those demonstrating sympathy for the African American cause and stressing the use of non-violent tactics giving ammunition to the argument for integration and anti-discrimination legislation; and those in which the violence of the situation and the growth of black separatism was highlighted resulting in the push towards immigration control. Interest in the press was wide throughout these years but it was not until 1965 that a rather lame anti-discrimination act was passed. It was also in that year that the Labour Government introduced much stricter controls on immigration than had previously been contemplated set against the background of the Watts riots.

During the summer of 1962 it was the American race situation that again dominated reports on the United States in Britain. There were reports on the demonstrations in Albany and in June both *The Times* and *The Guardian* reported on the battle between the police and the Black Muslims in Los Angeles. *The Times* carried the headline, "Negro Sect Arouses Racial Tension", and described the group as an "entirely new and disturbing source of tension."⁷² News throughout September and October was concentrated on the reports from Mississippi and the attempt by James Meredith to desegregate Oxford University. There were reports of demonstrations, arrests, the use of tear gas and federal troops although throughout the courage of Meredith was stressed. This drama was overtaken in October by the Cuban Missile crisis which whilst increasing fears that the Cold War might become a 'hot' one raised Kennedy's support in Britain. Although some were critical of the risk he had taken, all were reminded how much the West depended on America for the maintenance of peace and how British security rested on the stability of the United States. The civil rights issue raised questions about that stability.

Links with Britain and the situation in Mississippi were made through reports of the death of Paul Guilhard, a journalist writing for the *Daily Sketch* who was killed during the disturbances in Oxford,⁷³ and through the correspondence sections of *The Times*. One letter from Birmingham, Alabama, criticised the tone of *The Times* in its reporting on the trouble in Mississippi. The writer stated that it should be remembered that the black population in Mississippi was forty-five per cent which was far greater than in Britain and "yet we have ended the invasion of Britain by Jamaican Negroes and still have racial troubles."⁷⁴ The writer appeared to infer by this that it was more than simply a matter of numbers; thus arguing against the notion that racialised relations were worse in America because of the greater numbers of African Americans. The second letter was from a Jamaican living in Britain who stated that he supported the Immigration Bill and argued that the situation in Britain was quite

different from that in the United States.⁷⁵ This response from a Jamaican could partly be explained by the fact that he was a resident of Surrey and possibly his experience of racial tolerance may have been different had he lived in the back streets of Brixton. It could also have arisen out of the sense of insecurity felt by many blacks who thought that their own position would be less threatened if immigration controls were implemented.

If the smallpox scare at the beginning of the year added fuel to the immigration control lobby then President Kennedy's Executive Order requiring Fair Housing in federally-assisted housing added weight to the push for anti-discrimination legislation. *The Times*, whilst regretting the delay and describing the Order as a cautious approach, stated that the Administration deserved credit for it.⁷⁶ *The Spectator* also published a very positive report on the workings of anti-discrimination laws in the States under the title "Racial Equality by Law - The American Example". In this it argued that the United States has exploded the myth that legislation was ineffective and that this was "one of the most striking reforms of modern social history". The report also stated that the situation in Britain, though different, was getting worse.⁷⁷

The months of May and August in 1963 carried the most concentrated coverage of the Civil Rights Movement with the troubles in Birmingham, Alabama and the March on Washington. In that year *The Times* carried ten leaders on the situation and in May *The Guardian* ran 28 reports and one leader on Alabama. *The Guardian* compared the situations in the United States and Britain in a leader entitled "Crisis Point in Alabama" in which it stated that there was now a great need for anti-discrimination legislation in America but also that it was not possible to be complacent in Britain. It went on to state that although the situation in the southern states was clearly worse than that in Britain the situation in the northern states was not so very different.⁷⁸ In June the brutal killing of Medgar Evers increased the sense of urgency for action and in a leader *The Guardian* took its message even further, again stating that there was no need "to feel self-righteous here" and arguing that "If the Americans have a moral responsibility for descendants of Negro slaves ... Britain has an equal responsibility for the descendants of slaves of the British West Indies".⁷⁹

The Times also gave its approval to the President's attempt to increase laws to protect civil rights in a leader entitled "The President's Brave Move" though without making a comparison with the situation in Britain. The leader stated that the major benefits would probably lie in a decrease in young black unemployment which was a "source of unrest" and that it would be tragic if he failed and that success would be a significant step forward.⁸⁰ *The Times* demonstrated the increased awareness of the situation in the northern states that had been evident in *The Guardian*. In a long article from Our Washington Correspondent entitled "The American Negro Giant Awakes" the writer gave a description of the situation in the north explaining that although de jure segregation did not exist in the north, the housing situation created de facto segregation. It went on to pose the question whether the moderate leaders,

such as Martin Luther King, could continue to "manipulate the giant they have unleashed" through their limited success or if increased impatience would drive many African Americans into the arms of the more militant Black Muslims. The article concluded by stating that "in this task the United States deserves the sympathy of its friends."⁸¹

This theme was echoed in a transcript of a talk by an African American Harvard scholar at Cambridge, Haywood Burns, which was broadcast on the Third Programme and was published in *The Listener*. In this the commentator warned that support for the Black Muslims would grow if progress was too slow. He also quoted a poem by Langston Hughes which asked "What happens to a dream deferred?" and after suggesting some possible outcomes ended with the words "or does it just explode?"⁸² *The Spectator* also drew attention to this threat in an article entitled "The Rising Tide of Colour" in which it stated that the lesson according to a newly published book *The Negro Revolt* by Louis E. Lomax was that "Negroes are tired of waiting". The report also stressed that the threat may not come from the south but from Washington, the seat of government, where fifty per cent of the population were black.⁸³

This message was to be underlined by the March on Washington that summer. The coverage of this major event was wide and largely positive, a *Times* leader describing it as a "Demonstration of good sense and controlled passion" and one that should send a message to "all countries, including Britain and certainly South Africa". The report did, however, note that there was a feeling of time running out and that "Now" was the main demand.⁸⁴ *The Times* also carried an item on the march to the United States Embassy in London organised by the Afro-Asian Caribbean Organization in support of the action in Washington which increased awareness in the British population of the concerns for the American blacks amongst Britain's own black population.⁸⁵ In an article covering the Washington march, the *Daily Telegraph* referred to "Negro bitterness...mounting". It further made the point that, "For all the gravity of the problem, the negroes in the US are and will remain a minority...They cannot like the people of some emergent African nation gain control of their destiny by force."⁸⁶ This idea reinforced the notion of the similarity of the racial situation between Britain and America.

The theme of time running out and the rise of militancy amongst African Americans was also covered in *New Society*. In a description of a recent visit to New York Colin MacInnes stated that "The Negro peoples of America are at war: and you, if you're white, whatever your intentions, are the enemy."⁸⁷ C.L.R. James, however, whilst stating that "Coloured people in Britain are being elevated into the position of a British national problem" denied that the situation was similar to that in the United States. He argued that the majority of 'coloured people' had little problem in Britain but that "There is constantly among anti-racists, if not the actual statement, a significant silence which gives the impression that we English people in Britain should not be so quick to condemn what is taking place in the United States because we have the same thing. But the situation in Britain bears no relation whatever, no possible relation to what is taking place in the United States."⁸⁸ What James was saying

was correct, though he underplayed the level of discrimination, but it was clearly not sufficient to point to the differences in the transatlantic situations if perceptions, often fed by the press, contradicted these. When public opinion counts, as it does in the issue of racialised relations, then perceptions form the base.

Parallels between the plight of American and British blacks, particularly West Indians, had already been drawn earlier in the year by the Bristol Bus boycott which became a front-page story in May against the background of reports on Birmingham, Alabama. In a leader *The Times* stated that the "colour problem in Britain is not becoming easier", no question here as to whether it existed or not. It went on to decry the "ostrich-like bewilderment of many in Britain" and to argue that although there have been some successes in integration, such as in the case of London Transport, it is still a "sensitive and all too menacing field".⁸⁹ The *New Statesman* made the connection clear in an article by John Morgan in which he described the situation in Alabama as "ugly" and then stated that it was "disconcerting to hear a young West Indian in Bristol's City Road echo almost word for word complaints about discrimination that I'd been offered by Negroes in the U.S. last month."⁹⁰

In September the British read with dismay about the bomb in Birmingham, Alabama, which was particularly shocking in that the victims were young girls leaving Sunday School. It gave rise to a deep sense of outrage and more riots, although these were played down in the press. An article in November by Brian Priestland, *The Times'* Midlands Correspondent who had a particular interest in racialised relations and was to highlight the Smethwick campaign in his reports the following year, brought Birmingham, Alabama, home to the British in his description of discrimination in Birmingham, England. The article was headed "Facing the Failure of Integration" and drew attention to the potential risk involved with the creation of a "Harlem" in Birmingham and the effects this might have on "second generation coloured immigrants".⁹¹ This was, of course, just before the assassination of Kennedy with all the concerns about the violence in American society and fears for the future that this raised.

In 1964 interest in the Civil Rights Movement was maintained with both *The Times* and *The Guardian* carrying ten editorials on the situation. Interest was particularly marked in March as Johnson took up the Civil Rights Bill and proceeded to push it through Congress, cashing in on the national mood of guilt and sorrow following the death of Kennedy. A *Guardian* leader approved the Bill stating that if it now got through the House it would be a "victory for the decency and humanity of ordinary Americans, white and black" and that it should be emulated in Britain.⁹² In this way the American experience was used to fuel pressure for anti-discrimination legislation at home.

Fears about rising racial tensions were also fed throughout March as reports came in on the split in the Black Muslims and the name of Malcolm X became well known in Britain. *The Times* gave its main editorial to the issue in March stating that this split might introduce "a new significant element into the racial struggle" and described the attraction it held for

African Americans who have "despaired of a truly integrated society, observed the hypocrisy of the white man and been disappointed by the false promises of legal victories."⁹³ The idea was supported by an article by Alistair Cooke in *The Guardian* entitled "All White Men now the Enemy" which pointed to a recent poll in the U.S. which showed that "over forty-two per cent of Afro-Americans now felt that the whites intended to keep them down whatever". His piece also recorded that "two Negroes who arrived at a Ku Klux Klan meeting in Atlanta were welcomed when they disclosed that they had come as observers for the Black Muslims."⁹⁴

Reports of declining black faith in the system raised the temperature, as did the riots that were a feature of that spring. These were attributed to the attempts in Congress, through a filibuster, to prevent the passage of the Civil Rights Bill. During the summer reports were published on the disappearance of Civil Rights workers in Mississippi and the riots that broke out again in July in Harlem and Rochester. In August the United States also dominated the news when the U.S.S. Maddox was attacked in the Gulf of Tonkin. This was not a race issue, although it was to become connected with race when the disproportionate number of blacks that were being sent out to Vietnam was publicised and the promise of the Great Society seemed to fail through lack of resources as more and more money was poured into the war.

1964 was an election year in America, as it was in Britain, and the race issue was to be a feature of both. Fears were raised through the British press that Goldwater, portrayed as a 'trigger-happy' right winger, might be brought into office through the white backlash created by the Civil Rights Movement, what Johnson termed the 'frontlash'.⁹⁵ It was argued that this could have serious consequences for British national security. On the British election Brian Priestly attempted to attract the nation's attention to the racial elements apparent in the Conservative campaign by Peter Griffiths in Smethwick in two long articles in *The Times*.⁹⁶ Priestly emphasised that Smethwick was alone in the racist tone of its campaign and that in other parts of the country with large coloured immigrant populations the issue had been underplayed. The danger was that use of this tactic would spread, Priestly argued, particularly if it appeared to be successful. Smethwick was the result of a particularly vigorous anti-immigrant local campaign which had been active in the area for a few years.⁹⁷ Instead of following Priestly's lead Ann Dummett has described the Smethwick campaign as being a turning point in which:

newspapers began seeking out and featuring prominently every kind of story where a sensational race angle could be introduced, taking for granted a popular, grass-roots racism that did not yet universally exist: when Gordon-Walker stood again a few months later at Leyton reporters kept putting into their reports of the by-election little queries about whether 'race' would be an issue in the campaign, and although there was no sign at all of any racial issues the repeated questions themselves probably helped both politicians and public conclude, after Gordon-Walker's second defeat, that it was again because of race that he had lost. It was necessary, the Labour Party clearly then believed to ditch Gordon-Walker and along with him any reputation the party might have for being soft on immigrants, if it was to maintain electoral success.⁹⁸

In fact, Griffiths' methods, despite his success, were not emulated in other campaigns and it was not until 1968 that Enoch Powell, launching his campaign to prevent the passage of the Race Relations Bill, was to use similar racist language on the open political stage. If the temptation to employ these tactics was generally resisted the result in Smethwick did, however, dent the confidence of the Labour Government and gave it the impression that nothing less than a strong stand on racial questions would be acceptable to the nation.

In December both Malcolm X and Martin Luther King visited London increasing interest in the racial conflict in America and bringing with them their own messages. It was actually Malcolm X's second visit to England that year. He had spoken in London during July and, as *The Guardian* reported, warned of a "blood-bath in America," This was on his way to Cairo to attend the Conference of African Heads of State where *The Guardian* guessed he would receive a polite hearing and possibly some sympathy.⁹⁹ His second visit was in order to speak at Manchester University and *The Guardian* reported his speech under the heading "Ballot or Bullet Warning".¹⁰⁰ In a later report in the same paper the journalist wrote that Malcolm X, when questioned about Martin Luther King, answered that King used to be considered a communist but since the arrival of Black Muslims "the whites thank the Lord for Martin Luther King".¹⁰¹ During a further visit at the end of December to speak at the Oxford Union Debate on the motion 'that extremism in the defence of liberty is no vice', a Goldwater slogan, Malcolm X recorded an interview to be broadcast on the Third Programme. The programme was not actually sent out until after his death. The reason given for withholding the broadcast, according to the transcript, was that the activities of Malcolm X were not part of the "Integration" story.

When Martin Luther King visited London he was at the highest point of his international prestige, having just been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. On his visit to London he was in transit to Oslo to collect the Prize and interest in his visit was intense and support for his cause strong. *The Guardian* reported that his sermon in St. Paul's drew more than 4,000 people who came to hear him speak on racial justice and non-violence and that "He did not disappoint them, he said what we hoped he would and as well as we can hope to hear it said."¹⁰² *The Times* also covered his speech but on a slightly less positive note reported that at a press conference King had stated that Britain had lessons to learn from the American experience, namely that moral pressure can be a powerful weapon, this under the headline, "Dr. King's Racial Warning to Britain".¹⁰³ During this visit King was also interviewed on the BBC 2 programme *Encounter* during which he was questioned about black riots and replied that there was evidence of frustration but that the vast majority of African Americans recognised the futility of violence while understanding the causes. Although in Britain King represented the moderate side of the Civil Rights Movement he did not underestimate the struggle that was still to come and in his speech in Oslo, which was reported in full in Britain, talked of an economic boycott in Mississippi as a protest at the lack of justice.

In February 1965 Malcolm X was again in the British news when he visited Smethwick.¹⁰⁴ This was only a few days after the Government had announced the increased restriction on immigration from the Commonwealth. The *Daily Telegraph*, in keeping with its traditional Conservative support, drew attention to Labour's change of policy since the days when Gaitskell denounced the Conservatives for their first restrictive bill. The report stated, "when Labour was in opposition it denounced immigration restrictions, but now it is critical of the Conservatives for their lack of vigour." It further argued that what was needed was to cut down on illegal immigrants, the "methods of evasion are legion";¹⁰⁵ using terms that would hardly be out of place in some papers today. The *Daily Telegraph* also carried two reports on Malcolm X's visit. In a report on his visit to Smethwick the paper included a quote from the Mayor who had stated that it was regrettable that he had used Smethwick for his own particular platform.¹⁰⁶ Many readers would have echoed the sentiments of the Mayor and the visit and the coverage of it in the press would have also served to strengthen the idea that Britain was not immune from the threat of black militancy.

When *The Times* covered Malcolm X's visit to London and Smethwick it reported that his visit to the Midlands had been at the invitation of the BBC who filmed him. It was also stated that, at a press conference in the Midlands, Malcolm X had said that "the English were becoming increasingly racist and that Smethwick could develop into a brutally violent affair." This tone, however, was moderated by a comment from Cedric Taylor of the Standing Conference of West Indian Organisations who argued that conditions here were different from Alabama and that British West Indians would not follow a Malcolm X. The report in *The Times* also covered his speech later the same day which he had delivered at the London School of Economics. In this speech to a "packed house", the report stated, he had declared "you used to be proud of your lack of colour problem but with more immigration the African revolution has moved from outside to inside the house." The article reflected the attitude of the BBC when it indicated that the "activities of Malcolm X are hardly a contribution towards the integration of immigrants and native white people in Britain."¹⁰⁷

The following week the Cambridge Union debate was on the motion, "The American Dream is at the expense of the American Negro" and the motion was carried by 544 to 164. Peter Griffiths asked the Home Secretary if he would ban future visits to England by Malcolm X and was told that the situation would be kept under review. Two days later, however, news came in of Malcolm X's assassination and, given his recent publicity in England, interest was strong. All the national papers reported this event and *The Guardian* which termed him an "apostle of violence" included in the report Malcolm X's reference to West Indians in England who, he stated, were looking for an identity. The report also included his reply to the question "What would you do in Smethwick?" which was "Not wait for them to set up the gas ovens."¹⁰⁸ A later piece in *The Times* reported on James Baldwin's visit to London. This piece referred to Baldwin's comment that he thought Britain would find ways to deal with its 'colour problem'

before it became an 'hysterical disease', "Britain is no longer white and it now depends on whether you accept that fact or not."¹⁰⁹

The following month the press was full of news from Selma. *The Times* carried seventeen pieces on the crisis in March plus one leading article. The leader reported on "LBJ's rallying cry to the nation to meet the challenge at Selma" and went on to state that "We cannot feel complacent in Britain....we cannot escape the same challenge and need to face it with honesty."¹¹⁰ A second leader took a more positive tone praising the African Americans who "have endured much" and yet stuck to their non-violent tactics. It quoted Johnson who said that the real heroes were the American 'Negroes' who showed "persistent bravery and belief in democracy." The message here was of respect and sympathy for African Americans and was echoed in the following June by reports of the gift of a stained glass window to replace the one destroyed by the bomb in Birmingham. This was a gift from Wales and was supported by the local press and churches of all denominations in Wales. The amount raised was over £900 although no one was allowed to donate more than half a crown. The artist, John Petts, visited Alabama to discuss the design and *The Times* report also published a large photograph of the finished window which bore the words "You Do To Me" under an image of Christ crucified.¹¹¹

This positive act, however, demonstrating solidarity with the African American struggle was just before two major events again linked the situation in Britain with that in the United States. The first was the publication of the Government's White Paper on Immigration and further racial disturbances in Wolverhampton and the second was the explosion in Los Angeles which came to be known as 'Watts'. The press response to the White Paper was largely negative: criticisms ranging from complaints that it did not go far enough to promote integration; that the whole basis of the controls was illiberal; the Paper had been rushed through without adequate thought as to its implementation and that the question of repatriation should not be left to the discretion of a Minister. *The Economist* was critical on the grounds that the new controls would damage industry by exacerbating the already severe labour shortage and termed the measure a "Black Paper".¹¹²

The Guardian made a clear connection with the United States in two of its reports. The first, under the title "Racial Intolerance - Official?" by Jean Stead, argued that the White Paper was prejudiced whatever the reasons given. The writer then described the reaction of a friend recently returned from the northern states of America who stated that she was "shocked" by the indifference here, "Americans accept the need to cope with the situation. People here seem to think that if they close their eyes the colour problem will magically disappear."¹¹³ A second report was a leader on the liberalising of immigration laws in the United States which quoted Johnson who explained that the existing system could not exist with the tradition "not of asking where a person comes from but what his personal qualities are." The leader then went on to ask "Is this not an English tradition too - or have we forgotten it?"¹¹⁴

Throughout the debate on the effects of the White Paper reports were flooding in on the riots in Watts. These came at, what *The Times* called, a "tragically ironic moment"¹¹⁵ as Johnson had, only the week before, signed the Voting Rights Bill protecting the right to vote. The *Daily Telegraph* had reported the event with a large bold headline on the front page reading "Johnson Strikes Away Negroes' Shackles".¹¹⁶ Within a week this positive message on the development of civil rights was swept away by the riots. The headlines in the *Daily Telegraph* now shouted "Riot City calls in Troops" and "5000 running wild in black ghetto".¹¹⁷ The press was full of reports about arrests, looting, violence and the use of troops, and this time, much of the violence, including the use of guns, was attributed to the African Americans. Many reports stressed the lack of respect for the police and the frustration of black Americans who, after years of struggle, still perceived themselves to be denied equal opportunities. Many of these reports made the connection with the situation in Britain.

The Guardian, in a leader entitled "Los Angeles and Nearer Home", argued that these events should make us examine our own attitude¹¹⁸ and in a second leader the following week suggested that the "British Government should be more dynamic in dealing with the problems of racial prejudice and urban squalor if we are to avoid Los Angeles here."¹¹⁹ A leader in the *Daily Express* took a slightly more positive note and avoided criticism of the government by stating that "Now the riots have died down it is a time for thankfulness that this country has been spared the explosion of racial hatred which feverish heat and bad living conditions can produce" though it is unclear to whom these thanks should have been directed.¹²⁰ The *New Statesman* saw a lesson in Los Angeles for Britain, pointing out that the riots had more to do with social inequality than civil rights. It stated that the "cowardly Commonwealth Immigrant Act seems to imply that the problem is caused by numbers of coloured immigrants rather than an inability of government to tackle social and economic problems."¹²¹ In this way Watts was used to attack the Government which was already under pressure following an economic crisis in May which had resulted in the Government being obliged to negotiate an I.M.F. loan.

In the same week that Watts hit the headlines stories came in about racial disturbances in the Midlands. On the same page in *The Guardian* as their leader entitled "Los Angeles and Nearer Home" appeared, as if to strengthen the message, a letter was printed expressing concern about cross burning and the activities of the Ku Klux Klan in Leicester. On the same day the *Daily Telegraph* also reported a "serious racial incident" in Wolverhampton in which two white women were stabbed¹²² and on the same page a report on the statement by the West Indian Standing Conference of London that they needed a national organisation to withstand threats from the KKK. This piece quoted a spokesman as saying "We do not preach hatred against whites but need to prevent what is happening in Birmingham, Alabama and Los Angeles..happening here". On the same day *The Times* also ran a long article on the activities of the KKK in Britain, stating that at least three crosses had been burnt in the Midlands, that books published in the 'deep south' of America had been circulating for a few years and that the

Grand Wizard, Robert Sheldon, had stated that he had received many letters of support from Britain.¹²³ A *Spectator* report of the same week drew on all three issues to make its point, the riots in Watts, the troubles in the Midlands and the White Paper. It argued that the situation of social deprivation which gave rise to Watts also existed in Britain, as was demonstrated by the trouble in the Midlands, and that the White Paper had the effect of officially endorsing racial discrimination. It also stated that "Los Angeles - its Negro population is only six per cent - serves as an exaggerated mirror for what might sometime be happening here."¹²⁴

During this summer the threat of major racial violence must have seemed very close in Britain. As if to add to this perception, the *Spectator* printed another article in November which also brought all these threads together. It was an item on the growth of the Racial Adjustment Action Society (RAAS)¹²⁵ which was founded by Michael de Frietas, often referred to in the press as Michael X. The report stressed the influences of Malcolm X and the situation in the United States on De Frietas and the impact of the White Paper which had seen the membership of RAAS grow.¹²⁶

Before completing this examination of 1965 it should be mentioned that two further major reports provide a demonstration of the importance being accorded to racial issues at the time. The first, at the beginning of the year, was a series of eleven articles printed in *The Times* under the ominous sounding title, "The Dark Million". These reports were an attempt to rectify what was seen as a severe lack of information as to the real situation concerning immigration and the problems facing newly arrived immigrants in this country. They touched on such issues as housing, health, employment and the law. The first of these articles quoted Marion Glean, "midwife to CARD",¹²⁷ who stated that although Smethwick was a national scandal and "the situation was different from the United States, perhaps it could serve the same function and expose discrimination". The last article stated that "The dark million presents us with the greatest challenge in our history."¹²⁸ The second large study was the set of Reith Lectures for that year which were delivered by Robert Gardiner. It was the eighteenth in the series that the BBC had produced and is significant that it should have been devoted to racism in that year. An introduction to the lectures, which was printed in *The Listener*, together with all the lectures in full, stated that "One has only to think of the present Rhodesian crisis, of the riots in Los Angeles, of the departure of South Africa from the Commonwealth, of the incidents in London's Notting Hill." ¹²⁹ It is interesting to note that the only place included in this list without direct connections with Britain is that of Los Angeles demonstrating that, in the mind of the writer, it was also having an impact on British perceptions.

Throughout the years of 1962 to 1965 a high level of interest was maintained in the press though with a discernible shift in focus demanded by the progress of the struggle for Civil Rights. The reports, whilst in the main still supporting African Americans, also included mention of their increasing impatience, the splits that began to develop after the high point of cooperation during the March on Washington and the rise of black separatism. American

visitors, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, perhaps over-emphasised the degree of racism in Britain but in doing so helped to strengthen concerns about the future. The same could be said of reports on Watts which seemed to demonstrate the failure of legislation to tackle the problem and also highlighted the issue of unemployed alienated black youth which was already beginning to worry those who considered the issue of second generation blacks in Britain.

viii. 1966 - 1967 Black Power Comes to Britain

In terms of British interest in the Civil Rights Movement 1965 marked the high point. The coverage of events during 1966 was lighter with *The Times* only producing four leaders and *The Guardian* only three. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, there were many other issues that dominated the press in Britain. The publication of the Defence White Paper gave rise to much discussion concerning Britain's role in the world order. In March Wilson called an election. Rhodesia commanded the attention of the nation and the summer brought an economic crisis and a dockers' strike. This is not to say that interest in America waned, however, but the issue of the day was Vietnam, *The Times* carrying fifty-one items on the war during July and August alone and nineteen leading articles throughout the year.

Secondly, the Civil Rights Movement appeared to be in the doldrums. There were no more marches on Washington nor stories of brave students facing white segregationist attacks at lunch counters or Universities with the dignity of non-violence. Nor were there reports of brave seamstresses demanding nothing more than the right to a seat on the bus. Many black Americans were becoming impatient with the role of passive underdog. The riots in Watts had sapped support for their cause amongst many white liberals and Johnson saw ingratitude for his efforts and, besides, was preoccupied with Vietnam. Thus, the reports from America tended to be negative in their impact. A leader in *The Times* reflected this stating that the tactics of non-violence will be more difficult to maintain without the support of white liberals and Federal authorities.¹³⁰ A later report, under the heading "Negroes claim right to Self-Defence", made the point that because the black population in the U.S. was only ten per cent they were obliged not only for moral but for financial support on whites. It then further stated that although this compelled moderation "frustration will be quickly achieved if it does not bring results."¹³¹

The only event which might have had a positive impact on British perceptions was James Meredith's decision, in June, to take his solitary walk from Memphis to Jackson. He was already known in Britain through his brave stand at the University of Mississippi and his aim was to undertake this march as a demonstration of individual courage which might serve to strengthen the will of others to exercise their right to vote. When his endeavour was abruptly cut short through the action of a would-be assassin Martin Luther King and members of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Campaign for Racial Equality

(CORE) determined to complete the walk in his place. After this the majority of the reports in Britain became more negative as the splits within the Movement became apparent.

This appeared to be a turning point in the British press reporting of the Civil Rights Movement as more reports stressed the growth of 'black power' and disillusion with integration. A leader in *The Times* described "the growing impatience" of African Americans and reported on the cries of "Freedom Now" and "Black Power" that were to be heard on the march.¹³² Many reports, however, did attempt to underplay the implied threat of 'black power' which to many smacked of confrontation. The *New Statesman* made a valiant effort in two reports at the time. It argued that there was nothing really new about 'black power' and "although it might be frightening to many Americans it really means the end of black fear."¹³³ A second article which discussed the likely position SCLC would take between the extremes of SNCC and NAACP stated that the "poor Negro knew long ago what 'black power' was all about before their leaders and the whites began defining it for them."¹³⁴

If reports about 'black power' fed negative perceptions about the presence of a black minority within a white society then the riots that broke out in the summer of that year increased the impression. Although the riots in Chicago did not have the impact that Watts had done, *The Times* carrying seventeen reports on them, there was the added concern over the role of 'black power' and Martin Luther King. The earlier moral leader seemed to be having less impact in the northern cities than he had, previously, had on his own kind, the rural black Southerner. The more cynical urban African American was less amenable to his doctrine of non-violence and this concern was reflected in the British press.

One issue that raised interest in September was the attempt to get the extended Civil Rights Bill through Congress. The main stumbling block was over discrimination in the rental of accommodation. It was not a big issue for the majority of poor African Americans but one of considerable interest to those who had reached the middle-classes and still found their way out of the ghetto difficult. The *New Statesman* summed up the attitude of many whites, "it was bad enough having to accept Negro children in their schools but living next door."¹³⁵ According to the same report even the liberal *Washington Post* was beginning to blame the blacks and put down the response in Congress to their move away from non-violence which had alienated the white community. This article also stated that in the United States some of the "more cosmopolitan blacks" put this down to basic Anglo-Saxon attitudes and quoted Smethwick and the Immigration Acts in Britain. *The Economist* covered the unsteady passage of the Civil Rights Bill in an article entitled "Shades of Black Power". It also put much of the resistance of Congress down to the change in the mood of the black struggle and gave a full description of the various groups which could be listed under the heading 'black power', including mention of the emergence of the Black Panthers.

It was Vietnam, however, that was the issue of the day as far as developments in the United States were concerned. Concern about the Vietnam conflict was also felt in Britain.

Evidence of this concern was demonstrated in February by the action of the hundred Members of Parliament who signed a letter to Senator Fulbright protesting against American policy in Vietnam. It was seen in Wilson's attempt at diplomacy through negotiations with Kosygin in the summer. There was further evidence in the demonstrations in Grosvenor Square and it was reflected in the British press. The 'special relationship' was under some stress and the possibility of joining the EEC became more attractive. The year of 1966, however, could be called the lull before the storm as, in 1967, the black struggle in America once more demanded British attention and the nation looked again at its own 'colour problem'.

The period from the Spring of 1967 to the Spring of 1968 saw the final stage of the growth of fears concerning the development of racial antagonisms of an almost American scale in Britain. The Commonwealth Immigrants Bill of 1968 and the extension to the Race Relations Bill later that year provided evidence of these fears and the debate surrounding the passage of both these pieces of legislation were full of references to the situation in the United States. By this stage few were arguing that such a situation could not arise in Britain, as they had in the late fifties. Now the feeling was one which stressed that time was running out and there was little debate about whether Britain should turn to immigration control or anti-discrimination legislation. The general consensus seemed to be that both would be required and the discussion centred rather on what form the legislation should take.

Throughout the Spring the British public read reports on the continued growth of Black Power and fears in America of another 'long hot summer' to come. In January *The Times* reported on Stokely Carmichael's speech in Detroit in which he was quoted as stating "The Vietcong have learnt that they have the right to fightwe must learn that also."¹³⁶ Both the names of Detroit and Stokely Carmichael were to be heard widely in Britain before the year was over. May and June saw further reports on concerns about racial violence in *The Times*. An article early in May focussed on American police attempts to prepare themselves for what the summer might bring through the introduction of more sophisticated anti-riot equipment and pointed to Martin Luther King's decision to join the peace movement as a factor in increasing the threat. The report concluded, "More violence is inevitable and law and order must be maintained, hence the preparations to contain the Negro ghettos by force, if necessary, until peace and democracy are established in Vietnam."¹³⁷

Reports in June continued to echo these fears and often included references to Black Power leaders linked to unrest. Amongst these was one which told of violence in Dayton, Ohio, after a speech by Rap H. Brown but which also reported, on a more positive note, that violence had been averted in Tampa through the action of a group of young blacks who had set up a "City youth patrol". This report, however, also told of violence in Cincinnati and stressed that for the first time violence had spread to "predominantly white neighbourhoods".¹³⁸ Another, a week later, reported on disturbances in Atlanta at a rally at which Stokely Carmichael had

addressed the crowd.¹³⁹ A leader at the beginning of July examined the situation and highlighted the frustration of African Americans:

Their frustration and disillusion with white society are understandable. In spite of all the real progress that has been made in recent years the general status of the Negro in the United States remains a disgrace to a country of such wealth and high ideals. In the final analysis, the responsibility for keeping up the momentum of reform still lies with the white power structure.¹⁴⁰

The Observer used the situation in America to press for anti-discrimination legislation that Spring following the publication of a report commissioned by the Political and Economic Planning Department to look into the extent of racial discrimination in Britain. The results of this report exposed a far greater level of discrimination than had been anticipated. A leader in April argued that legislation was necessary but would not be the complete solution stating, "The American experience has shown both the need for such an approach and its limits" and went on to state that there was also a need for "positive discrimination in favour of the presently under-privileged". The final sentence was unambiguous, "On a smaller scale, but with some extra complications, we henceforth face the problem that has long confronted the United States."¹⁴¹ An article by Nora Beloff, Political Correspondent for *The Observer*, continued this argument when she reported on a speech by Roy Jenkins stating that "American experience provides overwhelming evidence that ... although legislation cannot change hearts and minds it can affect behaviour." She then quoted the Home Secretary who had declared that "For us to fall behind America in the leadership the Government offers towards racial tolerance would be an intolerable situation. But I do not believe for a moment this will happen."¹⁴²

The Economist also took up this theme in pressing for legislation. In an article under the heading "Let the Law Lead" it argued that there was a need for action. The report concluded:

Before long yet another report, from the Commission headed by Professor Street,¹⁴³ will suggest how British law might benefit from the experience of other countries. It may be asked whether the extreme experience of a country like the United States has any relevance here. The answer is that, even in America, Watts could not have happened forty years ago. Unless we start learning from the American experience and start acting upon it before present discrimination hardens, then, long before forty years are past, a Watts is all too liable to happen here.¹⁴⁴

All these reports acted in a way as an introduction for the month of July in which the fears of widescale violence in the United States became reality and the threat to Britain seemed even greater through three main events. The first of these was the visit to Britain by Stokely Carmichael who was already known in Britain as a leader of the Black Power movement through reports of his activities in America. *The Observer* carried a full page report of an

interview by Colin McGlashan with Carmichael under the headline "Mainspring of Black Power". It described him as a "man to hate and fear - and for America's young, militant and growing black nationalist movement, the man to follow." It then connected him with Britain by pointing out that "Like several other American Negro militants, Carmichael was born under British rule in the West Indies" and reported that "The striking thing is that England and an English-style education made Carmichael and governs his thinking today."¹⁴⁵

An initial response in *The Times* was fairly calm and reported on Carmichael's speech at the International Conference on the Dialectics of Liberation at which he was only one of the speakers, although no others were mentioned in the report. This piece argued that although he was uncompromising he provided a "useful measure against which to measure one's own racism". It also argued that his attitudes might be described as extreme but he was against irrelevancy and that "there was a need for a hard, clear stare at the relationship of black and white."¹⁴⁶ This report contrasts with later ones which took a more emotive line but appeared after riots had broken out in Detroit and Duncan Sandys had raised the temperature in Britain with calls for immigration control and for Carmichael to be banned.

The second event in July which brought racial tensions in Britain to the headlines was the publication of a Government-sponsored Report into the integration of second generation blacks. This Report was produced by the Youth Services Development Council Committee and its findings were widely covered in the press. Both *The Guardian* and the *Daily Express* took a fairly low-key approach and neither made any mention of the situation in the United States. *The Guardian* item, in fact, was quite positive and quoted Denis Howell, Parliamentary Under-Secretary, who called the Report encouraging and said that "we have got a few years before many leave school to get it right."¹⁴⁷

The reports in *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*, however, clearly saw a link with the situation in the United States and stressed the dangers. Under the headline "Race Riot Danger in Britain" *The Times* quoted the Report which stated that the "time for action is now, tomorrow may be too late". It quoted Paul Stephenson, who had led the Bristol bus boycott in 1963 and was one of the authors of the Report. Stephenson had declared, according to the article, "The situation in the United States can only worsen, I believe." There is no clear explanation as to why this quote was relevant to a report dealing with the situation in Britain but presumably it was because the author had assumed that readers would have already drawn comparisons with America themselves.¹⁴⁸ The *Daily Telegraph* also quoted Paul Stephenson and under the heading "Britain may face Race Riots, says Report, Swifter Integration Urged" chose a quote from the Report which gave quite a contrary impression to that included in *The Guardian*. This stated that "Race riots similar to those in America could spread to Britain if young coloured immigrants are not swiftly integrated into society."¹⁴⁹

Only three days later the press was full of reports of violence in the United States, particularly the riots in Detroit and President Johnson's decision to send in troops which

provided the third major factor in the raising of racial tension awareness in Britain. On this same day, 25 July, the press also covered events at home which served to reinforce the links with the situation in America. These were: firstly, the pronouncements by Duncan Sandys, the Shadow Commonwealth Secretary, responding to both the visit by Stokely Carmichael and the Youth Services Report; secondly, the speech delivered in Reading by Michael de Freitas (Michael X) who had stood in for Carmichael after his sudden departure; and thirdly, the announcement by David Ennals that the Government intended to introduce new legislation to ease racial tensions. Most of the pieces on Detroit were fairly straightforward reports, though they made grim reading. Many of the reports on the speeches in Britain, however, made reference to the situation in the United States and if they did not then the juxtaposition of the reports with reports on Detroit made the links.

The report in *The Guardian* by Alistair Cooke called the riots in Detroit only the worst of several riots that have already taken place in the United States this year.¹⁵⁰ A leader in the same issue argued that it was a case of "reaction, not revolution" and went on to explain that "some excited observers have called it a revolution - if it is, it would be a revolution that could only have one end, a savage victory for the white power structure which would put Negro progress towards equality back thirty or forty years." Louis Heren for *The Times* described the riots as the gravest strife since the Civil War¹⁵¹ and the *Daily Telegraph* in its front page report stressed the importance of the legislation before Congress. It pointed out that the proposed extension to the Civil Rights Bill was likely to be rejected but that the Anti-Riot Bill would probably be passed and went on to state that this Bill was aimed at militant civil rights leaders who "...many in Congress believed to be responsible for stirring the Negroes to the point of rioting."¹⁵² Thus, implying that blame for the riots lay rather with extremist black leaders than with social conditions facing African Americans.

Immediately beside this report on Detroit the *Daily Telegraph* carried two smaller relevant items. The first reported Roy Jenkins' request for a report on Stokely Carmichael and referred specifically to a speech Carmichael had delivered whilst in England, "It is time to let the Whites know we are going to take over. If they don't like it, we will stamp them out, using violence and any other means necessary." The second piece referred to Duncan Sandys' speech in Streatham in which he urged not simply an end to immigration but the introduction of a policy of repatriation when he argued that the Government should offer to pay the fares of immigrants who wished to return home stating "Race riots like those in America would occur in Britain unless something was done quickly about coloured immigration."¹⁵³

The *Daily Express* also covered the speech by Sandys and included in the report mention of the fears raised in his speech at the prospect of "the breeding of millions of half-caste children" which would produce, he declared, a "generation of misfits." These fears demonstrated how the anti-immigration sentiments had deepened. It was not just a case of concern for competition for jobs and housing but a concern for British identity. Although this

concern was not new it was not usually expressed so clearly in public. The article also referred to the announcement by David Ennals though it gave it less prominence than the report on Sandys.¹⁵⁴ In contrast, *The Times* whilst reporting both these views gave higher profile to the speech by Ennals though it made the link with the United States clear through its choice of quotes. It held that the Government intended to strengthen anti-discrimination legislation and reported that Ennals, who had recently returned from a visit to the United States, had stated that "there was no inevitability that the American experience of racial violence would be repeated here. The Government is determined that this will not happen."¹⁵⁵ As if to temper this possibly positive report, however, the paper had also carried a story on the front page on the speech made by Michael de Freitas who was described as the leader of the British Black Muslims. The report quoted de Freitas as stating that "coloured people should not fear the white monkeys" and that "If you love your brothers and sisters you will be willing to die for them."¹⁵⁶

On 27 July, two days later, both *The Times* and *The Guardian* carried more considered reports on the issue. A leader in *The Guardian* under the title "Equal Opportunities by Law" used the situation in the United States to push for stronger legislation arguing that there can be "no more graphic warning of the danger of not tackling race relations in time than the tragic violence now overtaking the United States" and then by going on to state that "Britain can still avoid their mistake by acting now while second generation immigrants are still young and at school."¹⁵⁷ *The Times* carried an article by Brian Priestly, their Midland Correspondent, who had already demonstrated his knowledge and interest in this issue. Under the heading "Birmingham is no Detroit, but there are Storm Signals" Priestly argued the case for stronger anti-discrimination legislation and expressed concern for young blacks in Britain, which he termed potential detonators, watching the battle of Detroit on television but went on to state that "it could be harmful to read the message of the United States into the British situation...we have a social problem, not a war." Despite this he concluded the piece by stating that "in the matter of riots, we shall get no more than we deserve" thereby not ruling out the possibility.¹⁵⁸

Both *The Times* and *The Guardian* had carried reports the previous day on the decision by a magistrate to send five members of the Racial Preservation Society to trial for inciting racial hatred through the distribution of racist leaflets. They also both covered the story of the demand by Sandys that Michael de Freitas should face prosecution under the Race Relations Bill for his speech at Reading.¹⁵⁹ *The Guardian* report made indirect links with the United States by wrongly calling him the British leader of the Black Muslims (he was a Muslim and black but his organisation was called the Racial Adjustment Action Society), as did *The Times*, and by including mention in the report of calls for Stokely Carmichael to be banned from Britain.

In an article in *The Economist* the writer stated that "It would be contemptible for an Englishman to feel smug about America's racial troubles" and added that the Home Secretary's

announcement that he intended to strengthen British anti-discrimination legislation showed that he did not. The article then went on to describe British racial extremists, on both sides, as "both rare and ridiculous" and argued that to prosecute Michael de Freitas would "ensure him a bigger audience next time". It then disposed of Sandys by stating "When it comes to mixing offensive sentiments with half-truths and non-sequiturs, even the Trinidadian duo (meaning Carmichael and de Freitas) are novices by the Sandys standard."¹⁶⁰ Writing like this would seem to put the issue into perspective but naturally its impact would have been limited in comparison to the national press with its much wider audience.

An article which appeared in *The Listener* might have had greater impact because it was the transcript of a programme that went out on The Third Programme. It was entitled "Could it Happen Here?" and gave a detailed analysis of the complicated response in Britain to Detroit. The author, Donald Watt, highlighted four main responses:

The first of these can perhaps be best defined as a combined guilt and responsibility complex. The second, allied to this, is a willingness to tolerate the public expression of racist sentiments, provided the speaker is a Negro. The third is a somewhat pharisaical attempt to argue that it cannot happen here, and to justify retrospectively the Commonwealth Immigration Act, which, so it is argued, prevented an American-style situation from coming into being in this country. The last, giving the lie to the previous reaction, is an anxious search for things that can be done to prevent such a situation developing here.

He then continued by arguing for the scrupulously indiscriminate use of the Race Relations Bill, regardless as to whether the offender is white or black, the strengthening of the Race Relations Board and for greater education. He concluded, however, on an ominous note by stating "Time and tide wait for no man. Britain has time, but not much time; and so much of the tide seems to be flowing towards Newark and Detroit."¹⁶¹

Throughout the rest of the year although the drama was less intense than in July the issue never left the papers. There were constant reminders of the events in July as the repercussions rumbled on and there were further calls for action. Reports in the press told of the trial of Michael X, and calls for the prosecution of Duncan Sandys, also under the Race Relations Bill, which came to nothing. They also referred to the proposed sale in Britain of recordings of speeches made by Carmichael which raised the question as to whether tapes could be considered under the Race Relations Bill. In September *The Times* reported on the launch of the Universal Coloured Peoples Association under the leadership of Obi Egbuna under the headline "Black Power Men Launch Credo". The report told of their Manifesto which, "gave warning that the Government was doing nothing to stop racial violence." It went on to quote Egbuna who declared "We do not advocate violence but the only way to neutralise violence is to oppose it with violence....Black Power is a revolutionary conspiracy of black

people. The black man is hitting out because he has been pushed to the limit where he can no longer breathe."¹⁶²

Press reports on racial issues throughout 1966 and 1967 in Britain reflected the change in attitude that was taking place in the United States as they referred to the growing impatience and militancy that developed within the Civil Rights Movement. They reported that more African Americans saw that legal rights were not enough to ensure equality and with growing alienation looked to more radical leaders, so concerns in Britain grew as to the future for second generation blacks. It was becoming clear that having been born in Britain they would not adopt the immigrant attitude of making the best of the situation as it existed, like their parents, but would expect the same opportunities as their white peers. Thus, without major anti-discrimination measures, this raised the spectre of an alienated black youth who might see Black Power as a solution. The violence in Detroit and other cities in the summer of 1967 strengthened these fears for it was no longer a case of white violence on dignified blacks but violence from the blacks themselves. No longer were they portrayed as victims but rather as aggressors.

ix. 1968 A New Challenge

The Autumn of 1967 was a difficult time for the Government in Britain. The Arab-Israeli war in June and the subsequent oil embargo on Britain put stress on the economy as did the dockers' strike which began in September and continued for more than a month in the case of London. By November, despite reassurances to the contrary Callaghan was forced to devalue the pound and it was in this month that De Gaulle vetoed the British application to join the European Economic Community. Thus, by January 1968, the Government was feeling very much under pressure. It was at this time, facing increased unpopularity arising from large-scale cuts in Government spending and the reintroduction of prescription charges, that the issue of the immigration of Asians from Kenya became front-page news.

Since 1963 when Kenya had gained its independence there had operated a policy of Africanisation which had become stronger in the mid-decade. At the time of independence Asians who chose not to take Kenyan nationality were given the assurance of a British passport. Many of these Asians, under pressure in Kenya, had been exercising their right to come to Britain during this time. Reports of their arrival appeared in the press right throughout the winter and in December there was evidence of a growing tendency to use black immigrants as scapegoats for British ills. *The Guardian* highlighted this in a story concerning Slough where, apparently, it was being rumoured that devaluation was the result of immigrants sending money back to their countries of origin. A Labour Councillor who was interviewed stated that "feelings are hardening towards immigrants and the more these things are told the more likely they are to be believed."¹⁶³

Throughout February *The People* carried a black immigration story on the front page of every issue. These reports spoke of "jet-loads of cut-price immigrants" which were part of a "startling new invasion" and of new Labour laws which would give preference to Kenyans.¹⁶⁴ Other reports featured a police hunt for illegal Pakistani immigrants¹⁶⁵ and how the school system in Birmingham was likely to collapse through the arrival of "vast numbers of Asian children" which appeared under the heading "Asian Flood Hits Schools".¹⁶⁶ With such emotive language the tabloid press built up the fires from which would arise immigration control at the beginning of March when the Government rushed through a Bill to restrict the entry of Kenyan Asians. Most of the press reports on this Bill were critical although some seemed more critical of the manner of its passing than of its substance. *The People* complained that the Government should have been applying pressure on Kenyatta to ease the pressure on the Asians and that if immigration restrictions were to be applied they should have been first directed at Europeans.¹⁶⁷ This seemed an unexpected message given their record of reporting throughout the previous month in which there had been no mention of the threat of European immigrants.

Both *The Guardian* and *The Observer* took slightly defensive attitudes. Neither were critical on the basic moral issue although *The Guardian* was critical of Callaghan for not being clear enough about how the legislation would work. Its leader stated that both Kenya and Britain were being selfish in their actions but concluded by arguing "it is an understandable desire to put one's own nation first. It might be decent for the British to recognise a high degree of selfishness in the Government's recent action."¹⁶⁸ To counter this, however, it gave more space to correspondence that opposed the legislation. It took what Hugo Young described as "a kind of worried hand wringing".¹⁶⁹ In a lengthy editorial *The Observer* argued the case for pragmatism, stating that it is a "harsh and ugly fact that there is indeed racial prejudice and discrimination in Britain and that it could get worse." It also defended the Government's concern for public opinion which was apparent in this legislation. It stated that "It is the Government's job to shape public opinion....But there is all the difference in the world between refusing to give in to majority opinion and refusing to acknowledge that the state of the country's feelings is a factor which is bound to affect Government policy. And this consideration is all the more important when it comes to a question like immigration."¹⁷⁰ It is interesting, at this point, to recall the views of *The Guardian* and *The Observer* on immigration control in 1958. *The Guardian* described the calls for controls "deplorable"¹⁷¹ and the view of *The Observer* was that they were "shameful" and an "easy way out"¹⁷² This provides a demonstration of how far opinion had moved over the decade. It is also a demonstration of how much easier it is to be critical when the Party supported by a paper is in opposition rather than passing a piece of questionable legislation.

This is borne out by the response in the *Daily Telegraph*, which took a more critical approach. An editorial under the title "More Haste, More Mess" in the *Daily Telegraph* called it a "wretched affair" which had been marked by "muddle, confusion and hypocrisy" and went

on to argue that the law would need generous interpretation. It also argued that the Government should consider cutting aid to Kenya.¹⁷³ Although it was critical of the legislation itself it was clearly in favour of controls. The majority of its reports tended to stress the potential threat, emphasising the number of possible Kenyan Asians who might come to Britain. It also gave space to supporters of control such as a series of letters from Sir Cyril Osborne who prophesied a racial holocaust unless controls were implemented.

The Times was also critical of the Government and became increasingly so. A leader on 23 February argued that the Government intention to restrict Kenyan Asians was "not dishonourable but that it might be hasty"¹⁷⁴ much on the same lines as the *Daily Telegraph* piece. A further leader on 27 February recalled how Labour had opposed the immigration restrictions imposed in 1962 and promised to repeal them once in power and then argued that the new restrictions represented "a complete breach of traditional attitudes of Labour towards questions of race and colour" and that such a move would be unconstitutional in the United States. It then questioned the Government's motives, "Is it afraid of Mr. E. Powell? Or of Mr. Sandys? Or the whiffling ambiguities of the Shadow Cabinet? Or is it afraid of the question of race itself?"¹⁷⁵ By 2 March, however, *The Times* had become scathing in its criticism when it argued that this new legislation would only make things worse as it seemed to demonstrate that, "the Government regards coloured people with fear and anxiety and that to a coloured man this Act passed at such unusual speed must surely look like proof of white hostility". The leader then expanded on its criticism of the Government by stating that "The Labour Party has a new ideology. It does not any longer profess to believe in the equality of man. It does not even believe in the equality of British citizens. It believes in the equality of white British citizens. This undermines its moral authority and reduces it to a national pressure group."¹⁷⁶

Despite this attempt by *The Times* to lead public opinion in favour of racialised relations based on equality, immediately after the passage of the Commonwealth Immigrants Bill it ran a series of articles which ran over five consecutive days and were entitled "Black Man in Search of Power". This series of articles dealt with the rise of Black Power in both the United States and Britain and stressed the connections between the two. The article that dealt with Britain described how many West Indians in Britain felt rejected, "a rejection emphasized by the passing of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 and the emergence of race in politics at Smethwick. Like some violently bitter American Negroes a few thinking militants began to look backwards through historical slavery towards a common root with Africa and Negroes everywhere."¹⁷⁷ In a review of this series, which appeared in the *New Society*, Dilip Hiro, argued that despite its intentions the Times News Team had "lent its support to Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael's belief that the black struggle is international for despite its inborn British reticence the team has not been able to conceal its revulsion at the theory and practice of Black Power in the western world."¹⁷⁸ This apparent revulsion fuelled concerns and served to strengthen the popular idea that Black Power could be imported, as was so much

else, from the United States. It would have also served to undermine much of the earlier message in *The Times* which might have encouraged a faith in the nation's ability to absorb numbers of non-white immigrants peacefully.

There was little mention of the situation in the United States throughout the coverage of the Kenyan Asian scare though it would seem that the fears and concerns for public opinion that are referred to in many of the pieces would have been fuelled by the increasing awareness of racial tension both in Britain and in America. Within weeks the British population were again reminded of the racial crisis that seemed to be facing the United States when reports of the assassination of Martin Luther King hit the press. Enoch Powell's famous "Rivers of blood" speech, which used the American crisis as an illustration, and the demonstrations in his support that followed, reinforce the conclusion that reactions to racial issues were affected not just by the situation at home but by the reports arising from the United States.

The death of King sent shock waves across the Atlantic. In Britain he still represented the Christian, non-violent, dignified face of the Civil Rights Movement. He was linked to the early days of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the noble lunch-counter campaign and the peaceful March on Washington. It seemed that with his death the violence and frustration that was associated with the black militant movement would erupt and this was reflected in the reports that appeared in the press. The *Daily Telegraph* in a leading article stated that he had "died fighting what for some time had looked like a losing battle against the militant advocates of 'black power'. They will see in his death justification of their contempt for non-violence."¹⁷⁹ A leader in *The Guardian* posed a question through its headline, "After the death of MLK: Chaos or Community?" and concluded the report by answering the question with the statement "America has moved one step further towards chaos and one step further from community."¹⁸⁰ This message was reinforced in a report which appeared in the same issue in which Carmichael was quoted as describing King's death as a "declaration of war on blacks" and telling hundreds of demonstrators "We need guns now".¹⁸¹ Alistair Cooke, in his front page report painted a grim picture in which the population of America, restricted by curfews, hunched over their televisions and watched America "going up in smoke".¹⁸² Reports in *The Observer* also echoed this message of impending doom and under the heading "Race War: Who now can speak up for peace?" stated that King had been the one leader that the United States could not afford to lose and concluded by declaring "Now the dangerous approaching summer looks even more ominously dangerous."¹⁸³

Against this background the debate in Britain had been continuing as to the pros and cons of anti-discrimination legislation. Questions were asked as to what form the new laws should take and how they should be enforced. Bill Grundy complained, however, in an article in the *Spectator*, that the Sunday press were being surprisingly quiet about the issue. Particularly, as he pointed out, "If the events of the last week in America have any significance for us it is that they have demonstrated the immense importance of the colour question."¹⁸⁴

There were comments, however, but they took quite different attitudes. The *Daily Telegraph* proclaimed that "All the indications are that the new Bill will do more harm than good."¹⁸⁵ Brian Priestly for *The Times* went a long way in the opposite direction and argued that the legislation would probably not be adequate and advocated either a form of 'bussing' or greater expenditure on schools with high immigrant in-takes.¹⁸⁶

Two articles in the same month used the American situation to reinforce their message that the proposed legislation was a necessary minimum step. The first which appeared in *The Economist* argued that the British Government "does not seem to have learnt enough from America". The article began by posing a question "The main question to be asked about Britains new Race Relations Bill, published on Tuesday, is whether it is strong enough to prevent the disillusion with the workings of similar legislation felt by many black Americans" and concluded by expressing this fear, "this bill, unless subtly toughened up by Parliament, could end up a monument to piety, and an invitation to bitterness."¹⁸⁷ The second piece which was published in the *New Statesman* also began on an American note, "We stand in this country now at the crossroads in race relations. What we do or fail to do now will shape the pattern of relations between black and white for generations. The choice that we face is, in Martin Luther King's words, either Chaos or Community." The author, Dipak Nandy, a leading member of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD), after arguing that the proposed legislation should be made even stronger and given the backing of legal sanctions, concluded with another allusion to the United States, "If the Bill goes through without the necessary and minimum alteration, then the government and the opposition will have forged together, for the British people, a truly American nightmare."¹⁸⁸

Within two weeks of the death of King and in the face of the promised anti-discrimination legislation Enoch Powell set himself up as the patron of the newly reawakened white racist extremism. On 20 April he delivered a speech of xenophobic ferocity. Powell used the image of a war-widowed, aged, white, female resident in a street taken over by coloured immigrants with which to stir up antagonism to the idea of anti-discrimination legislation, describing it as a "one-way privilege". Towards the end of his speech Powell, in the emotive language of the demagogue, declared:

As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see 'The River Tiber foaming with much blood.' That tragic and intractable phenomenon which we watch with horror on the other side of the Atlantic but which there is interwoven with the history and existence of the States itself is coming upon us here by our own volition and our own neglect. Indeed, it has all but come. In numerical terms it will be of American proportions long before the end of the century. Only resolute and urgent action will avert it even now.¹⁸⁹

Responses to Powell's speech in the press were mixed though most expressed some concern at his choice of words. The *Daily Telegraph* whilst critical of his extreme language

was also critical of Heath for dismissing him from the Shadow Cabinet. It argued, in a leader, that Powell was expressing the views of many in the Conservative Party and that Heath had allowed himself to be pressured by left-wingers.¹⁹⁰ The *Daily Express* went even further in its defence of Powell and in a cartoon showed Powell in the dock while a bench of judges faced him. The caption read "Prisoner Powell, you stand convicted of the infamous crime of telling the truth". The leader on the same page continued this theme under the title "Right to Speak Out" and argued that the British were innocent of the charge of racial discrimination.¹⁹¹

The Times took a strong line against Powell and again used the situation in the United States to argue for the Race Relations Bill. An article by Ian Trethowan compared Powell with Goldwater and found many similarities in their style.¹⁹² A leading article entitled "An Evil Speech" declared that Powell's speech was disgraceful particularly as it occurred within a couple of weeks of the death of King and the burning of many American cities. It continued, "It is almost unbelievable that any man can be so irresponsible as to promote hatred in the face of these examples of the results that can follow."¹⁹³ A further leader on the "ugly polarising result of Powell's speech" and the demonstrations in his support in London stated that "Now people have only to look to the United States to see what colour prejudice can lead to. They have only to look at the past weeks in Britain to see how quickly the situation here could deteriorate, how easily unrestrained protest against immigrants can degenerate into abuse of the blacks."¹⁹⁴

The Spring of 1968 saw a high point in awareness of the potential danger of racial tensions marked by the hurried passing of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act and the speech by Enoch Powell both of which encouraged racism. In this the press had played its part in three main ways. Firstly the popular press had fed public fears about growing numbers of black immigrants, reflecting already existing fears, exaggerating the dangers and feeding them back to the public; traditionally liberal-minded papers, like *The Observer* and *The Guardian*, reluctant to criticise the Government, had failed to meet the challenge of the Kenyan Asians and all the press had brought into British homes the racial crisis faced by the Americans and forecast such a situation developing in Britain.

Conclusion

By 1968 concerns in Britain over the issue of racialised relations were widespread. There were many contributory factors that caused such strong feelings to be raised at this particular time; many issues that contributed to fears about racial tension and the determination to avoid them. These included not least the great increase in numbers of immigrants between 1950 and 1970, even though the total numbers of blacks and Asians in Britain was still only a very small proportion of the total population. This fear over numbers was exacerbated by reports in the press, particularly the tabloids which ignored the fact that despite the increase in immigration

from the New Commonwealth the inflow was more than matched by outflow. It was clearly not simply a case of numbers. Both nations, Britain and America, felt the effects, to a greater or lesser degree, of the Cold War and the struggle for influence in newly created nations. Britain was suffering from post-Imperial insecurity and a refusal to acknowledge its reduced role in the world order. This resulted in a determination to keep a hold on the Empire through the Commonwealth but this brought with it responsibilities as well as pride.

Thus, when the demand for Civil Rights in the United States grew into a nationwide campaign it was inevitable that its impact should have been felt in Britain. Both the Welsh Nationalist movement and the demand for Civil Rights in Ulster also provide evidence of its influence. The effect on Asians, Africans and Afro-Caribbeans was two-fold. The growing demands for a more equal share of national wealth by the African Americans served to spur black and Asian immigrants in Britain to demand equal rights, particularly in the case of Afro-Caribbeans who identified most closely with the Americans, but the increasing evidence of racialism in Britain made such demands seem all the more risky.

As the racial tensions in the United States developed and seemed to be threatening crisis, the press in Britain used American images to stress their points. Whether they argued in favour of greater integration or for stronger immigration control the idea of an American-scale situation was seen to be one with which to frighten the British public or to put pressure on the Government. Apart from the *Daily Telegraph* treatment of the Kenyan Asian scare, the broadsheet reports tended to downplay stories of racial tension in Britain, on the grounds that they might be accused of exacerbating the situation but this did not apply to pieces referring to American racism, black or white. Indeed, the reports of riots and violence would have had an impact without overt links being drawn through the widely accepted idea that what happens in the United States one day will eventually happen in Britain but the press played its part in encouraging this perception. The tabloids, whilst giving less space to news from the United States, apart from such moments of high tension as Watts, played their part by reinforcing the prejudices of their readers. Articles in the periodicals whilst giving their more in-depth analysis provided the greatest evidence that the situation in America was informing responses to racial tensions in Britain. Their circulation naturally was limited but their reports are an indication of the general sense of the national debate.

As press reports from the United States reflected the transition in the struggle for civil rights from one of non-violence to the growth of black power so the response in Britain changed, developing from one of admiration and support for their struggle to one which feared the development of such a situation in Britain. The catchword 'Little Rock' conjured up the image of violence from white segregationists and few native white Britons would have identified with them but as this gave way to 'Watts' and 'black power' the threat of violence came from the blacks themselves and to many white British this was a far more uncontrollable and realistic threat. This fear coloured public opinion and hence the Labour Government,

which was particularly conscious of it because of its own current insecurity, and resulted in the panic measures that brought about the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act and the rise of Powell as a leader of white racialism. Despite Powell but also as a result of fears of racial tension it passed the Race Relations Bill. As Dilip Hiro stated in his review of *Black Men in Search of Power*, "Most coloured people feel that it was the racial violence in America during the summer of 1967 that forced the prevaricating British government to commit itself to a race relations bill in housing and employment. After all, Roy Jenkins made such an announcement on 26 July 1967, the very day Detroit was burning brightest."¹⁹⁵ This perception would have been shared by many Britons despite the fact that discussion of this measure had begun even before the passage of the first Race Relations Bill in 1964. The extent to which the American racial struggle had an impact on legislation and discussion in the House is examined in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 Parliament

The broad coverage of the American racial struggle in the press demonstrates that there was wide interest in Britain in the subject. Furthermore, the way in which American parallels were used in an attempt to understand the concurrent debate in Britain surrounding racialised relations linked the two issues. In broad terms the role of the media is to provide information but it is the government that should provide leadership. This chapter looks at the extent to which the situation in the United States was a factor in the response of politicians to increased non-white immigration in the late 1950s and the 1960s. Through an analysis of the debates in the House of Commons and the passage of related legislation it looks at ways in which American images were used to press arguments to support or oppose measures.

i. Background

Britain has a long history of accepting immigrants and, since the days of slavery, has had small numbers of non-white people, centred mainly around the ports. There is considerable evidence, however, that during this century governments have, generally, discouraged the entry of black and Asian immigrants. Following racially motivated riots in 1919, the Aliens Order was put in place and its provisions later strengthened by the Special Restriction (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order of 1925. Through these Orders 'coloured' seamen were obliged to register as aliens and report regularly to the police.¹ David Reynolds has shown that during the First World War the government avoided using West Indian troops in combat, and that during the Second World War the government opposed American plans to station African American troops in Britain. When it became clear, however, that this policy could not be maintained delicate arrangements were put in place to reduce contact between the African American soldiers and both black and white British civilians, thereby enabling American military authorities to maintain segregation in Britain.²

Some scholars, such as Paul Foot and E.J.B. Rose, have argued that the period after the Second World War was an 'age of innocence' in which the question of racialised relations, as a domestic issue, was treated in a laissez-faire manner and that it was the shock of the riots in 1958 that pushed politicians into action and resulted in the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act.³ This has now been shown to be too simplistic. In the immediate post-war period, Britain faced a labour shortfall and numbers of European workers were recruited in an attempt to meet the need for labour. When, however, the *SS Empire Windrush* docked in June 1948 carrying 492 passengers from Kingston it raised concerns. Geoffrey Issacs, the Minister for Labour, stated "I hope no encouragement will be given to others to follow their example".⁴ Despite this their arrival led some to consider the benefits of employing Commonwealth labour which would involve less cost or responsibility than the importation of European workers but had the

disadvantage that, in the case of problems, deportation might be difficult. Records also show that the notion of 'colour' was an issue in these considerations. In a letter to M.M. Bevan, written in 1948, a senior civil servant from the Colonial Office, Sir Harold Wiles, argued that,

Whatever may be the policy about British citizenship, I do not think any scheme for the importation of coloured colonials for permanent settlement should be embarked upon without full understanding that this means that a coloured element will be brought in for permanent absorption into our own population.⁵

Although Wiles did not elaborate on what this absorption would mean it is clear that it was the notion of colour that produced his negative response. Further concerns discussed were the issues of unemployment, illegal immigrants and welfare 'scroungers' although these were not based on evidence but were rather assumptions arising out of negative associations around skin colour. Set against these negative arguments were positive ones which included ideas about the place of Britain in the world, her role as the 'mother' country of the Commonwealth and the dubious legality of imposing restrictions based on colour. As a result of these discussions, the Labour Government arranged for a review of the situation to be carried out by the Cabinet Foreign Labour Committee. The findings of this review were that whilst numbers were still low it would not be politic to take any action to restrict them. It stated that, "In view of the comparatively small scale of immigration into this country of coloured people from British colonial territories and the important and controversial issues of policy involved in legislation to control it, we consider that no such legislation should at present be introduced".⁶

The Conservative Government from 1951 took a similar position. Immigration from the West Indies to Britain increased after the passage of the 1952 McCarran- Walter Act in the United States, which restricted the possibility of West Indian immigration, and in 1953 the Cabinet set up a Working Party on 'The Employment of Coloured People in the UK'. The language of reports by this Working Party demonstrated its hostility to the idea of colonial migration but, given a recognition that to focus on skin colour was unacceptable, criticisms were directed at the nature of the new immigrants, their unsuitability for employment in Britain and at the scale of migration, implying that only limited numbers were manageable. As Kathleen Paul has described, this placed two implicit barriers between colonial migrants and the indigenous UK population, they were foreigners and they were black.⁷ Despite this the final report of this Working Party presented in 1953 found that it would not be advisable for controls to be implemented, for much the same reasons as those employed in the late 1940s. The Government, however, did employ various covert tactics to discourage 'coloured' immigration thereby seeking to limit numbers without doing so publicly. Again Cabinet papers revealed in 1955 that a major concern was the impact such immigration would have on the nature of British racial identity when it was argued that:

The problem of colonial immigration has not yet aroused public anxiety, although there was some concern, mainly due to the housing difficulties in a few localities where most of the immigrants were concentrated. On the other hand, if immigration from the colonies, and for that matter, from India and Pakistan, were allowed to continue unchecked, there was a real danger that over the years there would be a significant change in the racial character of the English people.⁸

Throughout these deliberations there is little evidence that the current situation in the United States regarding racialised relations had much significance. It should be noted that these thoughts were expressed only one year after the Brown decision ruled that segregation in education was illegal, but, as yet, the issue had barely impacted on Britain. There is some evidence, however, that, even in these early days, the image of race in America coloured British perceptions. Michael Banton, in his description of Stepney in the 1950s describes how the neighbourhood was often referred to as 'London's Harlem'.⁹ In 1954 the Liverpool Group of the Conservative Commonwealth Association produced a pamphlet entitled *The Problem of Colonial Immigrants* which argued that increased 'coloured' immigration was causing a problem and drew upon an American image when it stated, "Liverpool is admittedly one of the chief centres of coloured settlement and a new Harlem is being created in a decayed residential quarter of the City."¹⁰ The language here is interesting because it implied, by the words 'is being created', that this development was the natural result of the presence of large numbers of 'coloured' people. This idea was widespread amongst government officials. As Lord Hailsham argued in June 1958, before the riots, "Many immigrants are accustomed to living in squalid conditions and have no desire to improve their surroundings".¹¹ The use of the word 'Harlem' sought to conjure up ideas which were well known through American literature and film. These images of wild living included uninhibited music and dance, loose morals and gangsterism, images which, at least to British officialdom, carried dangerous connotations.

The issue of housing was to become one of the major concerns, together with those of crime and employment, that were highlighted in the continuing debate over immigration control and became the coded language for racialised policies. Similar concerns were voiced about Irish immigrants who arrived during the same period but they did not lead to immigration control. Indeed, when controls were introduced there was no intention that the Irish should be restricted in practice.¹² Between 1945 and 1951 between 70,000 and 100,000 Irish people entered Britain¹³ and although they too suffered discrimination and were largely marginalised to the dirtiest jobs and worst housing, the government was anxious that this source of labour should be maintained. This demonstrates that the underlying issue was, in fact, the racialised construction of British identity, which was based on the belief that 'colour' was linked to social problems and that British identity was linked to 'whiteness'. Thus, as John Solomos has described, "Throughout the period 1948-62 the state was actively involved in monitoring and regulating the arrival of black workers, and it helped to articulate a definition of the immigration question which was suffused with racialised categories".¹⁴ The late 1950s, in this

way, marked a shift from a colonial legacy to indigenous racism as the individual from the New Commonwealth acquired the image not of the uncivilised, immature native in need of paternalistic control but that of a domestic threat to social harmony, material well-being and culture. The news from the United States throughout the 1960s increasingly helped to reinforce this perception.

The Americans, for their part, were conscious of the racial element of potential conflict with West Indian immigrants in Britain and British attempts to portray their concerns as simply fears over accommodation and employment. This is evidenced by the response from the White House in 1955 to a suggestion from the American Embassy in London that a consultant from the Urban League might be offered to advise the British Government. The White House evidently felt that "in view of the pains taken by the British Government to avoid admitting that the West Indian immigration problem has a racial aspect they would not welcome unsolicited suggestions from the United States Government."¹⁵

ii. Towards Immigration Controls

The 1958 riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill Gate took place against a background of high profile press reports on the situation in Little Rock. Sir Cyril Osborne, Conservative M.P. for Louth and a leading figure in the campaign to bring an end to colonial immigration, was reported as stating that the riots demonstrated the need for immigration control and that to neglect to implement such controls would be "sowing the seeds of another Little Rock".¹⁶ The Parliamentary response to the riots centred on four main issues, which are listed in their order of importance to the political debate: the maintenance of law and order; the debate about immigration control; the need for integration; and the problem of confronting racialism.

The debate in the House the following December, on a motion put forward by Osborne to introduce immigration controls, demonstrated an awareness of the situation in America. During this debate the issues of housing, employment and, what was to be a regular topic in discussions concerning immigration, that of numbers, were raised. Frank Tomney, the Labour Member for Hammersmith North, argued that the House needed more accurate figures and reported that West Indian immigration to the United States had now been restricted to 800. The implication of this statement, although it was not spelled out, was that if the Americans could do this, then why not the British.

The Labour Member for Durham, Charles Grey, referred to a recent visit to the West Indies and stated that there was much anxiety, in the region, about the riots in Britain, adding that "they had become really fearful that some terrible issue, like that of Little Rock, had been brought very near to them". Frank Tomney also referred to the United States when, arguing against the motion,

I ask the hon. gentleman to look at that American legislation, because in my opinion the American negro, except in the South has reached the greatest stage of emancipation of those in any country. In the North it is amazing to find the positions they occupy on the basis of equal skill, equal ability, and general qualifications... This has been achieved chiefly by good will and by legislation."¹⁷

Tomney's perceptions are curious as he was speaking before the passage of the Civil Rights Act but this quotation, and the statement by Grey, together represent the two images of race in America that were to become part of the debate in Britain. The first conjured up an image of social disorder, whilst the second gave a more positive image which implied that, with leadership, there need be no crisis at all. Furthermore, this reference to anti-discrimination legislation, within a debate on immigration control was to be a feature of the on-going debate linking the two issues throughout the decade. Wherever the issue of anti-discrimination was discussed it led to references to legislative action in the United States which was held up as a successful model.

No action was taken as a result of this debate; indeed, it was argued that to legislate at this point could be seen as pandering to racialists. Pressure continued until November 1961 when the issue was debated again and resulted in the imposition of controls. If the government felt that 'public anxiety' had not been sufficiently aroused, in 1955, its perception was quite different in 1961. Nigel Fisher, Conservative Member for Surbiton, argued that although he did not favour controls he would be supporting the measure because public opinion could not be ignored. He then referred to a recent Gallop Poll which had shown 90% of the population to be in favour of immigration control.¹⁸ In July 1958, prior to the riots, Miss P. Hornsby-Smith, had represented the Home Office in a meeting with a group of Conservative backbenchers to sound out opinion on immigration control. The solitary voice in opposition to controls at this meeting came from Nigel Fisher but clearly by 1961 he had been influenced by the general pressure for legislation.¹⁹ The findings of the Working Party on the social and economic problems arising from the growing influx into the UK of 'coloured workers' which reported in July 1961 demonstrated that the only arguments for control were social. They were based on a fear of "the long-term consequences of the presence of large and growing coloured communities" and that there was no case for control on the grounds of health, crime or economic concerns, that immigration was, in fact, beneficial to the economy.²⁰

The debate that resulted in controls followed a summer in which the press widely covered the disturbances in the United States over the continuing issue of desegregation in schools and the attempts to challenge segregation in other areas through the lunch room sit-ins and the Freedom Riders. The Foreign Office received a steady flow of reports on the situation through diplomatic channels whilst the Colonial Office was receiving reports on increasing black racism amongst Jamaicans.²¹ During the Commons debate, Hugh Gaitskell made a stirring speech in opposition, arguing that the controls would represent an 'appalling confession of failure' and stating that it would be saying to the world that Britain was unable to integrate a

mere one per cent of the population. He then stated that "We had better stop throwing stones at the Southern States."²² This sentiment was also echoed in the press and had been anticipated in American reports after the riots. A despatch from the American Embassy in London to Washington reported that the riots had reduced British 'smugness' and stated that, they were "likely to stimulate greater appreciation of the emotions involved in the Negro problem and induce a greater show of humility when judging actions of foreign countries struggling with this issue."²³ This demonstrated that both Gaitskell and the American Administration felt that basically it was a question as to how a white majority should respond to a non-white minority and recognised that this was the question facing both the United States and Britain.

Despite an unexpected amount of resistance,²⁴ at least unexpected by the Conservative government, and a considerable amount of press criticism,²⁵ the Bill was passed by a majority of 283 votes to 200. Opposition from the Labour benches, particularly those on the left of the party, was based on an internationalist perspective and a socialist critique of colonialism, a belief in the ideal of the Commonwealth, a concern for civil liberties and on a more practical level, a regard for the labour shortage problem. Conservative opposition came mainly from those who adhered to the older idea of the Commonwealth which was developed in the immediate post-war years and also from worries about the labour shortage. By 1960, however, there were new Members who had been less influenced by the ideals of a multi-racial partnership and argued that India's reaction to the Suez crisis was a demonstration that the proposition was unworkable. They began to see the possibility of entry into Europe as a more attractive option, in terms of Britain's place in world. When these younger Members represented areas with a number of New Commonwealth immigrants, as many did, they were often subject to pressure from the anti-immigration lobbies that developed after the 1958 riots.²⁶

It would be difficult to argue that the situation in the United States, at this stage, had a major impact but in terms of a recognition that there were parallels between the two countries and in the power of the pressure of public opinion, it had an indirect influence. The combined effect of the 1958 riots, press reports on black and Asian immigration and the steady stream of reports on racial disturbances in the United States had produced a mood in which it was now possible to introduce controls. The repercussions, however, were wide. Discussion about the possibility of controls had led to an unprecedented wave of immigration by those anxious to avoid being excluded which, in itself, fuelled the anti-immigration pressure. At the same time, racialists felt vindicated by the government being seen to concede to the argument that the presence of blacks gave rise to concern, and before long were pressing for stronger controls. Finally, the passage of the Bill dented the confidence of those West Indians, Indians and Pakistanis already in the country that they would be treated equally.

Throughout the rest of 1962 and 1963 little action was taken, at a governmental level. Almost as soon as the Commonwealth Immigration Bill was passed, however, there was debate

about its effectiveness. Having acceded to the racialists, the government found that they immediately wanted more. Early in 1963 Norman Pannell, the Conservative member for Kirkdale, put forward a Private Members Bill seeking to strengthen the deportation provisions of the Act. It was defeated by 41 votes but the government and most of the Shadow Cabinet took little part in the debate. The following July, however, during the Public Order debate, which was chiefly designed to address the issue of increased activity by fascist groups, the issue of racial discrimination was raised. It was agreed that this should be dealt with at another time. During the debate, the Conservative member for Willesden, East, T.H.H. Skeet, whilst advocating some form of anti-discrimination legislation, referred to American legislation when he said, "One will observe what is happening. The United States, that great country, is appreciating that it has a problem in its midst. I do not propose to tire the House by going through the provisions of these measures, because many of them are not applicable here. Many provinces of Canada also have legislation of this type. Suffice it to say that they have a problem in their midst and are seeking to deal with it."²⁷ This example of referring to America during a discussion on 'race relations' legislation was to become a regular feature of the debates within the House of Commons.

One of the concessions won by Labour during the immigration control debate of 1961 was that it should only run for eighteen months. Consequently, it was debated again in an Expiring Laws Continuance debate in November, 1963. During this debate Harold Wilson, now leader of the Labour Party, after the death of Hugh Gaitskell in January of that year, suggested that Labour would not attempt to reverse the immigration controls but would seek to address the issue of racial discrimination. Following Wilson's introductory speech the debate centred around criticism, from Labour members and from Jeremy Thorpe for the Liberals, that the government had not consulted the Commonwealth members before implementing controls. John Diamond, the Labour member for Gloucester, further argued that the workforces of Germany and Switzerland were comprised of about twenty per cent foreign labour but there were no problems because these nations provided for the influx, "Germany is building a half a million new houses every year."²⁸

Diamond then raised the temperature of the debate by declaring that the Tories support "the idea that it is right to have white but wrong to have black people coming here." Cyril Osborne then responded by citing the example of the United States, "Even the United States which has the 'lamp of liberty' and says 'send me your poor in distress' has had to stop free entry into that country."²⁹ Osborne also referred to racial tensions in East Africa and argued that there appeared to be no solution. This brought Tony Benn to his feet. He argued that the solution lay in anti-discrimination legislation and referred to the United States in relation to discrimination in employment:

If I went to an employment exchange and said, 'I want only white labour' what would they say? They would say, 'Certainly, we will give you a list of white workers.' They

would not say, as they do in America, 'We do not entertain inquiries from people who have racial discrimination built into their request.' We have all been praising President Kennedy this week for his struggle against racial intolerance. I have a letter here from the United States Department of Labour saying that it is prohibited for a department of labour to help an employer who lays down qualifications of race, colour, creed or national origin....It is known from the United States that if one wants to eliminate racial discrimination there has to be legislative and executive leadership and not just a tailing behind hoping that public opinion will educate itself.³⁰

Tony Benn concluded his speech by stressing that this was a "positive" way of approaching the issue of immigration as opposed to the "negative" approach of the government. It should be noted that this speech was delivered within days of the assassination of President Kennedy. An oblique reference to the death of Kennedy was made by an anonymous member just before the above quoted speech. Tony Benn expressed concern about racist comments by stating that they can release forces which are "explosive and dangerous" to which the anonymous member responded with the word "Dallas".³¹ Benn's response was to state, "We know very well where racial violence can ultimately lead."³² This brief exchange would imply that there was an assumption that Kennedy's death was motivated by concerns over race.

W.R. Rees-Davies, Conservative member for the Isle of Thanet, arguing in favour of stronger controls, however, demonstrated that the racial struggle in the United States could provide material for both sides of the argument when he described a recent visit to America in these terms,

I was deeply upset by my experience of spending some time in New York last year...As most of those who have been to New York know, there are complete and absolute compartments of races...it would be dreadful if London or any of our great cities were to become like New York. New York is a tragic, desperate city...I want to translate that situation into what is happening already in this country. Before speaking in this debate I took a great deal of trouble to find out the conditions which existed in certain parts of London and in our larger cities. There is now only the seed - the very beginning - of a much bigger problem....I feared in ten years' time we would have a Harlem here.³³

Rees-Morgan then gave a lengthy description of the way in which minority groups naturally congregate together which concluded the debate. The way the image of the United States was used by speakers became almost a commonplace in later debates. In comparison to later sessions, it is interesting to note how few references were made to America on this occasion, and then only when exchanges became more heated. It is also significant that there was only one reference to racial disharmony in Africa.

Following this debate the House examined the issue of racial integration in schools and again, the example of the situation in the United States was raised. During this discussion the Minister of Education, Sir Edward Boyle, stated that the government was anxious that there should be no more than thirty per cent of immigrant children in any one school, stating that he

would "support any authority which [tried] to spread immigrant children by introducing zoning schemes."³⁴ In support of this policy he stated that he did not wish to see "laissez faire acceptance of what one might call de facto segregation between immigrant schools and native schools". He then urged the House to stand firmly against segregation or a policy of "separate but equal" because "in practice separate will always mean unequal".³⁵ No explanation of these terms was given, presumably because they would have been easily understood but they would clearly have raised the issues of Little Rock and Birmingham, Alabama, in the minds of the audience.

Although this policy was officially termed a policy of 'dispersal', it was clearly a case of an American import and was based on the system of 'bussing' which was introduced as an attempt to desegregate schools in the United States. The arguments in favour of the policy, which mainly centred around language problems, were quite spurious. As Reg Freeson, Labour member for Willesden East, argued in 1965, "Nobody knows what the Department of Education and Science mean when they talk about 'immigrant children'. One thing is quite clear, whatever the definitions, there are children who have been and will be born in Britain who by that ...Education circular will be considered immigrant children. It is a disgraceful and stupid state of affairs."³⁶ This clearly demonstrates that by this stage the term 'immigrant' had become a euphemism for 'colour'; there was never any talk of transferring Irish children. It was a demonstration of the growing fear that Britain would develop black ghettos which, it was being argued, were part of the problem facing the United States. The references to the United States in this instance were quite inappropriate on two counts, firstly, the nature of the problem of integration was different in that it was complicated by the language question, which did put extra demands on school resources and, secondly, with a more centralised state system there were other less divisive solutions which could be employed.³⁷ In fact, the policy of dispersal in Britain was never widely adopted. It faced various constraints: the difficulty in identifying children in need, (statistics on children without adequate English were not collected until 1966); the problems of finding other school places for these children; and reluctance on the part of some teachers who feared lack of contact with parents.³⁸ Discussion of the policy did, however, do further damage to the confidence of West Indians, Indians and Pakistanis who pointed out that this would disadvantage their children by forcing them to travel further to school (but did not apply to 'white' children). From their perspective it was a case of discrimination that portrayed their children as a problem. This was particularly true of West Indians who rightly argued that their children had no problem with the English language.

There were two main reasons for the relative lack of political activity in relation to the question of racialised relations during 1963 and 1964. The first is that with the passage of the immigration controls, there was a general perception that the issue had been dealt with, although the pressure for some form of anti-discrimination legislation was growing. This period was one of considerable drama in the United States, not least the death of Kennedy, and

the press was filled with reports on the activities of the Civil Rights Movement and the opposition to it in the southern states. The Foreign Office received a steady stream of reports on the situation and hand written comments on these demonstrated a rather dismissive attitude. A report on the march on Washington, at which Dr. Martin Luther King Jnr. delivered his now famous "I have a Dream Speech", bears the hand written comment, "Not likely to be remembered as a milestone in the Civil Rights campaign. 200,000 doesn't seem a very impressive figure - where were the other 18,800,000? It is good that it was peaceful and has confounded the prophets of doom."³⁹ This tone provides an interesting comparison with comments designed to press either for controls or for anti-discrimination legislation, which tended rather to accentuate the threat and the drama of the struggle in America. This change in tone is probably explained by the perspective of the Foreign Office in which concern about domestic issues was not considered.

The second reason for the relative lack of action was that there were many other issues in Britain to demand the attention of politicians. Firstly, there was the death of Hugh Gaitskell which was quite unexpected and resulted in a leadership battle within the Labour Party, and secondly the Profumo scandal concentrated the political mind, although this affair was not without its racial overtones. Christine Keeler, it was widely reported, lived with an a West Indian and Mandy Rice-Davies had connections with Rachman. Rachman was a landlord with numerous properties in London which he mainly let to black and Asian immigrants, at very high rents, thus exploiting their disadvantage from discrimination. He became renown for using rough tactics against any tenant who was unable to pay or who challenged him. As a consequence the reports on Profumo also raised once more the moral panics concerned with black involvement in prostitution and racketeering. At a time when many Britons had never encountered a West Indian immigrant the connotations of these reports served to reinforce stereotypical views and increase prejudice. In October, 1963, Harold Macmillan resigned and this time it was the Conservatives who were thrown into a leadership dispute. Added to this, 1964 was an election year and election campaigns dominated political activity. This is not to suggest that during subsequent years there was little to distract politicians from the growing problems of racialised relations, but rather that they demanded more attention as awareness of the scale of the issue developed.

iii. The Labour Government and Immigration Control Legislation

One aspect of the 1964 election which had a major influence on future political activity was the campaign waged in Smethwick by the Conservative candidate Peter Griffiths.⁴⁰ Not only did Griffiths defeat Patrick Gordon Walker, an important member of the Labour Shadow Cabinet, he improved his position by 7.2 per cent. This contrasted with a national swing to Labour of 3.5 per cent. Griffiths' campaign was largely based on an anti-immigrant platform and a

widely used slogan was "If you want a nigger neighbour, Vote Liberal or Labour."⁴¹ The shock of this defeat has been identified as a major source of Labour's timidity over immigration.⁴² For the first time in Britain racism was openly employed on the political stage and furthermore was seen to be effective. Having contested the passage of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1962 and declared their intention to repeal it, should they come to office, by 1965 the Labour leadership had completely modified their ideas and in the summer of 1965 presented their White Paper which imposed even stricter controls. Wilson had come a long way, in less than a year, since the day he described Peter Griffiths as a 'parliamentary leper'. Seeking to sweeten the pill, however, the government also passed the Race Relations Act to outlaw racial discrimination. As Sir J. Vaughan-Morgan, the Conservative Member for Reigate, put it during the debate on immigration control, "I cannot but feel that such a Bill [anti-discrimination legislation] would be a gesture of good-will, more especially if more unpalatable restrictions on immigration are in the offing."⁴³ In the debate surrounding both these pieces of legislation the issue of the racial struggle in the United States was employed to strengthen arguments.

The debate in the House concerning the tightening of immigration controls took place in March, 1965 and was set against a background of high profile reports on the situation in the United States, the most dramatic of which were the reports concerning the bloody scenes in Selma where the struggle to desegregate the education system continued. It was also a month after Malcolm X had made his visit to Smethwick and three months after Martin Luther King had visited London and made his speech which was reported in the press as "Dr. King's Racial Warning to Britain".⁴⁴ The Conservative member for Monmouth, Peter Thorneycroft, opened the debate and in his speech referred to the "valuable series of articles" which had appeared in *The Times* in the previous January and bore the ominous title *The Dark Million*, thus demonstrating that even politicians are not immune to the power of the press, or certainly able to use it if it gave power to their argument. Thorneycroft was in favour of stricter controls.⁴⁵ During his long speech he argued that the issue was rather a clash of cultures than an issue of colour, stating that there were similar tensions in East Africa between Africans and Asians and between Chinese and Malaysians in Malaya. This was the only reference to other areas of racial tension, apart from the United States, in a debate that lasted for six hours. Of the fourteen speakers three used the American situation to support their arguments. The length of the debate and the relatively small number of contributors are an indication that it was mostly a case of prepared speeches with little argument.

Throughout the debate there was a certain sense of self-congratulation based on, what was perceived as the moderation of the discussion and the sense that a consensus had been achieved as Members, from both sides of the house, complimented each other on their valuable contribution. There was a general wariness and concern not to let this very delicate area become a political football. In general, there was agreement that both immigration control and

legislation against discrimination were necessary. Frank Soskice in a memorandum to the Home Affairs Committee on the issue of anti-discrimination legislation had stated that it was "useless going very far with the package ...until we have convinced the country that we are ready to halt the number of immigrants 'net' arriving. To introduce legislation of this type earlier would only tend to provoke indignation and resistance."⁴⁶

David Ennals, the Labour Member for Dover, arguing in favour of both tactics, drew an analogy with the United States, which, he stated, would place the debate in the context of the world situation:

The debate is taking place at a time when the world is watching the struggle for equal rights of all peoples in the United States. The march from Selma is half-way through its course, and I think that we all in the House and in the country have admired the courage and forthrightness of the stand taken by President Johnson. It would not be inappropriate to refer to two sentences from his speech last week, because they have some lessons for us. The President said, "Rarely are we met with a challenge, not to our own growth or abundance, our welfare or security - but to the values and purpose and meaning for our nation. The issue of equal rights for the American negro is such an issue, and should we defeat every enemy, double our wealth and conquer the stars and still be unequal to this issue then we shall have failed as a people and as a nation." I believe that those words are as true for us as they are for the people of the United States, although we recognise that we are living here in a different situation. But we are living in a world in which racial issues are becoming more divisive than ever before.⁴⁷

Despite the high moral tone of this speech, Ennals was in support of the controls presumably because he failed to recognise the racist nature of limits based on colour or sought to disguise it by reference to American attempts to achieve racial equality.

No other speaker referred to the United States until Bernard Braine, the Conservative Member for Essex, South-East, argued that there was certainly a need to increase controls on the flow of immigrants. He expanded his argument by referring to concerns about the problem of growing unemployment due to technological advances which, he stated, was already affecting the United States. He argued that, "The House should bear in mind that the negroes' struggle for civil rights in the United States is also a struggle for equality in job opportunity. In short, the terrifying problem of race relations in that country is bound up with the still larger problem of how to adjust human beings, whatever their colour, to rapid and sometimes bewildering technological change." Given this situation, he continued, it would be wrong to add to "the army of the unskilled" in Britain. He suggested that, as well as immigration control, measures should be adopted to assist integration. Amongst the measures which he advocated was the policy of dispersal, "to avoid ghettos".⁴⁸ This speaker was clearly of the opinion that the notion 'America today - Britain tomorrow' was accurate. This reference to the United States, however, appeared in a long speech, the bulk of which dealt with the usual issues of numbers, housing resources and the need for English language teaching. The

following speaker, Ivor Richard, representing Labour for Barons Court, picked Braine up on his American reference and dismissed the idea with the words, "...the United States is not analogous and, if I had more time, I could tell the hon. Gentleman why..."⁴⁹ Clearly not all were of the same opinion.

Sir George Sinclair in a later speech, however, also appeared to think that the situation in America had relevance to Britain when he expanded on what he termed "one of the great issues of our time". He spoke about the 'misunderstandings' that can arise between cultures and stated "We can all read the frightful warnings from outside of the danger of allowing intolerance and frustration to grow". He then paid respect to the way the American Administration was attempting to deal with the issue and pointed out some differences between the situation there and the challenge facing Britain,

Many of us, having read recent news from the United States, would, I believe, wish to pay a real, deep tribute to President Kennedy and now to President Johnson for their imagination and courage in dealing with their own difficult problem of civil rights. (Hear, Hear) But because our own problem is so recent, and because in our country basic political and legal rights are not at issue - and we are fortunate in this - we have, for a short time, an opportunity to get the immigrant communities and our own people moving forward in a concerted effort towards adjustment."⁵⁰

Although it is clear from this that he recognised that there were major differences between the situation in the United States and that in Britain, this speech also carried the implication that Sinclair believed that, without action, they would soon be the same.

iv. 1965 Race Relations Bill

Following on from this debate Frank Soskice, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, published his Bill to outlaw discrimination in April and launched the process whereby, through rapid debate and much lobbying, the 1965 Race Relations Bill came on to the statute books. An examination of this process demonstrates the extent to which American solutions were applied to British issues. Soskice's draft Bill was by no means the first attempt at tackling the problem of discrimination based on colour but the difference lay in the fact that, until now, no political party had allied themselves to the proposal, preferring to leave the issue to private Members' initiatives which could be easily controlled.⁵¹ The initiatives that had been made, by left-wingers Reginald Sorensen and Fenner Brockway, had differed little in structure and scope and Soskice largely followed their model. During the drafting of this Bill, in fact, Soskice had argued against the use of an American example. He stated,

Discrimination is essentially a denial of civil rights and it might be argued that for this reason any remedy should be by way of civil suit as is provided in the US legislation. This, however, would be unsuitable in the circumstances of discrimination as it occurs

in this country, where the main cause of complaint is less the refusal to admit individuals repeatedly seeking admission than the refusal of admission on particular occasions to individuals who may never have cause to seek admission to the premises again. Moreover, civil proceedings might not be regarded as sufficiently indicative of public disapproval. I have, therefore, decided to propose legislation which deals with the problem by providing for a new criminal offence.⁵²

Soskice's approach at this stage is interesting on two levels. Firstly, it seems clear from the way in which he describes the practice of discrimination that he had in mind such situations as an African American seeking admission to a white school and an African Caribbean attempting to find accommodation in London. Secondly, in view of his stress on the level of public disapproval to be demonstrated by the Bill, the change to civil proceedings in the final Act seems surprising.

During April and early May, a campaign was launched to alter the terms of the Bill whereby it substituted criminal sanctions for a process of conciliation in the cases dealing with discrimination, but left criminal sanctions in place for cases which would fall under the extended Public Order Act dealing with incitement to racial violence. In the period after Wilson had expressed a commitment to deal with this legislation, when Labour were returned to office in early 1964, two bodies had worked on proposals, a National Executive Committee under Frank Soskice and a Committee set up by the Society for Labour Lawyers (SLL). Their proposals differed to some degree over the strength of the Public Order section of the bill but both took the Brockway Bill as the basis for anti-discrimination legislation. The SLL Committee, however, made mention of the possibility of employing some form of conciliation process, as was the American practice. Anthony Lester then formed a group of like-minded individuals who felt that the government proposals were inadequate. Lester, now Lord Lester, who was a British lawyer and member of the SLL Committee was also a graduate of the Harvard Law School. Another member of this group was the barrister, Jeffrey Jowell, who had visited the United States to carry out a study on the workings of the American model.⁵³ At the same time, Lester, because of his interest in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, was invited to a meeting of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD), elected to the Executive Council and became Chairman of CARD's legal Committee.

Through their connections with CARD, the press and politicians, this group was able to have an influential impact. Firstly, they won over the majority of CARD to their proposals and, through the SLL Committee, made links with E.J.B. Rose and Nicholas Deakin and consequently the Institute of Race Relations.⁵⁴ The Chairman of CARD was David Pitt, who was also joint Chairman of the British Caribbean Association which had access to members of the House - the other joint Chairman was Donald Chapman, M.P., who was to be a member of the Standing Committee. Michael Zander, another member of CARD's legal committee was the legal correspondent for the *Guardian*.

Through these channels the lobbying campaign was waged. Articles in favour of the conciliation process appeared in the press and copies of CARD's proposals were sent to M.P.s of all parties. Anthony Lester broadcast on the BBC Third Programme, explaining how the law would work and arguing "Here we could learn from the experience of other Common Law countries, which have passed laws to prevent discrimination in employment, housing and public places. In the United States, thirty-four States have enacted such laws against discrimination."⁵⁵ As a result of this activity, when Soskice presented the Bill for its second reading in early May, he made it plain that a change from criminal sanctions to a conciliation procedure was a possibility. As an explanation for this, he referred to an Amendment by the opposition which proposed it and stated that "This is a point of view which is favoured by many hon. Members on both sides of the House and which has been repeated to me by some outside organisations and put forward by way of criticism of the Bill in the Press."⁵⁶ During this period of debate, Peter Thorneycroft, the Shadow Home Secretary, had invited David Pitt and members of the CARD Legal Committee to come and see him and then expressed his support for conciliation in the House. According to Heinemann, Thorneycroft and the majority of the Conservatives wanted no legislation but were more disposed to accept legislation that would not impose criminal sanctions. Thorneycroft indicated that "he might want to use the concept of conciliation as a switch with which to annoy Soskice".⁵⁷ It is, therefore, unclear whether he was convinced of the benefits of conciliation or whether he felt that by pressing for it legislation might be avoided or at least weakened. By the time the Bill reached Committee Stage, however, Soskice had decided that, given the shortage of time, he would accept that change but not the extension of its scope to cover housing and employment.

Discussion through the Committee Stage, also demonstrated that it was the American model that was employed. Thorneycroft, whilst advocating the use of conciliation, argued that,

...all the experience in the United States, which was available to us, went to show that in those States which had adopted the approach of criminal law, it did not work, because very often, either a prosecution was never brought or, if it were, a conviction was never obtained. Those States which adopted a conciliation approach...found it satisfactory...We are dealing with one of the most difficult social problems. It is not on the scale on which it is found in some countries...The United States has a far worse trouble over the question of racial discrimination than I hope we shall ever have. They have had to devise remedies and this represents an attempt to deal with this matter in this country.⁵⁸

During a later sitting, Thorneycroft, arguing against extending the scope of the Bill, again quoted the United States when he stated that the legislative machinery designed to cover housing and employment was both elaborate and expensive and intervened into a wide area of human activity. Donald Chapman, however, who felt that by softening the sanctions they could now extend the scope, argued that it should cover shops, agencies and offices, stating that,

These are public places and if discrimination starts in any area these will be the places in which coloured people will see it start. It will be in this kind of place that coloured people will make the first demonstration, and we may see the American equivalent of the sit-in strike in lunch bars and restaurants.⁵⁹

Another member of the Committee who proposed an Amendment was Shirley Williams and she also quoted the American experience. She was proposing that where all other avenues had been exhausted a complainant should have the right to bring a civil action. She stated that her Amendment was based on the New York Commission of Human Rights recommendations. She referred to the Commission's long experience and stated, "I would beg the Committee to have the imagination and the sense to consider the long experience of another friendly country in this respect."⁶⁰ By the time the Bill reached the Lords stage, where it was passed with little alteration, it was still more or less as proposed by Soskice after the Second Reading, incorporating the new concept of conciliation, but only covering 'places of public resort'.

By 1968, it was becoming clear that the scope of the Bill was inadequate, as had been argued by CARD.⁶¹ In fact, it was the kind of compromise that in reality pleased no one. By accepting the process of conciliation, Soskice had taken the wind out of the opposition's sails and managed to get the Bill through, but by refusing to accept arguments in favour of extending its scope, it meant that the Bill did not go far enough, although this satisfied the Conservatives. Cedric Thornberry, the Labour M.P. for Guildford, who was a member of the SLL Committee, in evaluating the final Act, stated that, "The wrong decisions have been taken for the wrong reasons. They can scarcely be attributed to misunderstanding; rather, to a certain hesitancy while marching to the sound of guns."⁶² From the stand point of those victims of discrimination it certainly did not provide them with the protection they felt they needed and particularly not in the areas where they were most disadvantaged, namely, housing and employment.

One of the main arguments favouring the use of conciliation as opposed to criminal sanctions in the United States was the difficulty in obtaining prosecutions, but whether a similar situation would have been encountered in Britain is a moot point. For an all white jury to prosecute a white in favour of an African American in the United States presented problems that probably would not have been encountered to the same degree in Britain. Furthermore, those arguing that the American experience had demonstrated success were considering its application in the fields of housing and employment. The inclusion of public transport with the areas covered also implies a straight import from the United States, for in Britain there had never been any major problem over discrimination on public transport, although there had been some dispute concerning employment in the public transport industry. Despite the fact that Soskice argued that the legislation would have a 'declaratory' effect on the whole nation, many argued that, in the end, the declaration was a rather half-hearted one which, coupled with the most stringent racialised immigration controls, did more harm than good.

v. Maintenance in Britain, Riots in America

Both the issues of immigration control and anti-discrimination legislation were raised at the Party Political conferences during the summer of 1965. These conferences were set against the dramatic reports of riots in Los Angeles, in which thirty four died and nine hundred were injured. The British press raised fears by asking how long it would be before similar events took place in Britain. The Conservative conference, given the choice of allowing full vent to those who wished to see a complete halt to immigration and the moderate line of pressing the Government to do more towards integration, chose the latter. The issue was more hotly debated, however, at the Labour conference in Blackpool where a motion was proposed to withdraw the 'reactionary' White Paper. The motion was defeated, but in its defence Wilson stated: "I repudiate the libel that Government policy is based either on colour or racial prejudice." He then went on to argue that it was the Government's duty to forestall "a social explosion in this country of the kind we have seen abroad. We cannot take the risk of allowing the democracy of this country to become stained and tarnished with the taint of racialism or colour prejudice". Against the background of Watts, it is likely that it was the United States that was in his mind and this reference was designed to act as a sobering suggestion before the Party members became too excited in their indignation.

The following autumn the issue of immigration came under scrutiny during the Expiring Laws Continuance debate once more and, again, there is evidence that the situation in the United States was kept in mind. The Conservative Member for Hampstead, Henry Brooke, who supported strict controls, stated at the beginning of his speech: "What we are debating this evening is nothing less than whether we shall be able in this country to avoid the atmosphere of racial bitterness and outbreaks of racial hatred which hang like a menacing cloud permanently over America. This is something to which we must all set ourselves."⁶³ Shirley Williams then rebuked him for seeming to suggest that nothing could be done except a complete halt in immigration and argued that he had drawn an unfair analogy with the United States. In a reference to recent changes in the immigration legislation in the America, she stated,

One of the striking differences between the United States and what has happened here in the last few years is that in the United States the bulk of the Legislature and Executive are now firmly committed against any form of racial discrimination based on quotas in their immigration policy towards a much more liberal immigration policy,⁶⁴ and this at a time when we are moving in the opposite direction. I take this opportunity to pay a much deserved commendation to the United States.⁶⁵

At a later stage of the debate, Norman St. John-Stevás, another Tory, returned to the ominous tone used by Brooke and also drew on the American experience to strengthen his argument for

positive measures by the Government to improve living conditions for 'immigrants'. He expressed his fears in these terms: "We are building up ghettos in our great cities in which immigrants are trapped and are unable to get out. This is exactly the situation that has caused so much trouble in the United States, and race riots in places as far apart as Los Angeles and New York."⁶⁶ The implication of this statement, however, was that his concern was more about the possibility of race riots than a concern for equality for the minority. These points of view show how the race struggle in the United States could be used to illustrate an argument. Whether the situation was portrayed positively, or negatively, depended upon the approach the speaker was advocating. The tone of the references to the race struggle in the United States in this debate demonstrated the increasing tension there, particularly when compared with the debate in the previous spring, just six months earlier and can probably be accounted for by the Watts riots.

One of the criticisms levelled at the government over the White Paper was that it incorporated no procedure whereby an individual could appeal against a decision to bar admission. The critics of the White Paper also found support from lawyers and political scientists who had long advocated an appeals procedure be incorporated in the Aliens Restriction Bill. Wilson, under pressure from this lobby, announced the formation of a Committee, under the chairmanship of Sir Roy Wilson, to make proposals relating to such an appeals procedure. Brushing away arguments that the process might be too difficult to work, Sydney Silverman, Labour member for Nelson and Colne, stated: "there are countries which have found ways out of the difficulties, notably the United States of America where, if an immigrant is refused leave to land, he has an appeal to a quasi-judicial tribunal so that at least the man knows what is alleged against him."⁶⁷ As with the case for anti-discrimination legislation, the message was that if the Americans could find a solution then there was no reason that the British could not do likewise.

The Wilson Committee, as it became known, taking its name from its Chairman, presented its findings in September 1967 having received evidence from CARD and NCCL and studying the methods of immigration officials at points of entry. The chairman and the secretary of the Committee also made an extensive tour of North America to study at first hand the systems of control in the United States and Canada and incorporated their findings there in the final proposals which advocated removing control out of the hands of the Home Office. The plan to pass legislation to put the appeals process on the books in 1968 was shelved due to the Kenyan Asian crisis. To have begun the legislative process at that stage would have meant a delay in the passage of the Commonwealth Immigration Bill and this may have resulted in giving a warning which could have precipitated a rush to beat the ban. David Ennals made this point clear when he suggested that, "...a separate, one clause Bill to control entry by citizens of the UK and Colonies would have a very great advantage that it could be passed rapidly into law as soon as possible as Parliament re-assembles. If it were included in a general Bill,

dealing with immigration appeals, there would be no way of preventing a numerous inflow during the months preceding the Royal Assent."⁶⁸ The appeals procedure was introduced in 1969.

At the same time that the White Paper was being implemented, the Local Government Act was passed which altered the funding of local authorities. This allowed funds to be targeted, through a complicated formula, to poorer areas. This marked a shift from the British social policy ideal of equal treatment for all and to some extent was a result of the fear of the development of black ghettos as "discussion of social problems began to take on a highly racialised character".⁶⁹ The new policy of targeting also led to the Urban Programme and its related initiatives. This programme was part of a new approach to a previously unrecognised degree of poverty in Britain. Just as America had been shocked by Michael Harrington's exposure of poverty⁷⁰ in the United States, so research at the Social Administration Department of the London School of Economics and the work of Abel-Smith and Townsend⁷¹ had thrown light on areas of deprivation in Britain. President Johnson's response was the launch of his 'poverty programme'. The British response was more tentative but adopted some of the ideas current in the United States. Its lack of scope was hardly surprising given the economic constraints at the time.

The Urban Programme took on the notion of 'positive discrimination' for those in greatest need. It was launched in March 1968 and promised over twenty million pounds over four years. Feeling threatened by the growing exploitation of racialism, this programme was launched closely following Enoch Powell's speech in April. It was felt that the measure had to be treated delicately:

It needed ...to try simultaneously to reassure both disadvantaged white inner-city residents who blamed black people for their troubles and also the new immigrants in those same areas for whom it had done little. In addition it did not want its response to be seen as a concern for deprived multi-racial areas at the expense of long-standing areas of deprivation largely unaffected by immigration. An urban policy, which could be described both as a response to racial strife and as 'colour blind' in its concern about urban deprivation, seemed to fit the bill.⁷²

Other initiatives were the 'educational priority areas' programme, the Children and Young Persons Act and the Community Development Projects (CDP). This latter experiment borrowed heavily from American examples and was designed to test the view that, within impoverished and needy communities, local people could be found to provide some kind of political leadership and articulate grievances in a way that existing political leadership failed to do. In the United States much of the thrust for initiatives of this kind was a desire by federal government to inject funds into the targeted areas in a way that would not allow them to be redirected by lower tiers of government. In Britain in contrast to this, local authorities were expected to take an active role in the implementation of projects. As CDPs developed, their

leadership was often dominated by radical activists with quite a different view from that held by their local authorities and this led to tension, "They saw the people with whom they worked as trapped by national and local policies they could do little to influence. For them community action needed to be not so much self-help as political mobilisation."⁷³ The way in which the policy was developed maintained government control in a way that it was not designed to do in the United States. This led to a more moderate response and avoided antagonising 'middle England'. In America where 'positive discrimination' became the subject of much criticism from the white middle-class it resulted in a stronger conservative backlash. However, just as in the case of Local Voluntary Liaison Committees,⁷⁴ which were controlled by government, the tying of CDPs to local authorities discouraged many from involvement.

In order to target certain areas, this new policy faced the problem of lack of statistical data. In seeking a solution to this difficulty American advice was sought. Correspondence between the Foreign Office and the United States Embassy in London revealed that statistics based on colour had been considered discriminatory in Britain and therefore were not collected. The reply from the Embassy, however, pointed out that the practice had been discontinued in America although civil rights leaders were currently pressing for it to be re-introduced. The report then commented that these leaders might prove to be less keen if the statistics began to show blacks in a less favourable light.⁷⁵ Correspondence between the Ministerial Committee on Commonwealth Immigration and the General Register Office requesting the inclusion of questions relating to 'race' in the 1966 Census also demonstrated the government's desire for data.⁷⁶ Records of the Sub-committee on Integration, chaired by Maurice Foley, provided further evidence that the main targets for funds were the new immigrants and highlighted the difficulty in directing these funds. Questions were raised as to how need was to be calculated and the point made that providing money on a per capita basis might not be the best procedure, "as not all immigrants place the same demands on local authorities". It was then decided that a more effective method would be to allow the Department of Education and the Department of Labour to assess local demands.⁷⁷

During 1966 there was little activity at Parliamentary level concerning the issues of immigration or discrimination. The White Paper, although it was initially criticised, seemed to have been accepted and even welcomed by the general public. The results of a poll, carried out in August 1965, demonstrated that 88 per cent of the population approved of the immigration controls.⁷⁸ The election in March produced an increased majority of 100 for Labour and the immigration question was barely raised.⁷⁹ A consensus had been reached over the issue. The Conservatives, under their newly elected leader, Edward Heath, were wary of the problem and although their manifesto carried some proposals to tighten immigration once more, they carried a warning against the exploitation of the issue for political gains. Likewise, Labour, apart from a few individuals who were still pressing for an expansion of the scope of the Race

Relations Act, felt that, at least for the moment, policy was decided and there was no requirement for further action.

Furthermore there were other, more pressing, political issues demanding attention. These were on-going issues, such as the question over a future world role for Britain. Firstly, the Defence White Paper in the spring of that year cut Britain's defence commitments 'East of Suez'; secondly, there were the continuing difficulties over Rhodesia, and the response to Britain's failure to resolve the situation by some members of the Commonwealth; thirdly, pressure was growing to consider re-applying for membership of the EEC; and lastly, there was the Vietnam War. On 29 June 1966, Wilson announced in the Commons that the Government dissociated itself from the American bombing of Haiphong and Hanoi. Indeed, as far as press reports from the United States are concerned, it was Vietnam that dominated. During the summer, however, there was a return to interest in the racial struggle as James Meredith embarked on his walk to Jackson, and as Martin Luther King and Stokely Carmichael stepped into the breach after Meredith was shot, splits were observed between moderate and more radical approaches to the issue and the call to Black Power was heard. The British financial crisis hung over all this, and in July, the Government found themselves forced to tackle inflation and they introduced a pay freeze.

Although 1966 was a quiet year in terms of British political activity regarding immigration and discrimination, these issues persisted. In a Cabinet reshuffle Wilson had promoted Roy Jenkins to the position of Home Secretary and he was to prove more dynamic and liberal than his predecessor. During the autumn of that year, Roy Jenkins visited the United States and referred to this visit in a speech which he delivered in October to the Institute of Race Relations. He made the point that although the racial tensions were much greater in the United States than in Britain, he found a greater determination to tackle them, stating:

It is, I think unwise to attempt to draw too many parallels between the still relatively limited problem in this country and the far more violent and difficult situation in the United States. But I was very much struck in my recent visit between the situation in those American cities where an honest and sustained effort has been made to absorb minority groups into the police and other public services and those places where this has not been done. The contrast could hardly have been more marked...Perhaps our progress is bound to be slower than New York's, with its enormous experience of absorbing new immigrant communities. But I will not rest content until I see far more coloured policemen, firemen, ambulance men - yes and coloured magistrates than we have today.⁸⁰

It is interesting to note that he referred, in this speech, to New York's experience of absorbing immigrant communities. This raises questions as to whether he was simply using the coded language 'immigrant' to mean 'black' or if he believed that New York's black population was composed of recent arrivals. Alternatively he may have had other minority groups in mind, such as Jews, Irish or Italians and was not referring to New York's progress in integrating its

African American population; in which case the implication is that he was equating newly arrived Africans, Caribbeans and Asians in Britain with European migrants to America and thereby glossing over the issue of colour.

The implication in this address that progress in the United States put some kind of pressure on Britain to match it, was also apparent in another speech which Jenkins delivered on 13 May 1967 to the Annual London Labour Party Conference. This speech was delivered soon after the publication of the Political and Economic Planning Department (PEP) report which exposed a level of discrimination in Britain that was much more severe than previously recognised and only two weeks after the publication of the Race Relations Board sponsored Street Report.⁸¹ It was also only two months since Jenkins had attended the NCCI Conference on Racial Equality in Employment. This Conference was also attended by five invited American speakers.⁸² In his speech at the London Labour Party Conference, Jenkins, referred to the findings in the PEP report and stated that, "This is a blot upon our national life" and argued that legislation could play a role in modifying people's behaviour: "American experience provides overwhelming evidence that this is so. For us to fall behind America in the leadership the Government offers towards racial tolerance would be an intolerable situation. But I do not believe for a moment this will happen."⁸³ These expressions of concern for Britain's reputation, in comparison to the United States, were unusual at this time. The fear he was exploiting was that Britain would appear less tolerant in the eyes of the world. The majority of references to the United States were simply a case of holding up the image of American racial conflict with the threat that this would be where Britain was headed if there was no action. Jenkins's tone was reminiscent of some of the comments that were made soon after the 1958 riots, when some were shocked into thinking that the British could possibly be as racist as the Americans.

vi. The Rise of Black Power and Kenyan Asian Crisis

July of 1967 brought the issue to the forefront once again. Firstly, the Youth Services Development Council Committee produced their report on integration amongst second generation blacks, with its dire warnings that were widely reported in the press. These warnings referred to American race riots and, as the report concentrated on the second generation, the analogy with African Americans was much clearer, as neither groups could strictly be described as 'immigrants'. At the same time, Stokely Carmichael visited Britain; Michael X, the self-styled British black power leader, was arrested under the new Race Relations Act and Duncan Sandys pressed for tighter immigration control threatened "a generation of misfits" through miscegenation.⁸⁴ All these events took place against a backdrop of riots in Detroit and a steady flow of reports from the United States to the Foreign Office, including reports on the activities of Stokely Carmichael in America, the passage of the Anti-

Riot Bill, which, the report stated, had been nicknamed the 'Carmichael Bill', and changes to the Civil Rights Bill to include housing.⁸⁵

Concerns were also being expressed in the Foreign Office about the position of the West Indies as a possible focus for Black Power ideology. A report from the Washington Embassy to the American Department of the Foreign Office drew attention to the possible spread of black racism through activists like Carmichael, who was originally from Trinidad and who had recently been warmly welcomed in Cuba; the presence of Adam Clayton Powell in the Caribbean; the fact that delegates from Bermuda had attended the Black Power conference in Newark; and the possible influence on the large numbers of West Indian students in the United States. The writer, J.E. Killick, then stated that, "in all prudence we need to watch very carefully for signs of the spread to the English-speaking Caribbean of the violent approach to race relations which is now so much in evidence in the United States." Killick was clearly concerned about disturbances in the Caribbean paying regard to the part played by a shared language. The response to this report, however, is interesting, as it stated: "I agree that this is a matter to be watched. We are very conscious of the U.S. Government's concern about any possible source of subversion in the Caribbean". This response would appear to imply that within the Foreign Office concern was that the West Indies could provide a source of embarrassment for the British Government in its relations with the United States, if it became clear that black 'racist' influences from there were having a detrimental impact on American 'race relations'.⁸⁶ Thus the Foreign Office was more anxious about the effect that a British area of concern might have on relations with an ally.

Concerns that Britain was moving towards American-style riots were further demonstrated in September when a circular letter of guidance from the Home Office asked chief constables to take further steps to improve racialised relations. The *Coventry Evening Telegraph* reported that the local police force had already been considering the issue. Inspector Seer stated that:

If trouble does occur, we hope to have enough background to deal with it. In America, the first in to deal with the rioters are the police. They would also be the first to be called in this country. Coventry and Warwickshire were among the first forces in the country to establish race relations officers - and this could be the way to prevent American troubles happening here.⁸⁷

This report gave the impression that, although they had accepted the Home Office guidance that they had a role to play in improving local 'race relations', should the worst come to the worst, they would also be ready to tackle 'race riots'. As the number of complaints about racism amongst the police grew and the Home Office wished to provide some education on racial matters for police officers, it is interesting to note that it was an American who was appointed to run the course. This was at the Cambridge Institute of Criminology which sponsored research into police training and public relations and the course was organised by

Gerald Kemper who was on an exchange from Columbia University.⁸⁸ The choice of Kemper is another demonstration that there was a perception that the racial situations in Britain and the United States were similar and that Britain could learn from American experience.

Throughout 1967 pressure had been building for an extension of the Race Relations Act and in July Roy Jenkins announced that the Government was planning to extend the Act to cover the sensitive issues of housing and employment. Mark Bonham Carter, the Chairman of the Race Relations Board, had made an extensive tour of the United States. The Home Secretary referred to this tour in answer to a question in the House from Christopher Rowland, a Labour Member who asked, in the light of the recently published PEP report, "As we have now shown ourselves to be as prone to colour prejudice as the United States, will my right Hon Friend say what official action is being taken by his Department to study the lessons of experience in the United States and the desirable effects of legislation in that country?"⁸⁹ Clearly Mark Bonham Carter was of the opinion that lessons were to be drawn from the American experience for not only did he make a tour of the States himself but he also arranged for John Lyttle (who was to take up the position as Secretary of the Race Relations Board) and Nadine Peppard of the NCCI to do the same and provided many American contacts for them.⁹⁰

Bonham Carter also referred to his American visit in a speech he delivered to the conference on Racial Equality and Employment. He stressed that there were major differences between the situation in the United States and that in Britain in two main ways, firstly, the very fact that the issue, in Britain, was relatively small and new and, therefore, more flexible and, secondly, that the more centrally organised structure of government in Britain meant that it was easier to initiate national policies. He then stated, however, that:

...there is no evidence that in the field of race relations they [British] behave very differently from the Americans or the Canadians. The sooner we banish from our minds the idea that race relations in the UK. are going to follow a totally different pattern from that in the rest of the world - including those parts of the world largely inhabited by people who hail from these islands - the sooner we are likely to deal sensibly and constructively, with humanity and justice with the situation...⁹¹

This statement demonstrates that he recognised that, although there were differences in the relative current positions, the fact that North America was largely populated by Europeans, could mean that British progress could still follow similar lines despite the differences that existed. It also conveys the impression, which was widely held in Britain, that Americans were largely British in origin and partly explains why America appeared to be the logical place to look for answers. There is evidence, however, amongst Home Office papers of an interest in the way that the Dutch were handling their own racialised relations. But in a discussion about the value of a tour of Holland Nicholas Deakin advised Maurice Foley to guard against making too much of their achievements which, he felt, were somewhat over-stated.⁹² Foley reported, after a visit to the Netherlands, that there was a certain complacency and that the situation

there was reminiscent of the position that existed in Britain ten years ago.⁹³ This perception that, in terms of the development of a multi-racial society, Britain was ahead of other European countries reinforced the notion that the place to look for answers was the United States which, it was felt, was at a more advanced stage of development.

In the autumn of 1967, the Expiring Laws Continuance debate in the House again demonstrated that Members were concerned about the situation in the United States and the danger of such a situation developing in Britain. Both Robert Howarth, the Labour Member for Bolton East and Duncan Sandys argued that without further restrictions on immigration this would be the case. Robert Howarth referred to his recent visit to the United States and said, "I do not for a moment suggest that ours is in any way comparable, but I am certain that, unless we take action in the next few years, the potential problem I have outlined may well develop..."⁹⁴ Duncan Sandys, whilst complaining that no accurate figures for future immigration by dependants were available, also picked up this theme, stating, "There is no reason to suppose that this will not lead to the same troubles and difficulties as in America. If we are serious in our wish to avoid racial trouble and over-population, our first duty is to prevent the problem from getting bigger than it already is."⁹⁵

A little later in the debate, Sir Cyril Osborne, sticking to his usual anti-immigration theme, also used the American tensions to illustrate his argument. This time he referred to Martin Luther King, who had visited England the day before the debate, in these terms:

I now turn to the most important problem of all. Yesterday a most moderate coloured leader from America - Dr. Martin Luther King - received an honorary degree from Newcastle University apropos of what we are discussing he said, "All our troubles could soon be yours." He said that we had the makings of a Selma or a Watts situation in this country.

He then continued by quoting a section of King's speech,

Britain is in the same situation as many of the northern cities of America were at the turn of the century. They did not have legal segregation but there were latent prejudices in the white community.

Osborne concluded his speech by urging the Government to "place greater restrictions on immigration because otherwise it will automatically cause the situation to arise that has occurred in America and which no one there seems to be able to solve at the moment."⁹⁶

The Labour Member for Croydon, David Winnick, who had been pressing for an extension to the anti-discrimination legislation, responded by pointing out that it was discrimination that was the cause of the problem in the United States. He asked Osborne,

Does not the hon. Member agree that to a large extent the trouble in America has been caused by years or even centuries of discrimination against non-whites, and that this is

part of the trouble at the moment? Only now are the negroes in America beginning to get their legitimate legal rights as human beings.⁹⁷

His argument was further supported by Paul Rose for Labour who told the House that he had recently had a conversation with an American "leading civil rights worker - by no means a black power man" who advised extending the scope of discrimination legislation to cover housing and employment and that, in this way, "we should be able to go some way to avoid the tensions which have built up in urban areas of the United States."⁹⁸ David Marquand, a fellow Labour Member, took up this theme when he stated, "At the same time, if we are to avoid the coloured community who are already in this country coming to believe that there exists an unshakeable racial prejudice on the part of the majority, to which their only answer would be a response of the kind that has been made by the coloured population in the United States, it is essential that all of us in this House should display a responsible attitude..."⁹⁹ By this statement Marquand made it plain that he believed that the case for an extension of the Race Relations Act rested on the danger of race riots erupting.

One of the ways in which David Marquand suggested that the House should display a 'responsible attitude' was by ensuring that immigration control should be seen to be fair. The same point had also been made by David Winnick who had argued that discussion of controls undermined the attempt to legislate against racism, when he stated that:

One of the snags is that, by constantly raising the question whether or not we want more Commonwealth immigrants here, we tend to make it all the more difficult to integrate those immigrants who have been in our country for some years. The two matters are connected, because if we keep harping on about this issue - that somehow, these people from the new Commonwealth countries are undesirable, that we should restrict them.. there is bound to be more resistance and hostility in Britain to our saying that those already here should be allowed to lead their lives without any form of discrimination...¹⁰⁰

Throughout this debate, it is clear that the two issues of immigration and anti-discrimination legislation were linked. Despite the fact that at the beginning of the debate Members had been asked to avoid discussing the issue of integration and to address themselves solely to the subject of immigration control, it seems this was not possible. Although the two issues were linked, however, they were also, as David Winnick pointed out, in conflict. The attempts to outlaw discrimination were constantly being undermined by the attempts to restrict the flow of non-white immigrants. During 1968 this struggle continued so that when the 1965 Race Relations Act was finally extended to cover the most sensitive issues of housing and employment, its impact was damaged by the fact that it was preceded by the exclusion of Asian immigrants from Kenya. Throughout the discussion that surrounded the passage of both these pieces of legislation, the situation in the United States was again employed although there were

fewer references during the debate over the Commonwealth Immigration Act. By this stage its work had been done.

There has been much written about the passage of the 1968 immigration restrictions which, in practice, refused Asians from Kenya admittance to Britain despite the fact that they held no other nationality and would, therefore, not have been affected by the 1962 Act. The restrictions were only in force for about one year, but it marked a low point in the political response to non-white immigration on the part of either of the main parties.¹⁰¹ Some pointed the finger at Callaghan, arguing that it was the fact that he became Home Secretary instead of Jenkins in November, 1967, but the issue had been discussed before the reshuffle and Jenkins, although, deciding not to act, had also failed to make a commitment never to do so and thereby fuelled the immigration by raising fears. In January, 1967, only 282 Kenyan Asians arrived in Britain whereas the figure for January, 1968 was 2,294.¹⁰² A firm statement at the time might have done much to avoid the situation developing.¹⁰³

Throughout the winter a Powell/Sandys campaign was waged which sought to stir up fears concerning numbers of new black and Asian immigrants. The press took up the theme and the campaign by Sikh transport workers to be allowed to wear their turbans was portrayed as a threat to the British way of life rather than an attempt by a minority to continue to observe their religion. Powell's speeches and his appearance on *Panorama*, on 12 February, emphasised the potential size of forthcoming immigration. On 19 February, when Malcolm MacDonald, George Thomson's emissary to the Kenya, returned empty handed, the Conservative Party produced a five point plan on immigration which was designed to "prevent conditions arising here which could lead to the racialism and race tensions which so tragically exist elsewhere."¹⁰⁴ It is possible that the writer had South Africa or Rhodesia in mind but given that at the time there was considerable interest in the strike in Memphis led by Martin Luther King, it is probable that the image of America contributed to this perception. The following day Duncan Sandys tabled a motion calling for the Government to put a curb on all new immigration, which was supported by ninety Conservative M.P.s. and by fifteen Labour M.P.s. The next day, Callaghan made a statement in the House outlining the Government's intention to prevent immigration by those UK. passport holders "who have no substantial connection with this country, for example, by birth or paternal parentage."¹⁰⁵

The heated debate that took place on the 27 February provides some evidence that fears of developing an American-style race problem was an issue in the minds of some speakers. The Conservative, Charles Pannell, a long time advocator of immigration control, used the words of an American equal rights campaigner to describe the situation in the United States, which he said, "will come home to this country", to reinforce his argument that equality could not be achieved through legislation without the support of the population. He stated that this campaigner, Martha Ragland, whom he claimed as a friend, indirectly placing himself on the side of equal rights, had said in a recent lecture,

Most negroes see very little difference in their lives. They still attend criminally inferior schools (and are largely segregated). Negroes are not competing for traditionally 'white' jobs...the negro unemployment rate is twice that for whites and the teenage rate is four times that of whites, and most employment is in menial, low-pay jobs as always. The black ghettos in our inner cities are contained and festering. Negro housing is a national disgrace, and white America is making it clear that they prefer this to having 'them' live next door. Rural negroes live lives of bleak despair....Why is this - after all we thought we had done to redress injustice? I think that basically the answer is that legal action unsupported by a genuine commitment of the people will never build a truly democratic society.¹⁰⁶

Through this quote, Pannell had raised all those fears about large numbers of young unemployed blacks living in ghettos, which, it was by now widely believed, were one of the major causes of urban riots. It also carried the message that there was little that could be achieved to avoid this scenario apart from strict immigration control, for if even the much lauded American legislation for equal rights was unsuccessful, then there was little chance similar action would create racial harmony in Britain.

A later contribution, by the Conservative, Lieutenant Commander Maydon, was of a much more forthright nature. He stated, "...we must face up to the fact that racialism with regard to colour is here and cannot be eradicated overnight....I am really scared that unless the Government put a final stop to immigration of even moderate numbers of people of races differing from our own we shall soon be faced with a situation as bad as that which obtains during the hot summers in New York, Chicago and, more recently, in Detroit."¹⁰⁷ This speaker, having already stated that he supported apartheid in South Africa, could perhaps have been dismissed as only representative of the right wing, but George Thomson, Minister of State for Commonwealth Affairs, also stated "there are all the makings of a situation similar to that in the United States" and that what the British Government was trying to do was "to fight prejudice and prejudice arises from fear. Fear often, if not always arises from social inequality between one race and another."¹⁰⁸ The tone may have differed but the message was the same. The Bill was passed with only sixty-two Members voting against it, which included fifteen Tories, thirty-five Labour backbenchers. Those voting in favour included Roy Jenkins.

During the debate on this Bill, the Home Secretary had promised an extension to the legislation designed to combat racial discrimination, and, if the image of racial tension in America had been used to support the Commonwealth Immigration Act, it was even more of a factor in the discussion surrounding anti-discrimination legislation. A dramatic backdrop for the debate was provided by Enoch Powell who delivered a stirring speech three days before it was due to take place. This contribution, which became famous as the 'River of Blood' speech, sought to raise fears about the presence of blacks and Asians in Britain, arguing that they were a threat to the British way of life and that their numbers would continue to grow until there were areas in cities where no white face would be seen and schools were entirely comprised of

'coloureds'. In his reference to the United States he employed extremely emotive language, describing the racial tensions there as a "tragic and intractable phenomenon" which "is coming upon us."¹⁰⁹ This speech was delivered just over two weeks after the murder of Martin Luther King and the riots that followed. These events in the United States were, naturally, widely reported in Britain and dire predictions made of further racial trouble in America.

In response to Powell's speech notes were sent out from the Prime Minister's office to all Private Secretaries stating that no minister should speak publicly on the issue until the content of the proposed speech had been cleared by the Home Secretary's office and stressing the danger of making this a party political issue and the importance of bipartisan ship.¹¹⁰ Concerns were also expressed within the Home Office and a background preparatory note for the Race Relations Bill debate stated that, "Powell's outburst may lead to attempts to turn the debate into a discussion of the rate of immigration...in the context of race relations the controversy over 1968 Act as a allegedly racist measure may be revived." The Home Secretary was then advised to stress that the intention of the Commonwealth Immigration Act was the furtherance of the best possible 'race relations'.¹¹¹ Edward Heath promptly sacked Powell from the Shadow Cabinet, but as large numbers of dockers and porters in London took to the streets in support of Powell it was clear that many approved of his words. It should be noted, however, that a factor in this was the activity of some extremists, for example a march of 300 Smithfield Market porters was led by Dennis Harmston, who had been known as a Mosley supporter,¹¹² and that there were also counter demonstrations by left-wing dockers.

References to the United States were scattered throughout the debate. In the majority of cases they were from Members who were arguing in favour of the legislation and were convinced that legislation had proven itself to be effective in the United States and, therefore, would be successful in Britain. Sir Dingle Foot quoted the findings of the Street Report and argued that "we cannot ignore the American experience. We know the events that have taken place in the United States during the past few weeks. In that kind of situation there are not only differences of race and colour but social differences which coincide."¹¹³ In this he would seem to be referring to the growing awareness that the focus of the issue for African Americans had shifted from a desire for equal civil rights to a demand for economic equality. Foot was supported in his belief by Nigel Fisher who stated, "all the research which has been carried out, both here and in the United States, leads to the conclusion that legislation is an essential beginning and that it does help to influence peoples' attitudes. This was the view of the Street Report in Britain and of the National Advisory Commission in the United States."¹¹⁴

Nigel Fisher was amongst those who argued not simply that legislation in the United States was succeeding, but that the situation there should be seen as a dire warning rather than just an example to follow, when he stated, "I should have thought that the American experience was sufficient warning of the dangers of leaving legislation too late."¹¹⁵ Paul Rose expanded on this theme when he stated that,

It is rather ironical that the Opposition should oppose this Bill only a week or so after the passing of the Civil Rights Bill in the United States of America. American experience above all should demonstrate the need to act quickly in this matter before the problem solidifies...It is discrimination outside the ghetto which creates the ghetto..."¹¹⁶

David Winnick added to this sense of urgency by arguing that, "if more and more coloured people feel a burning sense of resentment ... it is quite likely that they will turn to extremist groups"¹¹⁷ and David Ennals referred to the death of Martin Luther King which he described as a 'flash point'. Ennals then drew a comparison with Britain when he said, "Those who suggest that we ought to delay before bringing in our legislation are playing with fire and danger. There need not be a flash point in this country but it can happen if we dither."¹¹⁸ If any members were inclined to dismiss these American references as irrelevant to Britain, E.L. Mallalieu, a Labour Member, twice referred to "our American friends", stressing the notion of a close relationship between the two nations. He argued that if no action to outlaw discrimination was taken, "we shall find ourselves before the end of the century, possibly well before the end of the century, in a state which is as serious for ourselves and the world as that in which are American friends now are."¹¹⁹ It is interesting to note that Powell had used a similar threat in his 'Rivers of Blood' speech whilst urging an end to non-white immigration.

Although it is clear, through press reports and the use of much research into American legislation, that the United States situation was already in the minds of the Members, the Kerner Report into the urban riots was also published that month and this, again, drew attention to the dangers of racial tension in America. This report was referred to during the debate within three speeches. Dingle Foot, supporting the Bill, used the Kerner Report to back his argument that the legislation under discussion did not go far enough and that "the law can only scratch the surface".¹²⁰

The majority of Members who employed the situation in the United States to reinforce their argument were in support of the Bill but there were also those who opposed it who found the American example useful. The Conservative Member for Warwick and Leamington, Dudley Smith, arguing against the Bill, was concerned that the generally moderate members of his constituency who believed that, "unless we tread very carefully indeed, we shall finally be presented with a problem of the type which is now very much to the fore in the United States..."¹²¹ will see that this Bill as discriminating in favour of 'coloured people'. In this way, he argued, it will create tensions rather than alleviate them.

Ronald Bell, another Conservative, argued that the aim of the Civil Rights Movement had been to fight for civil rights, but that in Britain these were automatically accorded to all and that this Bill was concerned with the intention of achieving social equality which, he argued, was not possible. He then stated that it represented an "encroachment on personal freedom" and that he was against the use of such an American model, declaring, "Let us get it

clear that we are here borrowing an American procedure and taking it over virtually lock, stock and barrel. It is interesting to see what the American propagandists over the past few years have been telling us that we ought to do and why, because we have it in the Bill."¹²² His argument against the Bill was based on civil liberties but he seemed to feel that the importation of the American model was wrong simply because that was what it was.

There were others who gave a more reasoned argument against the transposition of American solutions to a British context. The Tory, Quintin Hogg who opposed the Bill made a number of points against it in his speech but his main objection was that it would not be effective and would not improve racial relations. During his detailed criticism he explained that, as he saw it, there were major differences between the situation in the United States and in Britain, one of the most important being the provision of the welfare state:

anyone who knows anything whatever about America - I do not claim to be an expert, but I am half-American - realises that on every American shoulder there is a little black dog which says, "What will happen to you when you get old, or when you fall out of work, or when you are ill, or if you cannot afford to keep your boy in college?" We are very fond of denigrating ourselves in this country, but I believe that we have set ourselves on the right road when we have provided those things. I believe that to try to cure racial prejudice without an adequate sub-stratum of social policy on a basis of universal provision in case of need, where there is no reference to race at all, is like trying to carry water in a bucket with a hole in the bottom.¹²³

Although he was correct in pointing out this dissimilarity, he appeared to believe that, by providing the welfare state, Britain had no holes in its bucket. The question, however, was rather whether universal provision with no reference to race existed in reality. In Britain, blacks and Asians had access to free schooling and free health care but did they receive the same treatment as whites? Were they treated equally when applying for council housing? These were questions that he did not address.

Another contributor who opposed the Bill, Reg Maudling, also felt that the similarities between the United States and Britain were over stressed and stated that he doubted,

the wisdom of trying to base too much on the United States. Their colour problem is different from our own. The numbers involved are much higher, and they have lived there against a background of resentment for many generations. That is different from the situation in this country where, as we all know and rejoice in the fact, there is not the same ready turning to violence as one finds in the United States. Therefore, I would counsel caution in building too much on what is thought to be the analogy of what happens in America.¹²⁴

Despite these dissenting voices, it is clear that the majority agreed that Britain should take on the lessons of the American experience and adopt their tactics for tackling discrimination. At the same time, however, American research was beginning to demonstrate the limits of its own legislation. Two reports from the United States argued that a major defect

in the legislation was an over reliance on conciliation which resulted in the perception that reaching conciliation was the central role of the State Commissions rather than enforcement of the law, and that they took pride in the small number of cases that had been taken to court. Thus, cases were allowed to drag on whilst conciliation was sought and often soft settlements were reached. A further problem that was highlighted was the inability or reluctance of the Commissions to initiate complaints, taking the position of a "neutral umpire-like disinterest".¹²⁵

These concerns had also been highlighted in the Street Report, which, whilst advocating the extension of the scope of the Race Relations Act, had also stressed that the legislation would be next to useless if the enforcement mechanism was inadequate. It, therefore, advocated that the Race Relations Board must be given powers to initiate complaints, be able to subpoena witnesses and call for relevant documents, be able to make affirmative rulings, such as orders for back pay or admission to housing and be ready to take cases to court rather than seeking, above all, to reach conciliation.

During the Committee stage of the passage of the Bill, however, Government front-bench spokesmen formed an alliance with the Tories to prevent the Committee from strengthening the enforcement machinery. Firstly, the Government wished to take the Conservatives along with them or at the least avoid too much opposition; secondly, against the background of popular support for Powell, they were anxious about public opinion, and thirdly, Callaghan had faith in the declaratory nature of the Bill. As he stated in the debate in the House, when he referred to a recent report by Anthony Lewis, chief correspondent in London of the *New York Times*, which had argued that the legislation works in Britain and the United States because the citizens are basically law-abiding, "I attach great importance to the declaratory nature of the first part of the Bill. I believe that what Mr. Lewis said is profoundly true, and that the very process of giving the law brings an instinctive response from the great majority of our citizens."¹²⁶ The result was that, although the scope of the Act was extended, its power to enforce was limited. Despite the statements of intent to take on the lessons of the experience in the United States, the British adopted their approach just when many in America were expressing dissatisfaction with it.

vii. Conclusion

Throughout the period under review governments and politicians responded quite inconsistently to the increasing numbers of West Indian and Asian immigrants. At times, they appeared to be acting decisively and without hesitation, or perhaps in panic, as in the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Bill, and at other times to take a cautious approach, as they did with the Race Relations Act. The Tories, whilst in office, favoured the tactic of controlling numbers but also supported weak anti-discrimination legislation when they were in opposition. Labour, during its first period in office, with a tiny majority and frightened by Smethwick, was worried by

public opinion and wary of being seen as soft on the issue. It adopted a dual interventionist strategy of control and legislation to promote racial equality and thereby conveyed conflicting messages. Furthermore, both attempts at anti-discrimination legislation missed the mark and on both occasions only went a certain distance in adopting the American model. The first Act lacked both scope and enforcement and in the second attempt the enforcement mechanism was weak and difficult to implement. This produced compromises which attempted to satisfy the Opposition and public opinion. In addition, the result of immigration controls, that were perceived as racially motivated, undermined any positive effect that might have been gained by even weak anti-discrimination laws.

Throughout the discussions surrounding both these tactics, the image of the struggle in America was maintained as both a source of inspiration and a threat. Racial strife in the United States provided a nightmare vision that could be employed to press an argument but the Civil Rights Movement and President Johnson's response also engendered a degree of respect for the Administration's attempts to tackle this challenge. In order, however, for arguments employing American references to be effective, parallels between the situation in Britain and that in the United States needed to be stressed. Voices arguing that there were major differences between the two countries were too few to have an impact. One factor that led to the decision to adopt the model of American legislation for the anti-discrimination legislation in Britain was that it was such a high profile issue at the time, coupled with the view that the United States had far more experience and that this experience was relevant to Britain. This led activists and interested parties to seek to adopt their tactics and then put pressure on a government that lacked experience, support and time. Government is not only a top down process, but is also subject to pressure from local bodies and public opinion. The early attempts at anti-discrimination legislation, although making reference to practice in America, had not anticipated the use of any other form of legislation than the commonly accepted criminal law.

Legislation to outlaw discrimination was not the only area in which the influence of the American experience could be seen. Concerns rising from the increasing number of complaints over police attitudes to blacks and Asians also prompted a transatlantic response. Fears about the development of segregated schools led the Department of Education and the Home Office to discuss the possibility of implementing a 'bussing' policy. The adoption of the tactic of directing funds to assist areas of deprivation through local grants and thereby avoiding the creation of 'ghettos' also pointed to the influence of American policy. One area in which an American input seemed less relevant was that of immigration control, due to the particular post-colonial position of Britain. But even discussion of this issue prompted regular references to America, demonstrating that many were more impressed by the similarities between the two situations than by arguments which stressed that the conditions across the Atlantic were quite different. In the majority of cases these references were a way of pressing for controls by

holding up the image of racial strife provided by the United States, but America could also be used as an example of more liberal immigration policies by those who opposed controls in Britain, as demonstrated by the results of the Wilson Committee. Given the evidence that fears about the inflow of non-white migrants had been a part of government thinking since the end of the war it would be unrealistic to see the racial struggle in the United States as the main factor in the way in which racialised relations developed in Britain. It seems clear, however, that it had an impact in terms of the debate and in the choice of official methods employed to respond to the presence of larger numbers of blacks and Asians in Britain. Without the impact of events in the United States it is possible that the reliance on immigration control would have been the only official response. Against this, however, it must be recognised that the situation across the Atlantic fuelled fears in Britain and helped to create a mood in which controls were acceptable. As the press highlighted the dramatic events in the United States, many politicians responded both directly to these reports and to their perception of public opinion. The next part of the thesis examines the extent to which the non-white section of the British population recognised parallels with the racial struggle in America and looked across the Atlantic for solutions to their own problems.

PART III - Special Interest Groups

Chapter 4 Immigrant Groups

There is evidence when looking at the organisations and societies set up by Afro-Caribbeans or Asians that there developed an increasing militancy and a growing reluctance to accept, if not white support, then certainly white leadership during the 1960s. The reasons for this include a growing awareness of racism in Britain and an increasing lack of faith in the commitment of the British population to address the problem. Here there are parallels with the situation in America as the Civil Rights Movement was subject to splits when some sections became frustrated with lack of progress and began to demand a more radical approach. This study of the responses of black and Asian immigrants and residents will, therefore, concentrate on areas where there is evidence of the use of American models, either in terms of language or tactics, or where there were direct links with American groups or leaders. One way in which the response of this section of the population could have had an impact on public opinion in general could have been through press statements, demonstrations and political lobbying; activities which would have been covered by the media. For this reason, the following chapter will highlight the political rather than social or cultural activities of the non-white population whilst recognising that these were not always separate. Other issues which must be taken into account are developments in the rest of the world, particularly the issues of decolonisation and the effect of the Cold War.

For the purposes of this chapter the period will be divided into four sections. The first part of the chapter will deal with the early years of post Second World War immigration providing a background to the main study. Secondly, it will examine the response to the riots in Notting Hill and Nottingham which witnessed the development of many organisations representing particular single ethnic groups. The third section will cover the early to mid 1960s during which there were attempts to create multi-racial groups which would also draw in white support. The aim of these organisations was to press the government not to limit immigration but to legislate against discrimination. The fourth part of the chapter deals with the years 1965 to 1968 during which there was an increasing interest in black power and attempts were made to draw all 'coloured' immigrants together whilst excluding white membership. Although for many of these organisations the main aim was still to put pressure on the government there was also an increasing stress on self-help; a need to take control of the struggle. This reflected the growing sense of frustration with the Labour Party and white support generally.

i. Early Days

There had existed groups of black Britons, mainly seamen who had settled over many years. They were concentrated around the major ports of Cardiff, Bristol, London and Liverpool and originated mainly from the Caribbean and Africa. Some West Indians had stayed on after service during the Second World War although most of them were encouraged to return to their countries of origin through the promise of training or the wherewithal to set up in farming on return. American legislation under the McCarran Act of 1952 cut down immigration to the United States from the Caribbean. Previously this had been a common way in which West Indians avoided poverty. For the majority their stay in America was temporary, many of them being recruited under an organised scheme, such as work on the Panama canal and in ammunition factories during the Second World War. Often these migrants arrived under a strict contract and were housed in special camps with compulsory savings schemes.

When the possibility of work in the United States became restricted, the number of individuals from the Caribbean who decided to take up their alternative option of work in the 'mother country' increased. Furthermore, in the mid fifties West Indians were being encouraged to come to Britain and even actively recruited to fill the post-war labour gap. An awareness existed between the potential emigrating Afro-Caribbean and job opportunities and this created a balance. According to Home Office figures the total number for 1955 was 27,500 but by 1958 this had decreased in response to employment demands to 15,020.¹ The introduction of controls in 1962, however, upset this balance. Moreover, in the United States settling was usually not an option under the work schemes but acquiring savings was easier than it was in Britain, where low wages and a welfare system encouraged settling. The much lower wages meant that it was difficult for an Afro-Caribbean to work in Britain whilst supporting a family back in the West Indies but the welfare state made it easier to maintain a family in this country.² The result was that many found that once in Britain, it was more difficult to stick to their original intention to return after a few years.

Added to the traditional link of employment in the United States, the war also marked an increasing awareness amongst policy makers in America of the strategic position of the West Indies as demonstrated by the Bases for Destroyers Deal in 1940. This brought employment and exposure to American culture to many Afro-Caribbeans and an opportunity to West Indian nationalists to exploit American anti-colonial rhetoric. It also brought with it the possibility of incorporation into the American sphere.³ Thus, many of the Caribbean immigrants to Britain had already had some experience of Americans and would, no doubt, have been aware of the racial situation there. Moreover, others had direct personal experience such as Trevor Carter, a Trinidadian who came to Britain in 1954. Carter recalled that as a seaman in the early 1950s he had considered jumping ship and travelling to New York when his ship stopped in New Orleans. When he saw the way in which African Americans were treated

he decided to move to Britain instead.⁴ In this way those who came to Britain would probably have been more conscious of racial attitudes in the United States than those who came from Africa or Asia.

There were numbers of black students in Britain during the 1950s, many of them from Africa. The majority of them, however, came on the premise that on completing their studies they would return home. Compared to those from the Caribbean, numbers were very small, the largest being in 1957 when, again according to Home Office statistics, a total of 2,830 were recorded. For many of them, living in London, the very heart of the Empire, the issues of decolonisation were very real. The African Students Union was housed in a property in Collingham Gardens in North London which had been provided by Nkrumah. The property next door was used by the West Indian Students Union and together they formed a focus for debate on the issues of imperialism and racism. The Pan-Africanist movement had its centre in Britain since the turn of the century and had drawn in intellectual support from Africa, the Caribbean and America. In the immediate post-Second World War liberal atmosphere, it had briefly been rekindled in the Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester in 1945 under the leadership of George Padmore. It was attended by many of West Africa's future leaders such as Nkrumah, Hastings Banda and Jomo Kenyatta and as Hakim Adi described it, "An air of optimism was evident not least because for the first time both intellectuals and workers' representatives were united around common goals."⁵ By the late 1950s, however, its focus had shifted to Africa. In 1958 the First All African Peoples Organisation Conference was held in Accra and as Paul Rich has described, its influence on "the Afro-Caribbean minority in Britain had to some extent been by-passed by the turn of events in Africa with the withdrawal of the European colonial presence there."⁶

Throughout the late 1950s increasing numbers of immigrants came from India and Pakistan, the pull factor being employment and the push factor poverty. Until 1961 numbers, compared to those from the Caribbean, were small. In 1957 Home Office figures record 6,620 from India and 5,170 from Pakistan, the governments of both these countries operating emigration restrictions. In 1961, however, numbers increased dramatically due to both the threat of immigration controls and the break down of the co-operation of the Indian and Pakistan governments to restrict numbers. The vast majority were men who came with the idea of making money and returning, leaving their families at home, although, again, this was to change in the face of controls. Unlike immigrants from the West Indies who had been exposed to British culture at home through education and saw Britain as the 'mother country' where they would be welcomed, those from Asia had often had little contact with Britons and expected and found Britain to be an alien country, with very different customs and many faced the added difficulty of speaking little English.

In this way the Afro-Caribbean, African and Asian immigrants were quite different from African Americans, in that all British immigrants had another 'homeland', usually one to

which they intended to return. This could often lead to a shrugging of shoulders in the face of discrimination with the thought that it was only necessary to survive in this country for a limited time. It consequently made them, at least initially, more tolerant of racism. In contrast to this African Americans had nowhere else to go. The attempt at a constructed homeland in Africa had limited appeal to the majority of African Americans who, imbued with the idea of the American Dream, felt that, with the right legislation in place, they should be equally able to reap its benefits.

A further major difference between the two situations was that these settlers in Britain were divided on class, cultural and religious grounds. Even within the different geographically determined sections they could not be seen as homogeneous groups. Those from the Caribbean saw themselves as hailing from one island or another; an African immigrant would have perceived him or herself as being from a single country or ethnic group first. Amongst those who came from Asia some had had no contact with one another until they came to Britain whereas others had a long complicated history of relationships, some of them hostile. The one factor that they held in common was the experience of being part of the British Empire. During the period under examination, however, this was to change as more found themselves settled here and bringing up families and began to have common interests in pressing for anti-discrimination legislation and for fighting immigration control. This is reflected in the attempts during the 1960s to form multi-racial groups incorporating the West Indian, Asian and African communities.

During the mid to late 1950s, however, the membership of organisations created by, or for, the black and Asian immigrants was largely based on ethnic groups. These organisations served various functions. Primarily they served a social or religious function, providing a base where people might meet and compare their experiences, support each other, and in a situation where other possibilities were limited through colour bars, such as pubs, helped to provide a social life. A further function was as a source of information; where jobs might be available, how to manage the housing problem or simply a way of hearing news from home. Paul Rich described the 1950s as "a bleak period for West Indian political leadership in Britain following the death of Harold Moody, the decline of the League of Coloured Peoples and the growing involvement by the radical Pan Africanists such as George Padmore with African politics."⁷ Many of the associations that did exist were very local and often short-lived, without permanent bases. As stated, most catered for immigrants from a particular area of the Commonwealth, an example of this being the Indian Workers' Association. Some had been set up to serve a particular group, such as the West Indian Students Union and the West African Students Union. A few were intended to improve relations between the newly arrived immigrants and their white hosts and included mixed black and white membership in varying degrees. Often an organisation would, initially, see the campaign for independence in the home country as the most important issue (and in many cases some of the initiators were political

exiles in this country), while in later years the organisation would shift its focus to the situation in Britain. Thus, it might continue to function even though the initial goal had been achieved but simply address the new problem, coping with life in Britain.

ii. 1958 and National Ethnic Associations

The race riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill Gate in 1958 provided a spur to greater organisation amongst the different ethnic groups, in some cases through the intervention of a leading figure representing the country from which the immigrants had come. When Norman Manley visited Britain to assess the situation he advocated greater integration as a remedy to the increased racial tension, in what was termed "The Grassroots Plan".⁸ This gave rise to the Harmonist Movement through which more inter-racial clubs were launched. A further response to the riots was an attempt to create a more formal organisation of West Indians. The initiative for this came from the High Commission of the newly Federated Government of the West Indies and, through the Migrant Services Division of the Commission, the Standing Conference of West Indian Organisations (WISC) was formed. Its aim was to provide a channel of communication between the Commission and the various West Indian organisations and to aid integration and improve relations between the 'races'. This became the leading organisation for West Indians and is still in existence today actively supporting British blacks with West Indian ancestors.

Indian Workers Associations had existed in Britain since the thirties and fulfilled social and welfare functions as well as being concerned with independence in India and the maintenance of ethnicity. A particular problem that often faced Indian immigrants was inadequate knowledge of English but this could be eased with membership of an IWA in which members with good English could acquire positions of influence. As numbers of immigrants from the Indian sub-continent continued to grow so more associations were formed. According to most published sources, centralisation was advised by Nehru⁹ when he visited Britain in 1957 with the idea that a larger body would have a louder voice and be in a stronger position to protect the interests of Indians in Britain. Thus by 1959 a co-ordinating central body was formed, the IWA (GB). Although throughout its history it has, at various times, been subject to splits it continued to be the major association for Indians and attracted a large membership. The IWA (GB) often had to stress that it was not a Communist organisation but the majority of its leadership came from a Communist background and many of its members had experience of political activity through the fight for independence and the peasant struggles in India. Many others found that joining the Party in Britain was much easier, simply a matter of filling in a form at the back of *The Daily Worker*¹⁰ whereas membership was more controlled in India and Pakistan. It, therefore, strongly supported an anti-imperialist platform and, certainly amongst the leadership, took an internationalist perspective.

It was not until 1964 that a national organisation representing Pakistanis was formed. Numbers of immigrants from Pakistan were relatively small until the fear of the 'closed door' in 1962 encouraged greater numbers to come. Thus net immigration from Pakistan in 1959 was only 850 whereas in 1961 the figure was 25,100¹¹. The umbrella organisation that was formed was called the National Federation of Pakistani Associations and had sixty affiliated bodies representing 140,000 members. Its president was Abdul Matin and the organisation tended to be fairly conservative in its views. In 1967 Matin was quoted in a piece in the *Sunday Times* as saying that "Black Power is dangerous because it foment trouble."¹²

In 1958 neither of the two national organisations, the Standing Conference of West Indian Organisations nor the Indian Workers' Association (IWA), took any official stand on the US, though some individuals, particularly IWA members, with strong Communist party links, could not have ignored American politics in the atmosphere of the Cold War. Although there was no Communist Party in the Caribbean many West Indian nationalists became members in Britain during the 1950s. Trevor Carter, now a member of the Executive Committee of WISC, stated that disillusionment with the racist attitudes within the Party caused most to have left by the end of the 1950s.¹³ Many refugees from McCarthyism had come to Britain, influential writers and Hollywood victims, such as Paul Robeson, and during the latter half of the 50s there was considerable support amongst politically active black leaders for the American Civil Liberties Association.

One such individual was Claudia Jones. Although born in Trinidad, this charismatic woman lived much of her life in the United States where she became an unswerving Marxist. In the States she was active politically, fighting for racial equality and against capitalism. After a well publicised trial and despite her ill health she was deported to Britain in the late 1950s where she settled in Notting Hill Gate and became a "one-woman American influence".¹⁴ She arrived with a knowledge of journalism and the experience of Jim Crow and although, as Ranjana Ash recalled, she would have arrived with limited knowledge of the situations in Africa or Asia, in Britain she quickly saw the connections and developed a more international perspective.¹⁵ One of her main activities was to launch a monthly paper *The West Indian Gazette*, which was later to acquire the sub-heading, *Afro-Asian-Caribbean News*, reflecting her desire to attract a readership amongst all those of colour in Britain and an attempt to try and draw all together in solidarity. It is difficult to say to what extent this approach demonstrated, (because of her American background) a possible lack of awareness of the great differences between the groups or if Jones felt, despite a clear understanding, that the anti-racist struggle could not succeed without creating such solidarity. Her international perspective on race was unusual amongst the Afro-Caribbeans in Britain at the time although this perspective was to spread throughout the decade. Another of her aims was to produce a community paper, again as an attempt to appeal to all, and consequently editions contained items referring to a wide range of issues, from coverage of the murder of Patrice Lumumba to

reports of black beauty contests and from coverage of British party political conferences to reports of local incidents of racial violence.

The paper was not actually launched as a response to the riots in Notting Hill Gate but as a result of a local survey amongst immigrants in London which highlighted a need for a journal of their own. Due to this it was in a good position to cover the events in the summer of '58 from a black perspective. Naturally the paper also carried extensive reports on the situation in the United States and, through her contacts in the States, Claudia Jones was able to bring to the readers interviews with American visitors to Britain such as Paul Robeson, Martin Luther King and Bayard Rustin. Rustin was actually from Jamaica but lived most of his life in the United States. It is difficult to assess with any certainty the impact that this paper may have had as circulation figure estimates differ. Ruth Glass in her study *The Newcomers* published in 1960 stated that the readership was about 15,000¹⁶ and certainly the correspondence pages reflected a wide circulation containing contributions from Leeds, Cardiff, Manchester and Scotland. Paul Rich, however, gives a circulation figure of 3,000¹⁷ but it is quite possible that both figures are correct, for as Trevor Carter, who worked with Claudia Jones on the paper confirms, such a journal would have been passed around amongst family members and friends.¹⁸

Another West Indian on the editorial board was Amy Ashwood Garvey, who like Claudia Jones, had lived in the United States for many years. She was the ex-wife of Marcus Garvey and brought with her a strong interest in Africa. In 1945 she had opened the fifth Pan-African Conference in Manchester.¹⁹ In response to the Notting Hill riots, she founded the Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, although this organisation did not last. Her choice of name for this body reflected her American experience. She was also invited by the Mayor of Kensington to join a Race Relations Committee which was set up, after the riots of 1958, to look at ways in which racial tensions might be eased in north London. Pansy Jeffries, who knew Amy Garvey, has suggested, however, that her initiatives were less than successful at this time because "her politics belonged to the thirties."²⁰

iii. Multi-racial Organisations

Claudia Jones was one of the first to attempt to create an organisation which drew in all the ethnic groups in Britain. It was called the Conference of Afro-Asian-Caribbean Organisations, (CAACO) and was launched in 1961. Its main aim was to fight the immigration control legislation under discussion. Its title reflected her concern that if black and Asian immigrants in Britain were to have a voice that was to be heard, then they needed to work together. This organisation had links with the IWA and with Fenner Brockway's Movement for Colonial Freedom making it a multi-racial movement. It held meetings, issued statements and organised marches to demonstrate against immigration control. Through this organisation and the *West Indian Gazette* Claudia Jones also drew attention to the murder of Kelso Cochrane in 1959

collecting funds for his family and for a headstone for his grave. She initiated the first Caribbean Carnival in London in 1959 on the anniversary of the riots with the aim of wiping away the taste of racism through cultural celebration. The importance she placed on culture reflects her experience in New York during the 1930s when she was involved with the Harlem renaissance.

In 1963 CAACO organised a march in London in support of African-Americans. This was held in August at the time of Martin Luther King's march on Washington and went from Ladbroke Grove Tube station to the United States Embassy. In a handbill produced to advertise the march Claudia Jones made connections between the situations in America and in Britain:

On Saturday August 31st we in Britain will march as an act of solidarity with those who demonstrate against racial discrimination in the United States. In so doing we will be continuing the great traditions of the workers of Liverpool who in their opposition to slavery during the American Civil War refused to spin American cotton raised by slave labour, and so weakened the southern plantocracy. In Britain, racial discrimination in jobs, housing, civil liberties, deeply affect British Commonwealth citizens of the West Indies, Africa and Pakistan. The Immigration Act with its special provision for entry and deportation has created a second-class citizenship.²¹

Ranjana Ash, who was a friend of Claudia Jones, recalled that there was much debate within CAACO concerning the main focus of the march.²² Some members simply wished it to be a demonstration in support of Martin Luther King and his struggle for equality through non-violence, whereas others were keen to use the march in the United States as a focus to draw attention to the fight for equal right of entry to Britain for all members of the Commonwealth; they argued that the way in which African Americans were being treated was unconstitutional as was the imposition of immigration controls in Britain. Claudia Jones managed, however, in the above short quotation to include both these issues and with her reference to the Civil War also incorporated the idea of international working class solidarity and, furthermore, the idea that this solidarity should be put to use to assist African Americans.

The London march was reported in *The Daily Gleaner* which was a newspaper which was based in Jamaica but was also widely read by West Indians in Britain for home news. The tenor of reports in this paper was generally conservative for, as Trevor Carter recalled, its editorial staff was dominated by white British ex-patriot journalists; a situation that took some time to change even after independence.²³ According to its report on the London march "about 600 marchers" took part and when their path to the American Embassy was blocked they sang "We Shall Overcome".²⁴ An issue a few days earlier had covered the march in Washington and also a report on a solidarity march in Kingston, Jamaica which "thousands joined". This last piece made the point that the marchers responded for calls for cheers for Marcus Garvey and the Washington marchers but that calls in support of President Kennedy were met with silence;

thus indicating a degree of anti-Americanism in Jamaica and a sense of fellow feeling for African Americans.²⁵ The *West Indian Gazette* report on the London march revealed similar sentiments. It recorded that the marchers chanted "Freedom Now" and carried banners bearing the slogans, "US Negroes, Your fight is our fight" and "Caribbean Unity against US Imperialism".²⁶ It is interesting to note that the demonstrations against immigration control in 1961 in London and Birmingham drew many more supporters. This could either be due to a lack of interest in the struggle in the United States amongst Asian immigrants which could account for the lower turn out. On the other hand, it could simply be an indication that people are more easily moved when an issue affects them directly.

Claudia Jones died in December 1964 and *The West Indian Gazette* folded soon afterwards. Her last editorial was devoted to Martin Luther King's speech on the occasion of his visit to London in December 1964. In this she stated, "...whether or not the American Negro struggle in all its aspects parallels our situation here, we can agree that there is enough that is similar from which to draw certain lessons."²⁷ Page four of the same issue carried a full report on the closing address to the First Congress of the Council of African Organisations in London by Malcolm X and reported that he had stated that "the citadel of world imperialism is no longer in London, Paris, or Berlin but it is in Washington D.C." and that "British imperialismcould not exist for a single day without the support of the United States of America."²⁸ Through this and the slogan against American imperialism used on the London march, both Jones and Malcolm X were expressing the growing perception that the American racial struggle was a fight against imperialism; that the relationship between African Americans and white society in the United States was of a colonial nature. This strengthened the message that the struggle for racial equality in America was the same struggle faced by any colonised people. According to the *West Indian Gazette* report, Malcolm X directly addressed West Indians present at the Congress. The report stated that:

He was very happy that there were many people from the West Indies in the audience and he said they should know they were also Afro-Americans. They are the people of the African race whether living in North America or the Caribbean, they are Afro-Americans, they must unite in their common struggle.²⁹

It is not clear whether Claudia Jones met Malcolm X. Although he was in London during the month of her death, she was clearly very ill at the time. The following year, however, when Malcolm X visited the midlands he did meet members of the Co-ordinating Committee Against Racial Discrimination (CCARD), based in Birmingham. This organisation was launched in 1961, at the initiative of Jagmohan Joshi and Maurice Ludmer. Joshi was the General Secretary of IWA (GB) and a staunch Marxist and Maurice Ludmer was a member of the Jewish Ex-servicemen's Association, a strong supporter of the Labour Movement and also a member of the Communist Party. Joshi, with his Marxist background, saw racism as a class



issue but always argued that, through their experience of racism, blacks and Asians had a special role to play as leaders in the socialist movement. Like CAACO, CCARD was to represent all racial groups, including white support and the chairperson was Victor Yates, a Labour M.P. The aim of its founders was to make this an association with very broad support which is demonstrated by the numbers of other organisations that are listed on CCARD correspondence as supporting their aims. These included many Trade Unions, the IWA, the West Indian Workers Association, the Pakistan Welfare Association, Sparkbrook Association, the Young Socialists Campaign Against Racial Discrimination, the Birmingham Jewish Ex-servicemen's Association and various groups based at Birmingham University. The inclusion of Jewish organisations is interesting. There was considerable Jewish support and involvement with the American Civil Rights Movement and although individual Jews did act in Britain in support of racial equality the level of involvement was not of the same order as in the United States.³⁰ Other correspondence also indicate links with the National Council for Civil Liberties, the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Movement for Colonial Freedom.³¹ This list reflects a desire to bring all those individuals concerned with the issues of racial equality, human rights and anti-colonialism into concerted activity; drawing in socialists, liberals, all the non-white sections of the population and Jews.

The main focus of this Committee was to press for anti-discrimination legislation and to lobby against immigration control. Joshi clearly felt these aims were distinct from those of the IWA (GB) and, therefore, required a separate body. Its period of greatest strength lasted until about 1965 and in that time it dealt with various aspects of racial discrimination. In 1962 it assisted the NCCL in compiling a petition in favour of legislation to outlaw discrimination which collected over 500,000 signatures and was presented to Parliament. It mounted campaigns to test for discrimination, adopting the American Civil Rights Movement tactics, demanding an end to colour bars in public houses and inviting United Press International to send camera-men to witness occasions on which discrimination would be exposed. It lobbied against segregated classes for immigrant children when these were being proposed in Smethwick. It protested against the proposed visit to Britain of the leader of the Ku Klux Klan and organised demonstrations in protest at immigration control in 1961 and against the White Paper in 1965.

A further demonstration of the awareness of the Committee of the situation in the United States was revealed by a petition to President Kennedy in May 1963. This petition stated that:

We, the petitioners of Birmingham, England, fully support you, Mr. President, in your efforts to implement the Bill of Rights and the orders in relation to integration enacted by the Supreme Courts securing full citizenship for the Negroes of the USA. We also request you, Mr. President, to use your full Federal powers to put a stop to police brutality in dealing with the just demands of the Negroes in Birmingham, Alabama.

The Committee also sent a letter to Jacqueline Kennedy at the time of the President's death which stated, "His outspoken and fearless denunciation of racial intolerance did much to counterbalance the harm done to American prestige by racialism in the Southern States."³²

Shirley Joshi, the widow of Jagmohan Joshi and the Secretary of CCARD, believes that connections were made by members and supporters of CCARD between the situation in America and that in Britain. She stated that many members saw it as an international working class issue whilst others viewed it from the perspective of black solidarity. They argued that, "What's happening in parts of America, the attacks on black and white people, the denial of civil liberties. We don't want to see that happening here."³³ She remembered that Malcolm X had visited members of the organisation when he was in Britain in 1964. This was on the same occasion that he visited Smethwick and hit the headlines. Joshi stated that he received strong support from members of IWA (GB) and from CCARD. She explained it like this:

He was viewed very sympathetically. I think what IWA members focused on was not the aspect so much of Pan-Africanism but that he did recognise that this was a class issue, which of course was very much the IWA perspective. That racism is one expression of the class struggle and Malcolm X recognised that and recognised the alliances that could and needed to be made.³⁴

By 1965 CCARD had largely ceased to function. Shirley Joshi stated that this was a reflection amongst supporters of their disillusionment with the response of the Labour Party on which they had placed high hopes and that they either abandoned the struggle or became more militant and moved to more radical groups. To some extent this was due to the government White Paper in 1965. This promised anti-discrimination legislation and consequently the demands of more moderate members would have been met. The stringent immigration controls that were implemented by the same White Paper and which were perceived to be based on 'colour discrimination' led radical members to take an even more extreme position. Furthermore, the riots in Watts that summer carried the message that African Americans were becoming disillusioned with the effectiveness of legislation to improve their situation.

Although the origins of CCARD were based on a British initiative to counter racial discrimination it seems clear that as interest in the American struggle grew in Britain its impact on this organisation increased. A multi-racial organisation with an even higher national profile, the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD) was launched in 1965 and this organisation took directly from the American model. The plan for it was formulated in December 1964 at the time of Martin Luther King's visit to London. Records of exactly what happened vary but a widely accepted view was that it was King's suggestion that the organisation be formed. Others, however, dispute this. Marion Glean, an Asian with West Indian family connections, a Quaker and founder member of CARD, was involved with a group called Multi-Racial Britain with which C.L.R. James was also connected. Glean has

argued that it was this body that launched CARD.³⁵ Dr. Ranjana Ash, also a founder member of CARD, believes that it was this body that was the forerunner of CARD and that it was 'no accidental formation'.³⁶ Another founder member of CARD, Selma James, the widow of C.L.R. James, told the author that she believes that the initiative for the formation of CARD came from her husband, although he was never involved once the organisation was formed.³⁷ Thus it would seem that Martin Luther King's visit was more coincidental than crucial. The assumed connection with King, however, was not lost on the press and contributed to its high profile. Ann Dummett, in discussing the difficulties faced by journalists in finding sources for information on racial issues, makes the point that:

When the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination came into existence early in 1965 it soon achieved a great deal of publicity, out of all proportion to its numerical support in the nation at large, simply because it provided an easy source of news at the end of a telephone line. CARD played a valuable role in many ways, and its effectiveness in lobbying for a Race Relations Act was in no small part due to the fact that the press found it newsworthy; politicians, reading frequently of its activities and demands in the press, believed it a strong force to be reckoned with.³⁸

The stated aims of CARD were both national and international. Nationally it aimed to co-ordinate the work of similar bodies; struggle against discrimination against both 'coloured people' and 'all other minority groups'; and oppose racially discriminatory legislation. At an international level it aimed to "be concerned about the struggle of oppressed people everywhere."³⁹ Although this organisation was active and achieved a high profile for a further two years, according to Marion Glean, the movement really only lasted for a few months.⁴⁰ These wide aims reflect the varied backgrounds of the founders. From the very start there were greater differences between members than any hope for cohesion, in order to fight discrimination, might overcome. If CARD was to succeed it had to bring together people of different national, cultural, class, religious and political backgrounds. The backgrounds of the three founder members mentioned above demonstrates a degree of inter-ethnic relationships. Marion Glean was ethnically Asian but had lived in the West Indies and had Afro-Caribbean family; Selma James was a white American, married to a well-known West Indian intellectual and Ranjana Ash, with connections with India and the Caribbean, was married to a white American. With these backgrounds they may have over-estimated the ability of others to overcome ethnic loyalties.

As well as their inter-racial backgrounds these founder members also brought links with other interested organisations. As stated, Marion Glean was a member of the Society of Friends which, drawing on American links and its history of work for abolition of slavery, was active in racial issues in Britain. Ranjana Ash had strong links with the IWA (GB) and Selma James was involved with the West Indian Standing Conference and had spent four years living

in the Caribbean where she became involved in the struggle for independence. James felt that their top priority was to represent the wishes of the 'coloured' immigrant population and that in order to do that they must be heard and a strong organisation based on the support of the grass roots built up. She recalled that she was concerned about the differences in approach even at the time of the 1965 founding convention. She, as Organising Secretary, had written to every group or body that was concerned with West Indian, Asian or African communities inviting them to attend, seeing this as their opportunity to put forward their views, but said that many left disgruntled as, in the event, the National Executive had dominated the whole proceedings.⁴¹ Marion Glean, expressing the fear that too much emphasis might be put on the legal debate, made explicit reference to the situation in America when she argued:

CORE (The Congress of Racial Equality) and SNICK (sic) (The Student Non-violent Co-ordinating Committee) were revolts against the old coloured, legalistic bourgeoisie of the NAACP (The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People)...It would be a pity if CARD became the NAACP equivalent in Britain.⁴²

Members of the National Executive like Anthony Lester and Michael Zander, who were both Jewish, were members of the Society of Labour Lawyers' Committee on Race Relations. At the request of the Labour National Executive, they had been involved in the production of a report in 1964 based on a survey of anti-discrimination legislation in the United States and Canada. Thus, they were very well placed to put forward proposals on how legislation in Britain should be formulated and naturally felt this should be given a high priority. They were, however, faced with pressure from the opposing side who wished to stress American notions of 'community action' and 'conscience raising'. Thus, from its conception it held the potential for division between those who favoured working within the system and those who wished to employ more radical tactics. In fact they never really received the support of the more radical organisations. IWA (GB) never became affiliated to CARD and neither did the linked group CCARD. Jagmohan Joshi is reported as saying about CARD,

We knew from the United States that such a movement would only pacify people. We must do all that we can to make sure that the resentment among our people is not repressed. We must channel it into the proper forms of commitment.⁴³

A separate body representing Indians based in Southall, the IWA Southall, did become affiliated to CARD. This group had split from the national body and maintained a separate identity and although it commanded wide support in its region, this was largely restricted to West London. It is generally thought that the reason that the Southall branch withdrew from IWA(GB) was because of fears that it was dominated by Communists but in fact there were more complex reasons concerned with the nature of the Communist Party of India as

Josephides has argued.⁴⁴ In 1965 IWA Southall agreed to send representatives to join the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NCCI) which the IWA (GB) absolutely refused to support as, so they argued, it was a product of the White Paper which they viewed as 'racist'. The West Indian Standing Conference affiliated with CARD reluctantly and only after receiving assurances from Dr. David Pitt, the West Indian Chairman of CARD, that the organisation would not become white dominated or tied in any way to the Labour Party. When, however, Pitt and Hamza Alavi, another member of the National Executive, agreed to take places on the NCCI, the Standing Conference withdrew from CARD.

One tactic which was employed by CARD and which was borrowed from the United States, was the idea of summer projects, modelled on the SNCC projects in Mississippi during the summer of 1964. The CARD projects were carried out in the summers of 1966 and 1967 and involved small groups of white and black students spending time with Afro-Caribbean and Asian communities 'testing' for discrimination. Part of the aim was to demonstrate the level and wide range of discrimination that existed in order to strengthen the arguments for wider legislation and also to build up local groups and introduce ideas about community action. These were relatively successful in identifying cases of discrimination but they also created some ill feeling amongst the local groups who, in some cases, felt their positions undermined and, in others, resented the cost because they felt that the money could be employed more usefully in other ways. Among the localities where tensions developed between the CARD Executive and the local branch were the Soho Ward branch in Birmingham and the Islington local CARD group. Heinemann has described how the local leadership of the very active Islington branch were keen to stress the housing difficulty, as it effected the whole community. The local leaders argued that they "were not eager to give money to voter registration or to the summer project (which they viewed as merely an expensive way of gathering cases to send to the Race Relations Board). They felt that the money spent on those programmes should have been given to active, ongoing local groups."⁴⁵ This would infer that, although the national leadership saw a role in Britain for American initiatives, those at the grass roots, possibly more aware of the particular problems that existed, viewed them as less relevant.

The Conference in November 1967 which marked the end of CARD, widely reported as a case of 'black take-over'⁴⁶ was, according to Marion Glean, simply the end of a battle that had been waged since the organisation was founded. In the previous July CARD had held a public meeting at which the main speaker was Stokely Carmichael and at which he received tremendous support when he delivered his message of black power and stressed the importance of independent action. Diane Langford, a white voluntary worker for CARD, stated that she had joined CARD after hearing Carmichael speak. She also recalled that she had attended meetings at which plans were formulated to enrol hundreds of new members who could then out-vote Anthony Lester and Julia Gaitskell, the daughter of Hugh Gaitskell and a member of the National Executive, who had come to personify the white liberal careerists whose

domination of the organisation was most resented by black members, particularly the West Indians.⁴⁷ Dilip Hiro, author of *Black British White British*, however, argued that one of the major aims of supporters from IWA Southall was to vote the Communist, Vishnu Sharma, off the Executive which conflicts with the view of a black take-over.⁴⁸

It would seem that there is truth in all these explanations but that underlying them is the basic fault in the original plan which was to create an organisation that could be all things to all people, drawing in the complex different immigrant groups and providing for them both a respectable lobbying body with the ear of the establishment and a strong community based grass roots organisation. This was probably an unrealistic goal and, given that so many of the founding members had experience of the struggle in the United States, possibly based on a false perception that the situations in Britain and the United States were more similar than they were; that the 'black' immigrants in Britain would be prepared to put their cultural and religious differences aside and see themselves as 'black'. Tariq Modood has written that some Indians and Pakistanis who adopted the political label of 'black', later felt that it had marginalised them; through this act they were denying part of their culture and ethnicity.⁴⁹ As with CCARD, the more militant members of CARD would have either moved to more radical organisations or abandoned the struggle in disillusionment. More moderate members could find openings within the government sponsored bodies such as the NCCI, or join independent bodies such as Equal Rights which was formed in 1967.⁵⁰ Ex-CARD members who joined this organisation were Nicholas Deakin, Dipak Nandy and Anthony Lester.

One factor which lent the Civil Rights Movement in the United States some respectability was the support of the Christian church. This was lacking in Britain. Immigrants from Asia in the main adhered to their own faiths. The majority of Afro-Caribbeans were Christians with links to European denominations but in these their needs were diluted by the overwhelming numbers of white members whereas in the United States, through segregation, there had developed strong black congregations. The same challenges that faced CARD, also confronted CCARD and CAACO but their aims were not so ambitious and their leadership was always more firmly rooted from the outset within the immigrant communities. Lack of funds was another factor that hindered the success of CARD. In Britain there was not the same degree of sympathy for the cause as there was in the United States for the Civil Rights Movement. Furthermore it was not seen to be as dramatic as Alabama or Mississippi nor was there sufficient unrest to worry businessmen or encourage them to reach for their wallets.⁵¹

Two years before CARD was launched, racial discrimination was being challenged in Bristol in a way that reached the national press and which deliberately borrowed the tactics of the American Civil Rights Movement. This resistance was led by the West Indian Development Council. This body was set up to fight a particular campaign, that of breaking the colour bar that operated in employment on the buses. In 1963 a young community worker, Paul Stephenson, came to work in Bristol. He was born in London of mixed African and West

Indian parentage and had studied sociology at college in Birmingham. He felt that action needed to be taken and decided to declare a boycott of the buses. In fact the colour bar had existed for a long time and had been questioned as early as 1956 by Andrew Hake, a local curate.⁵² Since then other West Indians in Bristol had attempted to end the colour bar but without success. It is unclear whether it was the unions or the company, the Bristol Omnibus, which insisted on it but it seems that there was a tacit agreement between the two. It is also interesting to note that since 1952 there had been in existence a Committee for the Welfare of Colonial Workers in Bristol, charged with helping migrant integration and containing representatives of the city's main statutory and voluntary bodies and the University of Bristol and with the official support of the Lord Mayor. To people like Stephenson the message was clear; if they did not take action nothing would change.

Although it has been recorded that Stephenson had recently returned from a visit to the United States by way of explanation for his choice of action this is not correct.⁵³ In an interview with the author, Stephenson stated that he was invited to America after the boycott was over by the NAACP who were interested in his work in Bristol. When questioned as to why he decided that a boycott would be an effective tactic he recalled,

I had to think about how I was going to get this out, big and relevant. I went walking on the Downs, lovely sunny afternoon, and I thought, now I'm going to call a press conference ...and I thought about what Martin Luther King was doing down there, and I thought ...that we would call a boycott of the buses and that will, and it did, exactly that, it carried that empathy.⁵⁴

As he had anticipated the press coverage was wide. In fact, support for the boycott was limited, many West Indians in Bristol who were employed being afraid that they would lose their jobs and be blacklisted.⁵⁵ It would also seem that not all the West Indian community in Bristol were so aware of the situation in the United States. The spark that brought about the involvement of Stephenson was his contact with a young Jamaican, Guy Reid Bailey, who had applied for a job and then been denied even an interview because of his colour. Bailey recalled that he had not heard of the Montgomery bus boycott before Stephenson suggested a boycott as a means of attracting support for their cause. Bailey explained that when he first came to Britain he found that:

people would look at you funny and if they were going down the street, they'd walk down the other side, you sit on the bus, they don't sit by you. These are just problems you need to come to terms with but I soon learned and I heard about what was happening in America and became more aware. You can hear about it but if it's not happening around you, at that age, you wouldn't have taken a lot of notice but then I was forced to.⁵⁶

There was, however, support from some of the West Indian community and from white Bristolians although Stephenson argued that they had an interest in an increase in staff as the bus service was poor.⁵⁷ A report in the *Bristol Evening Post* recorded that a picket at the St. Mary Redcliffe church only numbered about 45 persons; at the time when there were about 7,000 blacks and Asians in Bristol.⁵⁸ Compared to the boycott in Montgomery, when 42,000 black men and women walked to and from work for 381 days, the boycott in Bristol was a small affair but the dramatic connotations of Montgomery made it a very newsworthy story in which Bristol and Alabama were often linked. The high profile it was given brought it to the attention of the nation and it then received the support of Sir Learie Constantine, High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago and an ex-professional cricketer who happened to be in the area supporting the touring West Indian cricket team; Tony Benn whose constituency was in Bristol and finally Harold Wilson. On 28th August, the same day as Washington witnessed the biggest civil rights demonstration ever, the boycott ended and the company agreed to take on 'coloured' staff.

It seems that Stephenson had judged the mood of the moment correctly. He recalled that when he met Stokely Carmichael in 1967 he had told him that he was glad that the bus boycott had already been successful for, as he stated, "...if it had come after you had said 'black power' I'd have been doomed. They didn't know what to call me other than a nuisance. But if I had been coming out as a black power leader..."⁵⁹ Stephenson argued that the success of the boycott had an impact on the West Indian community in Britain generally as it was the first occasion when 'blacks' had set the strategy, fought a campaign and won. The Race Relations Act of 1965, however, still did not cover discrimination in employment. For this they had to wait until 1968.

iv. Growth in black power groups

At the same time that Martin Luther King visited London in December 1964, Malcolm X also came to Britain. He caused a stir when he visited Smethwick and commented on the racist election campaign there which resulted in the election of Peter Griffiths. Malcolm X's message of black pride was widely covered in the press and he made a deep impression on many that heard him speak. In a speech just before his death Malcolm X referred to his visit to Britain when he said; "The West Indian community is very restless, or rather, yes, restless and dissatisfied. And they too are trying to organize to find someone who can bring them together. And this has caused in England a great deal of fear, a great deal of concern."⁶⁰ It is interesting to note that in the Udham Singh Welfare Centre in Handsworth today, which was set up by the IWA, amongst the pictures of Indian and Sikh leaders, such as Udham Singh, is a large framed photograph of Malcolm X; thus, demonstrating that it was not only West Indians that heard the message of Malcolm X.

Malcolm X had a widely publicised impact on one Trinidadian, Michael de Freitas. Until the visit of Malcolm X he had been apolitical and made a living out of pimping and hustling generally and had worked for Rachman as a 'heavy'. According to his autobiography, *From Michael de Freitas to Michael Malik*,⁶¹ Michael de Freitas met Malcolm X and converted to Islam. He changed his name to Michael Malik by deed poll but stated that he was given the name of Michael X by the media although he must have found it useful. Indeed, he had a natural flair for publicity.⁶² In an interview with Collingwood August for *The Spectator* he referred to Malcolm X when he said,

Black people must regain the self-respect they lost so long ago. Look at what Malcolm X did for the Black Americans - he taught them self-respect, in spite of what the papers have to say about him.⁶³

In early 1965 Malik launched an organisation called the Racial Adjustment Action Society, commonly known as RAAS, which is a Jamaican swear-word and this choice of title shows something of his personality. One can imagine that it gave him pleasure to see the name RAAS being used in serious discussion by white reporters and commentators, a kind of Caribbean private joke. Certainly Malik attracted much attention. In May 1966, Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) visited RAAS and it was reported variously that 'Britain's Black Muslims' had 'taken over' the world champion and that a portion of the champion's takings would go to the funds of the organisation.⁶⁴ It is difficult to get a clear picture of the support that this organisation commanded as reports as to membership vary. Tony Gould, in his biography of Colin MacInnes stated that, "To dignify it even so far as to call it an organisation was to misunderstand the nature of the beast: RAAS was a confection of words, not of deeds; it was a triumph of rhetoric, not accomplishments." and gives a membership figure of no more than about 200.⁶⁵ August Collingwood, however, in his report in the *Spectator* claimed that a 'reasonable guess' at membership would be about 60,000.⁶⁶ Such groups rarely kept accurate records, their priority was on the present not the future, and now thirty years later any records that were kept are unlikely to exist. Individuals who were active at the time and knew Michael X are under the impression that this figure is much inflated.⁶⁷

The leadership demonstrates that it was a group that attracted members of all the ethnic groups. The vice-president was Abdullah Patel who came from Bombay with a B.A. in History and found it impossible to get work here that reflected his education, leaving him bitter. The national organiser was Roy Sawh who was also involved with the Universal Coloured Peoples Association (UCPA). He came originally from British Guyana of Indian parentage and recalled that it was his experiences in Britain that led him to join the Communist Party. He spent two years in college in Moscow and was expelled for organising a strike of black students against the racial harassment they experienced there. Sawh explained the way such organisations as RAAS and UCPA worked by describing it as,

a kind of network. ...we wanted a picket line because Britain largely depends upon a show of strength on the street, not extra-parliamentary activities, but demonstrations. We used to pick up the phone and ring about 12 people and we'd have a picket line. That was successful and that was how we did it. And because of that people thought we were fantastically organised but we weren't but we could count on people.⁶⁸

Initially support for RAAS had been largely drawn from the increasing numbers of young Afro-Caribbeans and Asians who were school leavers facing for the first time real discrimination over jobs and experiencing a growing sense of alienation. The perceived racialism of the 1965 Government White Paper gave an added impetus to support for RAAS. Until this point the majority of black and Asian immigrants had supported the Labour Party but many of them saw this as sign that when the Party was under pressure it would happily abandon them in its own interests. As a result, and clearly taking on Malcolm X's message of independent action, Malik made it plain that his organisation would not accept white members:

Brothers and sisters, you've got to learn how to deal with this white man. You used to turn your cheek when he hit you. You turned and twisted to please him. Stop twisting and hit him back. I tell you he is afraid....We are a family. Our last name is Black.⁶⁹

Despite his anti-white rhetoric many who knew him were not totally convinced of his conversion or even sincerity. Trevor Carter recalled darkly that there were rumours around that Malik had connections with the CIA.⁷⁰ It is also interesting to note that the only black activist in Britain that seemed to warrant a mention in J. Edgar Hoover's Official and Confidential Files is 'Michael de Freitas'; surely a measure of the publicity that surrounded him.⁷¹ David Udo, who was a member of the Brixton Black Panther Movement, believes that whereas Malcolm X managed to put his wild youth behind him and become a true leader of the black community of America, Malik, while he attempted to emulate this example, lacked the discipline and never acquired the deep understanding that Malcolm X achieved through study.⁷² Malik's autobiography certainly displays a continuing sense of inferiority towards whites and little of the ideas held by more militant blacks and Asians that their salvation lay in the overthrow of the whole system of white society.

One event which gave RAAS much publicity was the strike at a Courtaulds factory near Preston in May 1965. The workforce was mixed, white, Afro-Caribbean and Asian but it was Asian and Caribbean workers who were affected by a new ruling by management which required greater output for the same pay. It was the racial element of this strike that hit the headlines. CARD sent a delegation to see if it could negotiate a settlement and Michael Malik and Roy Sawh also offered their help. In fact, their vice-president, Abdullah Patel, was employed there. According to Ron Ramdin, "the workers listened to these two militant West Indians, applauded their spirit and laughed at their anti-white jokes, but couldn't take them or

their organisation as serious channels of industrial struggle. It was apparent to the workers from the beginning, that Michael X would bring them publicity in the quality Sunday papers, but no more." ⁷³

After three weeks the workers finally went back to work, the Asians gradually and the West Indians "en bloc after a combined 'pep' talk about 'responsible behaviour' from representatives of the West Indian High Commission." ⁷⁴ and after having gained assurances from the management that they would lose no benefits or suffer any victimisation. This episode demonstrates that RAAS saw itself as a body that could seek to support all 'coloured' immigrants and that Afro-Caribbeans and Asians were beginning to see the possible benefits of a combined stand given their increasing industrial muscle. This may not have been from choice but more a reflection that they were treated equally badly by their white employers. It is also interesting that the address by representatives of the West Indian High Commission is given as the main reason for the West Indians' return to work although it is possible that they already saw that they could not win. It does, however, show that many of them, despite Michael X's rhetoric about being British, still felt West Indian and recognised the authority of the High Commission.

Sawh ceased working with Malik, ⁷⁵ as he said, after he realised that "Michael was Muslim first, British second and Black third" ⁷⁶ and concentrated on his work with the Universal Coloured Peoples Association (UCPA) which had grown out of connections he had made through his regular attendances as a speaker at Hyde Park Corner. This group again sought to represent all 'coloured' immigrants and its president was Obi Egbuna, a writer and dramatist from Nigeria. Both Sawh and Egbuna received wide publicity in July 1967 when they were arrested under the 1965 Race Relations Act for inciting racial hatred. Roy Sawh argued that what he had said was merely banter and nothing unusual in the context of Hyde Park Corner. When he was arrested by five policemen he thought it must have been "some sort of joke". ⁷⁷ This led many to question the law and point out that similar treatment should have been dealt to Duncan Sandys for his racist speech in the same month.

The UCPA strongly supported the idea of black power, although, again, it is difficult to assess membership, but according to a *Sunday Times* report it consisted of 60% 'negro' and 40% Asian. ⁷⁸ The language used in its Newsletter demonstrates a clear identification with supporters of black power in the United States as this extract shows:

White racists, encouraged by the fact that the Race Relations Act will not be used against them, have increased their cowardly attacks. Black Power militants have stopped replying to these act of racist violence with words. We have organised ourselves and now return white racist violence with Black Power. Some Black ghettos now have neighbourhood self-protection squads and regular area patrols - Jim Crow had better look out! A self-defence patrol in Camden arrested a white racist attacking a Black man, the racist is now in prison. ⁷⁹

The front page of this Newsletter bears the symbol of a leaping black panther and another article in it dealing with a racist attack on a Pakistani youth calls him a "Pakistani brother" again indicating the desire to include all 'coloured' immigrants in the organisation.

The situation during the second half of 1967 and 1968 was very fluid for black activists. The summer of 1967 saw the launch of the Brixton Black Panther Movement which David Udo stated, in an interview with the author, was in response to speeches by Stokely Carmichael at the Round House Convention in July. He also stated that membership was probably never any more than about three to four hundred with a central core of about 25 which formed the leadership. Udo recalled that at the time he had been involved with UCPA but he and others felt that there was a need for an organisation "which would look more carefully and analytically at the causes of racism and at the history that had led to the situation they found themselves in." A further issue was in the name. It was felt that the title UCPA signified a certain deference by use of the euphemism 'coloured'. Udo also stressed that at the time many believed 'passionately' that revolution was round the corner.⁸⁰ Although they called themselves the Black Panther Movement there were never any official links with the Black Panther Party in the United States although, naturally, there was personal and informal communication. They regularly received publications from the Party and Udo recalled in particular visits from Connie Matthews who had worked with Bobby Seale although he stated that for most of them the leading inspiration came from Huey Newton.

The Black Panther Party had links with Jagmohan Joshi and members visited him in Birmingham on more than one occasion, as his wife recalled. She, however, being white felt it necessary to keep a low profile during these visits. She also stated that some of them were armed which impressed her as the presence of arms was such an unusual sight in Britain at the time.⁸¹ Joshi's correspondence files also reveal not only the number of small active bodies in existence at the time but also the breadth of his links. These files include invitations to speak or requests for information or support from such diverse groups as: Essex University, concerning a planned workshop on Black Power; the Birmingham Ad Hoc Civil Rights Movement which was mainly concerned with Eire; a group called Medical Aid for Vietnam; the Student Christian Movement; the International Community of Birmingham; the London School of Economics' Southern Africa Solidarity Committee; West Midlands Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; Bexley Young Communist League and Sutton Coldfield Young Liberals and others.

Given his widespread reputation Joshi was in a good position to launch the organisation called the Black Peoples' Alliance. Contrary to reports that it was a response to Enoch Powell's famous speech in April 1968, plans had already been put in motion to launch this body and the main spur was the Commonwealth Immigration Bill in February which had, in a mood of panic, prevented the arrival of thousands of Asians from Kenya. Initially, out of the one thousand bodies representing immigrants in Britain only twenty organisations were

invited to send representatives according to an Institute of Race Relations Newsletter.⁸² This gives an indication that support for militancy was limited but what is significant is that it received press coverage whereas more moderate bodies were seen as less newsworthy.⁸³ The selection was based on credentials of militancy and included such bodies as the West Indian Standing Conference, the UCPA, the, originally conservative, National Federation of Pakistani Associations and the Black Panther Movement. Fifty-one delegates attended the opening session and the choice of venue was appropriately the semi-detached house in Leamington Spa which had been the first one to be daubed with the sign of the Ku Klux Klan. According to the Newsletter, the organisation stressed solidarity between different ethnic immigrant groups stating:

Black People must join hands to oppose their common enemy. That is why the Black Peoples Alliance was founded over a year ago and why we must go all out to strengthen it. Africans, Indians, Pakistanis, West Indians - we are all black people even though some of our ranks are not prepared to admit this. We share a common past: enslavement; we share a common present: the exploitation of our homelands by colonialism.⁸⁴

The launch of the BPA and its choice of language, when compared to the earlier organisation, CCARD, demonstrated an increasing militancy. Shirley Joshi believes this was due largely to the growing scepticism about the ability or willingness of any of the political parties to do anything about the level of racism in Britain. She further stated in a personal communication with the author that:

the growing militancy of African Americans and their success in drawing attention to their position and securing legislation on the statute book, certainly brought about changes here in the UK. I would suggest that both CCARD and BPA had an international perspective. The difference between CCARD and the BPA is that CCARD had a socialist perspective and saw racism as integral to capitalism whereas some elements in the BPA tended to see it as a fundamental aspect of western institutions.⁸⁵

By 1969 the original twenty affiliated organisations had grown to fifty-five, representing 700,000 and had drawn together members of the far left, such as Sawh and Egbuna and more moderate leaders such as Jeff Crawford of the West Indian Standing Conference.⁸⁶ In the same year the BPA led a demonstration of 5,000 black and 2,000 white supporters during the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London. They demanded the repeal of the immigration control Acts and strengthened 'race relations' legislation.

Whilst recognising the increased militancy in the high profile 'immigrant' groups it must be noted that they did not represent the majority. Many, particularly from Asia with stronger cultural and religious ties to their original birthplace, simply made the best of things. Others conscious of the need to address the problems facing the 'coloured' immigrant worked

quietly within the system. These included people like Pansy Jeffries who came originally from British Guyana and was trained in community work. In an attempt to ease tensions after the riots of 1958, she was appointed by the Mayor of Kensington to work through the Citizens Advice Bureau taking a special role in assisting new arrivals with their particular problems. Although Jeffries recalled that it soon became the norm that any black or Asian face would be directed to her regardless of their problem.⁸⁷ She continued to work in Notting Hill Gate organising play schemes for children, arranging for evening clinics for working mothers, setting up housing schemes to get around the problem of discrimination and many other projects. Similarly, Bishop Wilfred Wood who also worked in London and arranged credit unions, set up an employment and training agency and liaised with the police in order to try to improve relations between them and the black and Asian communities.

Individuals like these contributed much to ameliorate the situation in local areas but could not completely dispel the message which came from the government and authorities, the schools or the unions. Neither could their work counter the message of racism which many encountered in the back streets of Southall or Handsworth and which was highlighted in the aftermath of Enoch Powell's speech against the extension of the Race Relations Bill, only days after the death of Martin Luther King. The message that they heard was that if the problems of discrimination in housing and employment; the classification of their school age children as educationally sub-normal and the growing alienation of the young unemployed, are to be tackled they must look to themselves. As John Rex explained:

the vast majority of black immigrants and black British are not conscious supporters of black power. But then the vast majority of British workers are not Marxists either. The fact of the matter is that most respectable immigrant families do the best they can to get on and to help their children get on in British society. But at the same time they will know something of the militant groups and may quietly approve their activities just as passive and acquiescent British workers often silently approve reports of industrial militancy in other industries.⁸⁸

Trevor Carter supports this view and stated that "the militant black groups had a far greater influence than their very small membership would suggest and this was particularly true of British born blacks."⁸⁹ Pansy Jeffries, although more moderate and preferring to work within the system, still expressed strong support for the work of both Martin Luther King and Malcolm X.⁹⁰

v. Conclusion

Throughout the period of 1958 to 1968 there developed an increasing identification with the African American struggle. Although the situation facing the new immigrants from Africa,

Asia and the Caribbean and that which faced the African American were different in many ways, they grew closer over this period of ten years.

Initially many non-white British immigrants saw the move to Britain as a temporary one and intended to return to his or her place of birth. This consciousness of another home gave them a resilience in the face of discrimination, a determination to put up with it until they had made their money or received their training or education and were in a position to return. This was in contrast to the position of African Americans. A major factor which changed this outlook was the introduction of immigration controls in 1962. This created the fear that, should they wish their families to join them before they were ready to return, they would have to do so before the door was closed and this led to a great increase in numbers moving to Britain. Once in Britain it became more difficult to return as children started schooling here. Thus, more and more they began to consider a future based in Britain. This meant that their situation was closer to that of the African American.

Another major difference between African Americans and new British immigrants was their constitutional position. The Nationality Act of 1948 confirmed that all Commonwealth citizens had the right to vote and the right to reside in Britain. Consequently when they arrived there was no need for a campaign for 'civil rights'. On the other hand, African Americans had, through state legislature, been largely denied electoral rights. In Britain, however, the imposition of immigration control legislation appeared to many of these immigrants to chip away at the rights they held. The discrimination in housing and employment meant that they were denied equality and the failure of the government to tackle these problems left many feeling unrepresented. When the Voting Act of 1965 was passed in the United States which protected the African American right to vote the situation facing the black in America and the black or Asian in Britain was perceived to be much closer. It is interesting to note that in the manifesto produced by RAAS they declared their intention to fight for 'human rights' and not 'civil rights'⁹¹ and Michael Malik, in his autobiography, referred to hearing Malcolm X speak and stated that he "...listened to Malcolm's speech on the problem of human - not civil - rights of the American Negro and heard the tumultuous applause which followed."⁹²

It must be recognised that the increasingly numerous expressions of concern over the possible development of ghettos would have been heard by non-whites as well as whites. If a ghetto is an area within a city where a minority ethnic group is in a majority, they have never really existed in Britain in the same way that they do in some major cities of the United States. Despite this, through discrimination over housing and in many cases through choice, there did develop areas in the inner perimeters of cities in Britain concentrations of Asian and West Indian communities. A report in 1968 stated that the primary schools in fourteen out of London's thirty-three boroughs contained between 13 to 31 per cent 'immigrant' children.⁹³ The use of the word 'immigrant' here does not necessarily mean that they were newly arrived for many of them would have been British born. Much of the concerns voiced over the possible

development of ghettos in British cities employed the image of America to express these fears, often referring to the riots that had shaken the United States in the summers of 1965 in Watts, 1966 in Chicago and in Detroit in 1967. It was not difficult for an Afro-Caribbean, Indian or Pakistani, seeing themselves portrayed in this light, to realise that they were seen by many as an unwelcome threat.

This perception of being separate was particularly true of West Indians. In the Caribbean there existed a clear distinction; white employers and black workers. Thus, the division appeared to be based on class. In Britain, however, the situation was more complicated because of the existence of a white working class and consequently, when Afro-Caribbeans perceived themselves as discriminated against and unrepresented by both the Labour Party and the Unions, it seemed clear to many of them that the issue was purely racism; a distinct disadvantaged minority based solely on skin colour. This would have been particularly true in 1968 when dockers and porters marched in support of Enoch Powell's speech arguing against the extension of the Race Relations Act, despite the fact that others marched in opposition. Support for Powell, however, was not restricted to workers in the East End of London. Even a moderate person like Bishop Wilfred Wood experienced the fear that the response to Powell's speech engendered. He recalled, in an interview with the author, that it was the first time in his adult life that he really felt fear when he had to travel by train to Leicester the following day and, as he said, "...an uncommon thing in an English railway carriage, everyone was talking quite loudly and unto a man supporting Enoch Powell...but what frightened me was that when the train pulled in they stood up to get out, all these people were respectable, smartly dressed business types, the kind of people that I would have turned to if I had needed help."⁹⁴

Throughout the ten years which constitute the major wave of mass immigration to Britain the majority of Afro-Caribbeans learnt that they were not British at all. If they looked for a new identity then the struggle in the United States provided one. They were 'black' with that sense of pride and self-respect that they felt denied in Britain. This was particularly true of the younger Afro-Caribbean or those who had been born here and who saw Britain as their permanent home. With the strength that they gained from religious and cultural ties, Indians and Pakistanis were less open to this sense of rejection. They came with fewer illusions that they were British and would be accepted as such. This applied less, however, in the case of young Asians for whom the ties to the 'homeland' were weaker and also for Asians from both the Caribbean and from Africa who had already made one move separating them from their origins.

If, however, the sense of rejection encouraged a willingness to take on the political label 'black' it was a case of action and reaction. The message of black pride was a source of inspiration to many Afro-Caribbeans, Asians and Africans but it did not create this feeling of

alienation, it arose from the experience of life in Britain. Colin MacInnes, in an article on Michael Malik, stated;

There is no doubt that Stokely Carmichael's visit here accelerated this social fermentation; yet anyone who imagines that Stokely is a mere 'agitator' who can arouse black Britons when they have no cause to be aroused, understands neither him nor them.⁹⁵

The aim of the creation of an organisation like CCARD was to press for legislation against discrimination although it employed the tactics of the American Civil Rights Movement. The West Indian Development Council took a leaf out of Martin Luther King's book but its aim was to break the colour bar on the buses in Bristol. Although the visit of Malcolm X might have been the inspiration for the formation of RAAS, it was the White Paper in 1965 that increased the membership. If the Black Peoples' Alliance used the militant rhetoric of the black struggle in the United States, the spur for its formation was the Commonwealth Immigrants Bill in 1968. It is clear that it was British racial attitudes that had a major impact on the non-white population but that the struggle in the United States provided both an inspiration and an example of resistance. The next chapter will examine to what extent organisations and individuals who expressed opposition to immigration and anti-discrimination legislation looked across the Atlantic for inspiration.

Chapter 5 Fascist, Anti-Immigrant and Racist Groups

i. Introduction

Racial tensions, and attempts by right-wing groups to exploit them, were not new in Britain. Severe rioting broke out in 1919 between whites and blacks mainly in ports such as Liverpool, Cardiff and London. The trigger for these disturbances was competition over employment in the shipping industry with the recently demobilised troops and the Unions' insistence on a policy of hiring 'whites' first, together with tensions over white women.¹ Although the spur for these riots might have been competition over jobs, the antagonism arose from wider racist concerns and the official response was to consider ways in which 'repatriation' might be arranged.² During the 1930s Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists identified the Jews as the source of the nation's ills and stirred up anti-Semitism, particularly in the East End of London. The sudden increase and geographically uneven distribution in Britain of New Commonwealth immigrants, however, that marked the 1950s and early 1960s, prompted the emergence of a variety of new racist groups. It also provided a focus for already existing ones. Ideological disputes, power struggles and personality clashes created a degree of instability and confusion in these early years until the late 1960s when the National Front emerged as a national body which, although not immune from internal feuding, reached a level of membership which was far greater than previous bodies in the post-war period.

This chapter examines firstly, the way in which pre-war fascist groups responded to the new wave of non-white immigration. It identifies leaders who arose out of the fascist tradition and the ways in which they adjusted their message in response to the current debate over multi-racial Britain. Secondly, it looks at the formation of local racial populist bodies and the development of national anti-immigrant organisations and, finally at the impact of the British importation of the Ku Klux Klan. It identifies, in particular, actions and rhetoric that demonstrated an awareness of the racial struggle in the United States and in some cases a willingness to use an American example to underline their message or increase support for their own groups.

ii. The Fascists

The Union Movement was the successor of Mosley's British Union of Fascists and was active in London during the Notting Hill riots. During the 1950s, however, Mosley and the Union Movement were a failing force, wallowing in nostalgia for their 'glory days' during the 1930s. In the post-war period Mosley attempted to live down his 'racialist' label and shake himself free of Nazi connotations on a public level. After the 1958 riots it became increasingly clear that the Union Movement supported an anti-immigration stand. Mosley advocated a form of world-

wide apartheid based on the argument that the 'races' were in a state of evolution, with Europeans in the lead, but, that mixing would lead to decay not growth. Mosley further argued that Britain should extricate itself from the burden of the Commonwealth, stating that until this was achieved there could be no peace with Rhodesia and no union with Europe. The pages of his journal *Action* were used to argue his case:

Britain in its days of power and glory ruled the waves. Now we are saddled with an old-man-of-the-sea, the Commonwealth. The Afro-Asian Commonwealth clings to Britain's back just as in the legend that other old man clutched at Sinbad the Sailor. We cannot get anywhere for this rider with his hands around our neck.....(the Atlantic Union) would simply mean Britain became the tail of America and not the head of Europe.³

There is little evidence within *Action* that Mosley drew on the situation in the United States to reinforce his anti-immigration message though there was clearly an anti-American theme. On immigration his tactic was perhaps more sophisticated than other anti-immigration groups because he still nurtured some hopes of working within the political system. He sought to stress the government's part in immigration, seeking to divert racial hatred towards anti-government feeling rather than appearing to incite racial violence. In the lead up to the 1966 election he stated, "Constant economic crises and heavy taxation drive our people to emigrate abroad. Starvation in Commonwealth countries drives their people to Britain. Both English and coloured are victims of the same system. Don't blame the immigrants, blame the politicians who support the system. And vote them out."⁴ This theme was also taken up by American segregationists and reflected the idea that if blacks were so inferior they could not be a source of danger to whites and that, therefore, the blame must lie elsewhere. Thus, both in the United States and in Britain, criticism was often directed at government which, it was argued, failed to take a firm stand against the blacks, whether because they wanted entry to the country in the case of Britain or full entry into American society in the United States. This led to anti-government rhetoric and also supported the belief that the blacks were being manipulated by Jews for their own ends. Examples of this kind of thinking can be seen in *Thunderbolt*, the organ of the American National States Rights Party which was advertised in Britain and which stated in 1968, "Congress will not act in the interest of the White majority until we rise up and demand and [sic] end to legislation which is destroying our freedoms!"⁵

One of Mosley's pre-war supporters, A.K. Chesterton, launched his own movement, the League of Empire Loyalists, in the early 1950s. He had avoided internment during the war but emerged after the war as a convinced believer in conspiracy theories. Amongst these was the belief that the war represented the victory of world Jewry and that American Jews were seeking world domination. In 1953 Chesterton introduced his journal *Candour*. It was largely written by himself and was professional looking. Through the pages of this journal he expounded his views which often stressed support for white Rhodesians and South Africans

and portrayed Africans as 'savages'. Although he did not address the issue of immigration from the New Commonwealth, the significance of this body is that it formed the school for other individuals who went on to create groups which stressed an anti-immigration message.

Amongst these future leaders were Colin Jordan, John Tyndall and John Bean who all left the League in 1956-57. There was a feeling amongst these younger, extremists that Chesterton, Mosley and other pre-war leaders were now outmoded. Jordan launched his own group, the White Defence League, in 1956. It produced *Black and White News*, which took a more populist racist tone than either Mosley's or Chesterton's publications. It employed provocative headlines, such as 'Blacks seek White Women' and 'America Pouring Negro Troops into Britain'. It also carried reports and advertisements of organisations and journals in other countries and these clearly demonstrated an interest in the situation in the United States. They included *The Citizen's Council*, "the monthly organ of the white Citizens' Council of America", Jackson, Mississippi and *The White Sentinel*, "the hard hitting organ of America's National Citizens' Protective Association", St. Louis, Missouri.⁶

John Tyndall and John Bean left the League in 1957 and together launched the National Labour Party and produced its first issue of *Combat* in the autumn of 1958, edited by Bean. During the summer of 1958 it held three open air meetings in the Notting Hill Gate area of London and stressed an anti-immigrant message, contributing largely to the tensions in the area. In 1960 Jordan joined forces with Tyndall and Bean and launched a new organisation under the title of the British National Party (BNP). In 1962 Jordan and Tyndall split from Bean to form the National Socialist Movement. Bean continued to run the BNP and produce issues of *Combat*.

The National Socialist Movement (NSM), as its title implied, was a distinctly Nazi organisation. The main reason for Jordan's split with Bean was that Bean was beginning to argue that it might be more constructive for the BNP to distance itself from its Nazi roots. Bean had disagreed with Jordan's "wrongful direction of tactics in placing increasing emphasis on directly associating ourselves with the pre-war era of National socialist Germany to the neglect of Britain, Europe and the White World struggle of today and the future."⁷ The NSM held strongly anti-Semitic views but also stressed an anti-immigration message. This body received a degree of publicity when, in the summer of 1962, it held its first rally in Trafalgar Square which attracted the attention of anti-fascists and the police and both Jordan and Tyndall received short jail sentences under the Public Order Act. Further publicity was gained, later on that summer, when it was announced that the Movement was to hold an international Nazi conference which the American Nazi leader, George Lincoln Rockwell would attend. The Home Office stepped in and banned Rockwell. Before that, however, Jordan had smuggled Rockwell in and photographs of them shaking hands in London were printed in the press.⁸ This resulted in further short jail sentences for Jordan and Tyndall. In 1964, after personal clashes with Jordan, Tyndall left this Movement and launched a new body, entitled the Greater Britain

Movement (GBM). Mosley had also had contacts with the American Nazis during the late 1940s and in 1963 a neo-Nazi paper based in New York, *The Free American*, carried advertisements for Mosley's journal *Action*.⁹ The following year Mosley's 'newly dressed-up' monthly paper, *The National European*, carried advertisements for the John Birch Society and, in a review of Senator Goldwater's two books, stated that his rise was a sign that "America was beginning to change".¹⁰

Whilst Jordan was seeking to forge links with the American Neo-Nazis, Chesterton was also hoping to gain support in America in the more practical form of funds. The *Wiener Library Bulletin* recorded that Chesterton had despatched one of his 'stars' Austen Brooks to the United States on a fund raising mission. In 1963 Brooks undertook a three month tour visiting South Carolina, New York, Chicago, New Mexico, Arizona and Texas where he gave a few radio and television broadcasts. He returned, however, with barely enough funds to cover his travelling expenses and although it would seem that he met many like-minded souls there were few who felt inclined to support the organisation with hard dollars.¹¹ The fact that Chesterton sought to gain funds in the United States is interesting as he had become a virulent anti-American after the war, seeing the role of Jewish financiers in American policy as part of his conspiracy theory.¹² Clearly both Mosley and Chesterton felt that there was potential support to be tapped in the United States and that their ideas would accord with right-wingers and segregationists there. In this two way traffic in information and advertisements for extreme right-wing bodies the issue of a shared language was a factor. It was far simpler to attempt to tap support on either side of the Atlantic because it did not involve the labour and expense of translations.

Tyndall and Bean were by this stage stressing an anti-immigrant message and playing down any Nazi connotations.¹³ This seemed to pay off, at least for John Bean, for he stood for election in Southall in 1964. Southall was an area with a high density of Asian immigrants and he received over nine per cent of the vote on a platform which stressed that British civilisation was being undermined by coloured immigration. At the time this was a record for a radical right-wing candidate and significant in that it was an area which had previously held a reputation as an example of good 'race relations'. Immediately prior to the election, however, Southall had experienced not only much activity by the BNP but also a campaign waged by a body called the Southall Residents' Association¹⁴ whose sole aim was to bring a halt to New Commonwealth immigration. It would seem that much of Bean's support must have come from these racial populists who looked to Bean as the only candidate who opposed non-white immigration.

By 1964, the former leaders of the BNP were each running separate organisations, Bean was still in control of the BNP, Jordan was the leader of the National Socialist Movement and Tyndall was organising the GBM. None of these bodies received significant numerical support. The British National Party had the largest membership with about one

thousand members in 1967 whilst the National Socialist Movement had only 187 full members on its list at the same time. At its peak, however, in late 1962 it had approximately 680 members. As Thurlow has pointed out, however, size was not necessarily the key indicator of influence, as it was the GBM under Tyndall with only 138 members which was to play the greatest part in the formation of the National Front.¹⁵ Despite the small official following that these organisations commanded they served to raise the political temperature. They gave voice to racist ideas of white northern European superiority based on a confused mixture of anthropology, social Darwinism, eugenics and sociology which resulted in the idea of a hierarchy of race. These ideas from the nineteenth century, as we have seen in the Introduction, were still prevalent within English history texts and works of literature at least until the second world war. As Peter Fryer has described 'Africans' were invariably represented as "ugly, animal-like, unintelligent, incompetent in abstract thought, physically dirty, cowardly, boastful, lazy, childish and given to lying and thieving"¹⁶ while Indians were commonly portrayed as "cruel and totally unfitted to rule themselves" and were lucky to be under British rule.¹⁷ It would be quite unrealistic to argue that the majority of the British population during the late 1950s and 1960s would have accepted these descriptions uncritically but they would certainly have been exposed to these images through their schooling. Furthermore these prejudices were perpetuated in popular fiction, for example the work of Ian Fleming and the highly popular James Bond novels¹⁸ and *Tarzan* films. Racist groups were able to draw on deep seated prejudices based on early impressions.

The National Front was formed during 1966 and 1967, with Bean and Tyndall as leading lights, but, in the two years prior to that, Tyndall's GBM and Bean's BNP turned increasingly to the situation in America to reinforce their message. This was due to their change in emphasis from an anti-Semitic National Socialist message to one which stressed that immigration was dangerous to British culture. In the spring of 1965 Tyndall's publication *Spearhead* carried a report which began, "With Selma very much in the spotlight these days.." and continued to present some 'facts' about Civil Rights leaders in the United States, stating that Martin Luther King was a communist, that Bayard Rustin was both a communist and a homosexual and that James Baldwin was also a communist whose writings glorified homosexuality.¹⁹ The context of this report is significant. In the month of March, 1965, *The Times* had carried seventeen pieces on events in Selma which demonstrates the importance the press placed on the Civil Rights Movement at the time. The theme of most of the reporting in the British press was also supportive of the African American struggle, praising their dignity and determination in the face of white supremacist attacks. Thus, the report in *Spearhead* was a way of countering this general tone by attacking Martin Luther King, the personification of the non-violent movement, as a communist and, therefore, at least in the minds of members of the far-Right, a potential threat to civilisation.

It is not surprising that King should have been a target of *Spearhead* but Rustin and Baldwin seem unlikely candidates for the attention of this journal. Both these individuals, however, had been recent visitors to Britain. Rustin had accompanied King on his high profile visit to London. Baldwin had also visited London in February and his visit was covered in the British press. He could hardly have been described as a leader of the Civil Rights Movement but nonetheless he was well known in Britain, through his writings, as a successful African American which alone would justify his being seen as an appropriate target for *Spearhead*. The tactic of using a Communist smear against civil rights leaders was one which was widely used by White Citizens' Councils in the United States.²⁰ It is also significant that the report refers to homosexuality which, to members of the far Right in Britain and America, was considered a danger to western values and a mark of degeneracy.

A further issue of *Spearhead*, carried the headline, "Lesson from America" and argued that the main difference between the situations in the United States and in Britain was that conditions in America had been created by previous generations whereas the present generation was creating the same state in Britain. It then claimed that it was "insanity to create this kind of time bomb, with all the destructive potency we see across the Atlantic."²¹ An issue of *Combat* declared that Britain will see "racial violence as in the American pattern,... unless this flood is stopped".²² Both these articles appeared in the autumn of 1967 which followed a summer of reports, in the mainstream press, of riots in American cities, such as Detroit and Newark. In many of these reports the fear that Britain could face similar episodes of inter-racial violence was expressed but the solutions suggested included greater strides towards racial parity, the need for anti-discrimination legislation and arguments for the limitation of immigration. *Spearhead* and *Combat*, however, called for an immediate end to any further immigration and the piece in *Spearhead* went on to counter any arguments that white Americans could be at all responsible for the African American violence when it argued that "white liberals blame the whites, but Right-wingers cannot excuse the negroes."

With the split with Tyndall, and even more so the formation of the National Front, Jordan became marginalised and even more extreme in his language, "If you don't want a Negro neighbour - send him home"²³ was a typical Jordan sticker. This was also the theme employed by Peter Griffiths, the successful Conservative candidate for Smethwick in the 1964 election which was held four months later. A copy of the *National Socialist*, dated 1966, with a swastika on the right hand corner carried a cartoon, dealing with the Rhodesian crisis, which depicted a mass of running Africans with the caption "We shall Overwhelm" clearly made a connection with the struggle in the United States. Further, its implied message was that as Africans were threatening to 'overwhelm' in Rhodesia, they carried the same threat in America and that they might also threaten to do the same in Britain if numbers were allowed to grow. Although Jordan displayed racism against blacks and Asians he had certainly not abandoned his anti-Semitism. In 1966 six men were tried for setting fire to synagogues and one of them,

in his own defence, claimed that he had done it on the instructions of Jordan and his wife.²⁴ This is not to infer that Tyndall and Bean were no longer anti-Semitic but they publicly played down this aspect of their thinking and stressed the anti-immigrant theme.

Jordan made a slight come-back in 1968 with a new organisation with the name of the British Movement and produced a news sheet under the title of *British Tidings*. This demonstrated a continuing connection with the United States in that it carried advertisements for an "interesting American monthly magazine" entitled *Thunderbolt* which was being offered by post to readers of *British Tidings*. The main themes of *Thunderbolt* were attacks on Communism, 'Negroes' and Jews. It is clear, however, that the prime target for *Thunderbolt* was the Jews for the paper contained mainly pieces in which it was argued that the Jews were responsible for Communism and that they were manipulating the 'Negroes' and were the cause of the unrest. One item which reported on anti-Semitism amongst African Americans stated, "The negro would be no problem if the Jews could be eliminated at the core of these troubles".²⁵ This journal also carried news from Britain and in 1968 reported on Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech. The correspondence pages demonstrate that it was read in Britain although the number of subscribers was probably extremely small.²⁶ The previously quoted membership figures for Jordan's British Movement demonstrate that by the late 1960s his anti-Semitic message was not receiving the same degree of support as those advocating an anti-immigration stand.

iii. Racial Populists

Jordan did not join the National Front when it was formed from an amalgam comprised of the League of Empire Loyalists (with Chesterton as the Chairman), Tyndall's GBM, Bean's BNP and another body, the Racial Preservation Society (RPS). The last mentioned group was founded in 1965 and was a loosely knit group of local organisations, based mainly in the South and the Midlands, which had sprung up to campaign against immigration. It was composed of local, mainly lower middle class, 'Little England' groups which developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s. These nativist organisations, such as the Birmingham Immigration Control Association, which was one of the largest, contained members from a wide spectrum, from extreme racials to disgruntled Conservatives, and drew strength from the fact that they were not tarred by the fascist label. As Paul Foot stated, they could "command a very much higher degree of respect and attention than the official neo-Fascist parties."²⁷ They concentrated on the single issue of immigration of 'coloureds' and launched local campaigns to push for controls and fight integration. Their convictions were based on Victorian ideas of Social Darwinism, a racial hierarchy with the Anglo-Saxon at the top and the belief that black immigrants had measurable and largely inheritable physical attributes which were inferior to those of the

average Briton. They argued that integration was an assault on the English way of life and culture.

In 1965 Paul Foot identified three main localities where such organisations existed or were developing: Birmingham; Southall under the Southall Residents Association; and Bradford. The last, under the leadership of a Mr. G. Smith, organised a petition against immigration before the 1964 election and collected some 25,000 signatures. The Smethwick branch was very active in the 1964 election and to a large degree responsible for Griffiths' successful campaign. At this stage there is little evidence that the situation in the United States had much impact on members of these bodies but their warnings of the dangers of inter-racial liaisons and their stress on individual rights were very similar to those of the American White Citizens' Councils. A key figure in the Birmingham Immigration Control Association, however, was John Sanders who had spent a large portion of his life in America although he was originally from the Midlands. His argument in favour of a halt to immigration demonstrated that he saw little difference between the United States and Britain when he stated:

If by civilisation we mean free men ruling themselves, then we are the only civilised nation in the world. Only twice has this self-rule been achieved in history - in Athens and in Britain. Since the end of feudalism this principle of self-rule has been practised only by nations around the North Sea (the American civilization stems from us, so that is no exception). We have the Magna Carta and the Bill of Rights and Habeas Corpus - a very precious heritage which we are now throwing away. No country has ever solved its racial problems. The Afro-Asians are feckless peoples with cultures different from our own. By our standards they are barbarous.²⁸

Sanders, a businessman, developed many contacts with local companies and with individuals within local government. He used these and orchestrated a letter-writing and postcard dispatching campaign to press for an end to immigration.

In 1965 the RPS drew in these local groups creating a national organisation. According to the *Weiner Library Bulletin*, this body had more than one thousand members by the summer of 1966.²⁹ It included a number of clergymen and many professionals giving it an air of respectability. One of the key figures in this organisation was James Doyle, the chairman of the Sussex Division and a Catholic who had studied anthropology. He described himself as one who was "opposed to race mixing, unlike the integrationists" and stated that "In America it has been said that race mixing in school class rooms leads to mixing in bed" and that "it is biologically harmful to dilute Caucasoid blood."³⁰ He stressed that the movement was based on Christian ethics and that it abhorred fascism. He and members like him would presumably have felt a natural kinship to segregationists in the Southern States and articles in one of its publications, *The British Independent*, demonstrated support for South African apartheid. Like members of the Dutch Reformed Church and those of the Ku Klux Klan, members of the RPS found support for their racism in their religion.

The RPS had several wealthy backers which helped to fund publication of various journals. Amongst its various publications were reprints from *The South African Observer*, the John Birch Society's *American Opinion* and *The Defender*, which was the organ of the American body, the Defenders of Christian Faith. According to Thurlow, it has been estimated that it was responsible for publishing over two million copies of various types of literature between 1965 and 1969, although in some cases it was a matter of recycling material under a variety of headings. An example of this can be seen in two papers, one with the title of *Sussex News* which carried, as its front page report, a piece under the heading "Sussex Race Riots?" and stated that it was felt that race riots in Sussex "seemed impossible a few years ago, but with the increasing numbers, it would seem that after Los Angeles anything can happen."³¹ A later paper, entitled *Midland News*, carried the same article on its front page, the only change being that it applied the same message to Smethwick.³²

Both issues also carried a long report on "Coloured Immigration - Its Effect on the Crime Figures", although, as it argued, figures for Britain were unavailable, and consequently it simply dealt with the crime figures for the United States implying that these would be just as appropriate. It also stressed the point that crime figures for rape, murder, prostitution and vice were higher in the northern States than in the south, just in case any reader felt inclined to dismiss them as a product of southern slavery and, therefore, irrelevant to Britain. This could also be seen to be an argument for the stronger line against African Americans which was adopted in the south. A further issue, this one entitled *The British Independent*, carried an article on Marcus Garvey, which praised him as a "great man and a passionate believer in the separation of the races."³³ The aim of this piece was clearly an attempt to demonstrate that there were also African Americans who held similar views to those advocated by the RPS, further implying that the RPS was not against all those of colour and therefore not racist. All these publications contained, interspersed between the articles, photographs of racially mixed couples, invariably, a black male and a white female, with no explanatory text presumably because the message would have been apparent to the readership. It is difficult to estimate circulation figures for these papers but the large numbers that were printed and the fact that they carried none of the negative connotations of the more fascist based news-sheets meant that they had a greater impact on the general public than the neo-Nazi publications.

Clearly the editorship of the Racial Preservation Society publications were either convinced that Britain was on the point of developing a similar racial situation to that in the United States or it was prepared to employ examples of American racialised troubles to reinforce its anti-immigration message. Given the lack of evidence that members of the local groups were motivated in their initial stages by concern that Britain was developing an American-style racial problem but rather by fears over miscegenation and racial purity which have a long ancestry in Britain, the presence of frequent references to the United States in later publications is significant. These references demonstrate how the developing situation in

America provided ammunition for the arguments of the RPS and served to reinforce their prejudices. The increasingly dramatic events, such as the riots in northern cities, provided members of the RPS with evidence of the dangers of racial mixing. Rose described the importance of these groups as acting, "as a conduit for potentially non-racial discontents, convincing the anxious moderates that immigrants are to blame for the processes of social change and their side effects"³⁴ During the early 1960s the African American was seen in Britain as the underdog and it would have been difficult to portray white Southern segregationists as representative of Christian ethics. When riots broke out in American cities and African Americans appeared to abandon their tactics of passive resistance, they provided a much more useful image to support the arguments of the RPS.

The RPS publications covered reports on the activities of Michael X and stressed the danger of the rise of Black Power in Britain. One of these reports referred to a statement by Roy Sawh on reports of fiery crosses being fixed to the doors of immigrants. There was little comment on the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) itself for the article concentrated on Sawh's statement that "where there are fiery crosses fixed to doors, there will be two dead white men beneath."³⁵ The stress in this article, which underplayed the threat of the KKK to blacks and Asians in Britain but which concentrated on the retaliation implied by Sawh's statement, fitted with the thinking of the RPS who argued that the violence was a black rather than white product. This theme was picked up again in a report on Rhodesia. It argued that one man one vote in Rhodesia would remove power from "Ian Smith's capable hands" and place it in the hands of people who were responsible for the sentiments expressed in a letter from the Zimbabwe African People's Union of Lusaka which stated, "We shall not abandon the struggle until the waters of Zimbabwe's beautiful rivers turn red with the blood of white tyrants and their children."³⁶ Clearly for the RPS whether the reports referred to the United States, Africa or Britain, the message was that blacks equated with a threat to whites.

iv. The Ku Klux Klan

If the RPS put little stress on the threat that the existence of a KKK branch in Britain posed to blacks, the mainstream press gave it considerable publicity. Throughout the summer and autumn of 1965 the activities of a KKK branch in Britain were headline news. There is, however, evidence of the KKK in Britain much earlier than this. In the 1920s the Klan was revived in the United States as a response to the growing numbers of new immigrants, those from Southern and Eastern Europe, particularly Jews and Catholics who were seen as undermining American values which included keeping 'negroes' in their place. From that time there have been occasional attempts to introduce a branch in Britain. These have briefly flared up and then subsided. In the mid 1930s the Board of Deputies of British Jews produced an intelligence report on a body called the 'White Knights of Britain' or the 'Hooded Men' which

was a British version of the Klan.³⁷ In the mid 1950s there were reports of Klan branches in seven different localities in Britain. They had connections with Waco, Texas, and it was suggested that these had been made through the US Air Base in Essex. Fenner Brockway, as usual vigilant on the matter of racism, brought the issue up in the house and urged the Home Secretary to make inquiries into the scale of the organisation and their activities. Brockway suggested that there were several hundred members at the time.³⁸

It would appear that supporters of the Klan were still active in 1958 when Claudia Jones, as editor of the *West Indian Gazette*, received a letter purporting to be from them. The letterhead declared it to be from the Ku Klux Klan of Britain but the address given was care of a box number in Waco. This letter, which was printed in the *West Indian Gazette*, as requested, was addressed to "Dear Mr. B. Ape" and finished with the words, "Aryan Regards, A. Whiteman". It stated that the information provided within the *West Indian Gazette* had "proven to be of great value to the Klan."³⁹ This letter had been received five days before the outbreak of the riots in Notting Hill Gate and would suggest that the KKK were already active in London. It is also possible, however, that Claudia Jones attracted this attention through her high profile activities in the United States before she was deported in the mid-fifties and that the letter actually originated from an American source. Nothing was then heard of a KKK branch in Britain until the summer of 1965, seven years later, although this organisation is reputed to pride itself on its secrecy. The "dangerous introverts" who were attracted to the KKK argued, "Secrecy is our defence against those who desire to mongrelise our proud heritage."⁴⁰

In June 1965, just prior to the publication of the much discussed White Paper and against the background of stories from Selma in the United States, reports came of fiery crosses being burnt in Leamington Spa, Rugby, Coventry and Ilford. On the day that a cross was burnt in Plaistow outside a shop belonging to a Pakistani immigrant, the press reported on the first public meeting of the Klan in Britain. Despite the fact that the room in the Chapel Tavern pub in Birmingham, had been booked under a false name, the Phoenix Book Co. of America, the members clearly wished for publicity as they had invited both the press and television crews, including an American one from NBC. They stated that they wished to prove that the KKK existed in Britain and that Robert Shelton, the Klan's Imperial Wizard from Alabama, would soon be coming to form official links with the American organisation. In fact, the meeting was a fiasco for as soon as the landlord realised the nature of the meeting he insisted that they all leave.⁴¹ After this the members of the press were invited to witness the burning of a cross on the summit of a nearby hill which was attended by a small group of individuals in costumes similar to those worn by the KKK in the United States.

These events, small in themselves, created a great deal of interest and concern. The majority of the mainstream press covered it and the repercussions continued as Frank Soskice, the Home Secretary, was urged to ban Robert Shelton from entering the country, which he did.

Throughout the rest of that summer and into the autumn more reports were filed in the press dealing with further incidents of cross burnings and of individuals who had received threatening letters from the KKK. These included Gurmukh Singh, an employee of the University of London, Institute of Computer Sciences, who was threatened that he would be 'burnt alive' unless he left the country,⁴² and Tariq Ali, the President of the Students' Union in Oxford, who was told to cancel a forthcoming debate on "This House would not fight for Queen and Country". Reg Freeson, a Jewish Labour M.P. and editor of *Searchlight*, the anti-fascist magazine, received a death threat purporting to come from the Klan.⁴³ Barbara Castle also received threats, in the form of charred wooden crosses, which were sent to her Blackburn Labour Party office,⁴⁴ and Mrs. Anne Evans, a woman magistrate from London who, having written an article calling for more black policemen, received a telephone threat and was given a 24 hour police watch.⁴⁵ Not surprisingly, Michael de Frietas, or Michael X as he was generally known to the press, was a further target and received a death threat, in the form of a letter signed by the KKK, on the eve of the first public rally of his organisation, the Racial Action Adjustment Society.⁴⁶ The issue also gave rise to high profile reports when eight of the members of this organisation were brought to trial in October under the Public Order Act of 1936 and convicted. Despite this, two further reports of burning crosses were filed in November, one in Leicester⁴⁷ and one in Warwickshire,⁴⁸ but after these events the KKK in Britain seemed to fade into the background.

A piece in *The Guardian* stated that social and research workers, "in continuous touch with developments in areas where many immigrants live, are concerned less about the rise of the Ku-Klux-Klan in this country than about the militant reactions it may stimulate among the immigrant communities"⁴⁹ and, indeed, the news of burning crosses and Klan activities in Britain did naturally concern those most likely to be its victims. In August the Indian Workers' Association in conjunction with the West Indian Standing Conference (WISC) announced their decision to work together to defend themselves against this new threat, although it was stressed that there was no intention to form a fighting force. Mr. Vernon Laidlaw of the London WISC stated, "We want to give our nationals confidence and assure them that they are not alone and that we have leaders who are prepared to stand by them and protect them from intimidation".⁵⁰ A *Times* report, however, quoted Mr. Lincoln Dyke, Chairman of the North London West Indian Association who said, "...at this time there is no use for a Martin Luther King, we are here to stay and would fight as citizens not as strangers. God help those caught putting up a fiery cross."⁵¹ It should be noted that this report appeared on the last day of the Watts riots. The riots in Watts could be said to mark a change in mood as the British audience began to hear reports of black violence, as opposed to the non-violent approach of the Civil Rights Movement, and to realise that the issue involved more than simply an end to southern segregationism. The majority of the British population had had no difficulty in supporting the aims of the Civil Rights Movement, and applauding their tactics, but the idea of urban unrest

as a challenge to social and economic inequality was quite another matter. Statements, such as the above quoted, must have struck at chord, at the time, with its rejection of King and its fighting talk.

Not all immigrants, however, supported this view, fearful that action on their part might simply exacerbate the situation. Mr. Dharam Singh, leader of Warwick's Indian community, whose own house had been damaged by a blazing cross, dissociated himself, arguing that "fascist" influence was very slight among the British people and if they succeeded in exploiting the fears and grievances arising out of bad social conditions it was the Government's function to attack the causes of the latter at source.⁵² Responses amongst whites to this sudden upsurge in American-style racism were varied. Mr. Maurice Foley M.P., addressing a gathering of some 700 Sikhs in Ealing said that the people responsible were just "a very small lunatic fringe" and apologised on behalf of the British people, for the outbreak.⁵³ *The Times Educational Supplement* stated that the emergence of the KKK might serve one good purpose, that of making the British public realise the potential danger of racial conflict. An editorial, however, in *The Birmingham Post* was critical of the resolution by the immigrant groups, arguing that any contemplation of a breach in the law that violence be used to counter violence was wrong and stating that "giving directions as to how their adopted country is to be run - a particularly irritating trait."⁵⁴

By the end of the year, however, news of the KKK in Britain had faded. It had proved to be a short-lived but startling episode and naturally was a cause of concern and fear amongst those who felt they may become targets. Many dismissed it as the manifestation of a lunatic fringe⁵⁵ but it still served to reinforce the message that Britain might not be totally immune from developing an American-style racialised situation. One further message which it relayed was that the non-white immigrant population of Britain were no longer in a mood to accept any kind of treatment. The increase in their numbers, the creation of strong local groups, further strengthened by this sort of threat, and a recognition amongst many of them that their future lay in this country, meant that they were prepared to defend themselves if the authorities appeared to be failing to do so.

It is difficult to estimate how many people were actually involved in the KKK. It would certainly appear that membership during the summer of 1965 was tiny despite a report in the *Daily Express*, as early as April of that year which, under the headline "Ku Klux Klan heads for Britain", stated that Shelton was planning a recruitment drive in Britain that summer and that 500 people had written to ask to join.⁵⁶ The attractions of the Klan for British racialists were firstly, that it carried no direct European Nazi connotations. Secondly, the glamour which was involved in the rituals, costumes, hierarchy and language employed held an appeal for individuals with low self-esteem who looked for a body which might increase their sense of self-importance. The Klan was seen as providing some form of legitimacy or historical basis and symbol for what was basically a primitive fear and dislike. Despite the fact

that although by the 1960s the majority of Klan members in America were urban dwellers, in Britain the Klan still carried an image of rural or small town Protestant Anglo-Saxon citizens seeking to preserve their way of life and in this perception lay its third attraction. It is significant that individuals with strong nationalist tendencies would have linked themselves with such a demonstrably foreign import. The explanation perhaps lies in the perception that Americans were not seen as 'foreign' in the same way as members of other nations.

The Klan had, of course, also been remarkably successful in its maintenance of segregation in the southern States and some would have identified with this aim. Indeed, the idea of southern segregation was not that far from the policy advocated by Mosley. It is interesting to note, however, that Robert Relf, one of the defendants in the KKK public meeting trial and their spokesman, was mentioned in Jordan's *National Socialist Bulletin* of May 1968. At the time Relf was serving a three year sentence for "allegedly breaking a couple of Indian windows in Warwick" and Jordan invited readers to visit Relf, whom he described as a "well-known Midlands fighter against the Coloured invasion of Britain", and to send contributions for the support of his family. Relf and a fellow KKK defendant, George Newey, had previously been linked to Colin Jordan's National Socialist Movement and so it is possible that for Relf, at least, this experiment with the KKK was only a temporary break from National Socialism.

Despite the small numbers involved in this outbreak of Klanism in Britain the whole episode received a great deal of attention. This was largely due to the violence of their threats but also because it conjured up images of lynchings and hooded riders sweeping across the Sussex Downs, newsworthy material for dramatic stories. It gave rise to reports with which the British public could frighten themselves, although for the majority not too seriously, as they would not have seen themselves as direct targets. The Jews who were potential targets could look for support to the Jewish Defence Committee section of the Board of Deputies and other established Jewish organisations. For the Afro-Caribbean or Asian immigrant, already too well aware of the violence that could arise from racism, these reports would have encouraged many to look to each other for solidarity but also to look across the Atlantic towards Black Power for strength.

v. Conclusion

The following year saw the formation of the National Front which, in its first year, had a membership of roughly 4,000, bringing in, approximately, 2,000 from the League of Empire Loyalists, 1,500 from John Bean's BNP, 500 from the Racial Preservation Society (roughly half the total membership of 1966) and, a few months later, members of Tyndall's GBM.⁵⁷ By 1973, however, immediately following the Ugandan Asian crisis, membership of the National Front was estimated to be 15,000.⁵⁸ Although it was still subject to factionalism, splits and leadership disputes it represented a greater force for racialism than any of its predecessors.

As has been described many of the leaders of these organisations came from a neo-Nazi background but the wave of new immigration in the late 1950s and early 1960s gave them the opportunity to tap prejudice within the white population, in highly settled areas, for recruitment. It was not National Socialism that attracted the majority to the Front but racial populism. One of the tactics that was employed by all these bodies was to present the increasingly frightening image of the racial troubles in the United States as a vision of future Britain. In this they were assisted by the wide press and television coverage of riots and black power in America. Furthermore, just as some blacks in Britain, particularly those from the Caribbean, identified with the struggle being waged in the United States, so some racialsists in Britain identified with American segregationists in their fight. Equally, as some of the new black immigrants held faith in British society and institutions to defend their rights, so many white Britons felt a duty to act on their behalf and to combat racialism. The next chapter will examine religious bodies in order to establish to what extent they took an interest in the issue of non-white immigration and whether the struggle in the United States had an impact on their responses.

Chapter 6 Religious Bodies

i. Introduction

As has been seen, during the period under review there was a growth in racist activity in response to the new wave of non-white immigration, based on fears arising from racist views. These fears came from a belief in the inferiority of blacks and Asians and were voiced in terms of 'outsiders' taking 'our' jobs, housing and women; concerns over the development of a multi-racial society; and the maintenance of a perceived image of British culture. They were then fuelled by the disturbances in the United States which also provided a strong theme for rhetoric and recruitment.

In contrast to these right-wing organisations there were also bodies which favoured assimilation or integration, composed of white liberals who espoused ideas of tolerance, equality and brotherhood. Amongst these groups were religious denominations and this chapter will look at their reactions to non-white immigration. It will follow a broadly chronological form examining the response of these bodies to the 1958 riots, the introduction of immigration controls and the middle years of the decade. It will then look at the way religious groups responded to the heightened concerns of 1967 and 1968. As part of the attempt to assess to what extent the situation in America was a factor, this study will concentrate more specifically on the response of firstly, British Jewry, whilst recognising that this included more than simply the religious body. Secondly, the work of the Society of Friends will be examined. The choice of these two particular groups is based on their stronger traditional links with fellow members in the United States. The final section will look at the religious bodies which attracted many of those immigrants from the Caribbean who abandoned the established British denominations.

A laissez-faire attitude towards non-whites in Britain was widely held amongst the leadership of the British religious denominations although there is evidence of increasing concern as the decade progressed. This reflects a similar process which can be detected in the press reports and was a result of greater awareness of the deterioration in black/white relations. In looking at the response of the churches the assumption could be made that they would favour harmonious racial relations, but it must be remembered that different views existed as to how this aim might be achieved. An extreme example was the Racial Preservation Society which declared itself to be a 'non-political body dedicated to the Christian solution to the race problem'. Yet it produced some of the most racist literature and six of its members were prosecuted under the Race Relations Act in 1968 for incitement to racial violence.¹ The majority of church leaders, however, argued that the way towards racial harmony was through toleration, education and the extension of welcome based on the belief that all humanity was the creation of God.

As with the majority of the British population, however, the initial impact was small and, in consequence, so was the response. Most church goers had little contact with the new immigrants but where they did responses varied. Although the leadership took little action, there were individuals who through their own personal experience became active on the behalf of black persons within their congregations. These may have been influenced by the experience of missionary work in Africa or India, may have had personal connections or may have been working in a parish where a high proportion of West Indians or Asians settled and were consequently more aware of the problems facing them. There were also those who, possibly through fear of a negative response from their often already dwindling white congregations, refrained from offering a welcome to black visitors.

The immigrants, themselves, of course, came from diverse backgrounds. The majority of those from the Caribbean were Anglicans, with some Catholics, whereas those from India and Pakistan, whilst including a small number of Christians, brought their own faiths with them and a determination to maintain them. To the local vicar or priest this factor could either have been seen as an opportunity for conversion or as a reason for feeling uninvolved with their problems, depending upon the individuals' perceptions. It would appear, however, that the British Christian churches were less than successful in recruiting and maintaining the allegiance of these new immigrants. It is not surprising that conversion rates amongst immigrants from India and Pakistan were low. Indeed their religions were often a source of strength and community cohesion amongst the early arrivals and were consequently held on to even more determinedly.

There is evidence, however, that even amongst those of Caribbean origin, who had grown up within the Anglican tradition, church attendance waned on arrival in Britain. According to Rev. Clifford Hill in a study carried out for the Institute of Race Relations, 69% of West Indian immigrants regularly attended a Christian church before immigration but a survey, carried out in London in 1963 as part of this study, revealed that only 4% of the total Afro-Caribbean community in the area were attending local churches.² This has been put down to the lack of welcome many of them felt within British churches and to differences in style of service. The anthropologist Malcolm Calley carried out a survey of London clergymen as research for a study of Pentecostalism among West Indian immigrants in Britain. He stated that:

he found none of them prejudiced against West Indians though some felt that members of their congregations would not welcome them in large numbers. Some of them had made efforts to attract West Indians; others explained that their normal work took up all of their time and that this would suffer if they were to direct their energies towards assimilating them into their congregations.³

Unlike African Americans, where, through segregation, strong black congregations had developed under black leadership, the churches in the West Indies were largely under the

direction of the British and churches were not segregated. A similar fall in church attendance, however, has been noted amongst Irish immigrants and the reason may have been, rather, a lack of social pressure and the mobile nature of the immigrant experience. Despite this, there is evidence of a growth in Pentecostal congregations during the 1960s, made up almost exclusively of immigrants from the West Indies, which would imply that the need was for a different style of religion and a lack of identification with the British churches rather than a rejection of religion itself. This development also supports the view that the churches largely failed the new immigrants and that the growth in the desire for black leadership which was felt in many areas of life during the 1960s also affected their religious life.

One of the major concerns during this period for the Christian churches was the movement towards ecumenism and debates over this issue continued throughout the 1960s. Also working towards inter-denominational harmony was the Council of Christians and Jews which was founded in 1942 in an attempt to improve relations between Christians and Jews in response to the news of the extermination of European Jewry. Although the initial aim of this organisation was the fight against anti-Semitism, as the issue of black/white racialised relations grew in importance, the Council took an interest and adopted a liberal assimilationist approach.

As previously stated, the issue of racialised relations within Britain was not initially seen as one of direct import to the Christian churches. The one exception to this, however, was that of the Society of Friends. The Quakers had a long tradition of interest in social issues and during the 18th Century had formed the core of the abolitionist movement. This commitment was reflected in their decision, as early as 1929, to establish the Joint Council to Promote Understanding between White and Coloured People in Great Britain. This body included some other church groups but was under the leadership of a Quaker, John Fletcher. Its aim was to examine the issue of 'the colour bar' and drew in some relatively well-known personalities, such as Vera Brittain, Winifred Holtby and Harold Moody.⁴

The Friends also demonstrated that they were advanced in terms of their thinking on racial issues when they changed the name of their Slavery and Protection of Native Races Committee⁵ to the Race Relations Committee in 1950. This demonstrated their early recognition that 'race' was not simply a matter that related to the 'developing' nations but was a truly world-wide issue with implications for Britain and the West in general. A further significant factor in their early interest in racialised relations was their long standing connections with the United States, going back to the days of William Penn and the establishment of the State of Pennsylvania.

As with the Society of Friends, British Jewry had many links with the Jewish community in the United States. A statement issued by a delegation from the World Council of Churches Committee on the Church and Jewish People to the United States in 1969 recognised this connection when it said that, "There are more Jews in North America than anywhere else in the world and their influence on Jewish thinking in the world is, therefore, of great

significance."⁶ The response to the influx of black immigrants in Britain amongst British Jews was varied, however, and discussions on the issue reflect an awareness that black/white relations was also an issue that was a cause of debate in the United States amongst American Jews. The relationship between blacks and Jews in the United States is an extremely complex one and cannot be realistically dealt with within this work but it is necessary to take it into consideration when examining the relationship between non-whites and Jews in Britain for although there were differences between the situations facing these minority groups in Britain and America, there were also similarities. In Britain, as in the United States, the issue really only focused on those of African origin for the same arguments did not apply to immigrants from Asia for they had not experienced the same dispersal and although they had been colonised they did not have the same history of slavery and it was not until they came to Britain that they were to experience widespread colour discrimination.

In both America and Britain there were Jews who were conscious of a link with African ex-slaves, through a shared experience of slavery and persecution. A central theme of both the Pan-African and the Zionist movements was the return of uprooted people to their historic homelands. Both groups had suffered discrimination. In Britain both Jews and Afro-Caribbeans had the shared experience of the immigrant. This was less applicable to African Americans, although many of the Southern blacks who trekked north during the 1940s and 1950s experienced a similar sense of insecurity. The immigrant experience also often led to close contact between the two minorities, both in the northern cities of the United States and in the industrial cities of Britain. Both groups also faced the dilemma of how far integration within the majority population could be achieved and at what price. They were both marked with a sense of separateness. There were, however, Jews in Britain during the late 1950s and the 1960s who felt that the problems that faced the new immigrants were of no greater or lesser concern of theirs than any other Britons. Indeed concerns were also raised that by identifying with the cause of equality for blacks, Jews might find themselves once more a target of racists. As the 'race riots' in 1958 brought the issue to forefront of public concern, such Jewish concerns were expressed.

ii. 1958 Race Riots

Evidence of Jewish fears were expressed in a report on the 1958 race disturbances in London and Nottingham, in the *Jewish Chronicle*.⁷ One report on these events demonstrated an increase in fascist activity but described relations between 'coloured' people and Jews in the particular areas as cordial.⁸ This piece, however, continued to report on a discussion that had been held in St. John's Wood Synagogue at which one speaker was reported as having stated that "Jews were not called upon as a body to exercise any particular endeavours on behalf of the coloured people, although all Jews should endeavour to show as much tolerance as they

could towards coloured people."⁹ An account later that month reported that the Board of Deputies had condemned the riots with a "Feeling of abhorrence" and that the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen (AJEX) had stated that, "racial ideas were being exploited by fascists and other hatemongers whose ideas carried to logical extremes lead to gas chambers and crematoria"¹⁰ The fact that anti-immigrant sentiments raised fears about fascism amongst the Jewish community is hardly surprising given that much of the surrounding propaganda was perpetrated by fascist groups like Mosley's and that it was only thirteen years since the end of the war.

A report in the *Church Times*, the primary Church of England newspaper, also had no doubt that the riots were racially motivated and quoted the Bishop of Chester who stated that the riots were a "vicious cancer in their midst" and that "the bitterness of Notting Hill Gate and Nottingham was no less than the bitterness of Little Rock and Sophiatown" and "was due to the fears which arise when men fail to understand what is meant by brotherhood of man" He then went on to argue, much as some Jews did, that the situation should be seen as a special challenge.¹¹ Underlining this message that racism was the same whether it was experienced in South Africa or in America, Rev. Trevor Huddleston recommended the book, he was reviewing, to every Christian. The book was entitled *Bigger Than Little Rock* and its author was the Bishop of Arkansas.¹² In this piece, Huddleston argued that, whilst reading this book, readers should bear in mind that they are also reading about Notting Hill Gate and Nottingham and that they should be prepared to be uncomfortable. It should be noted, however, that Huddleston was probably more conscious of racial issues than other members of the clergy through his many years of work in Africa and held unusually liberal views.¹³

In contrast to the tone taken by the Church of England paper, the *Catholic Herald*¹⁴ carried a report on the riots which implied that the fault lay at the door of the immigrants but went on to argue that the majority of them were not the cause of the trouble but that there was a tiny minority who through noise and vice gave rise to disturbances. A priest from Bayswater was quoted as saying that "Whites in the area are not anti-coloured, just anti this troublesome minority." thereby denying the existence of racism.¹⁵ In this report there is no connection made with the situation in the United States but the correspondence pages reveal that the link had not escaped everyone. This reference to America is in the form of a letter from a group of individuals from London suggesting that a body should be launched in Britain which would serve the same purpose as the NAACP.¹⁶

The records of the Race Relations Committee of the Society of Friends reveal that they also questioned whether the cause of the riots was simply the action of young white trouble-makers who targeted new immigrants as easy prey rather than racist in origin. It was recorded that the situation needed careful monitoring and recommended liaison with the recently set up Racial Integration Co-ordinating Committee launched by the Mayor of Kensington.¹⁷ Within a few months of this initial reaction, however, there is evidence of the traditional Quaker

response which is one of action, a plan to set up work camps in Sheffield and Nottingham to assist immigrants with housing problems was recorded;¹⁸ an invitation to become associated with the recently independent Institute of Race Relations was accepted and initiatives launched in Notting Hill Gate. These initiatives included a co-operative housing scheme, a community centre, a good-will week and an investigation into unfair practices by landlords in the area.¹⁹ Like the Society of Friends, the Council of Christians and Jews also made the move to become associated with the Mayor of Kensington's Race Relations Committee. They further expressed concern at the activities of the White Defence League²⁰ which relates to their initial aim of improving relations between Christians and Jews and guarding against the threat of fascism.

iii. 1962 Immigration Control

Although, the majority of religious leaders expressed their disapproval of the violence of 1958, the response to the issue of immigration control was varied. The Catholic press took a rather conservative tone in an article in *The Tablet* which argued that it was unfair that citizens of Britain could not settle in other parts of the Commonwealth but that there were no restrictions on Commonwealth citizens coming to Britain²¹ and, in a later piece, stated that it could not be considered 'illiberal' to be concerned with preserving national character.²² *The Jewish Chronicle* carried an editorial which condemned the passing of the Commonwealth Immigrant Act in 1962 on the grounds of discrimination²³ and the World Jewish Council discussed the issue and passed a resolution deploring the Bill though there were dissenters who argued that it "was not a Jewish issue" and that "Jews had enough problems".²⁴ The Board of Deputies, however, discussed it and decided not to oppose it officially. This response was mirrored by that of the Council of Christians and Jews when they discussed the issue in December, 1961. According to the Minutes of the Executive Council it was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Prime Minister and to the Home Secretary expressing the views of the Committee but it then appears that on further discussion it was decided that, as the issue was very complex, it might be wiser not to enter this political field but to place the feelings of the Committee on record and continue working towards "sound relations, on the basis of mutual understanding and good will".²⁵

Despite this rather cautious response, the Committee did put on record its appreciation of the speech by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey which took a stronger line. Michael Ramsey, who had only taken on the role of Archbishop of Canterbury in 1961, stated in this speech that it would be 'lamentable' if this issue was to become a party political one. He also expressed the hope that the Bill would be short-lived and "serve to arouse the conscience of the country to a new determination to attack the conditions which have led to this reversal of one of our country's great traditions" and commended the work of some Christian

congregations which had set themselves vigorously to assist with integration but stated that many others were "woefully behind".²⁶

These sentiments were in accordance with the World Council of Churches' statement which urged "all Christians to encourage and support efforts which seek through a non-violent way to combat human indignities and to construct a community permeated by justice and reconciliation and ...to seek to ensure that immigration laws are not based on race discrimination."²⁷ This message, however, seemingly, did not reach all, for, in a *Church Times* report, the Bishop of Edmondsbury and Ipswich was reported as stating that he was in favour of the Government plan to limit immigration because the open door policy would 'inevitably lead to disease and moral degradation and to squalor and misery due to limited space.'²⁸ In this, and other instances, it would seem that mixed messages were passed down to congregations. The presence of Afro-Caribbeans in British churches was a new situation and, as with the population itself, there was uncertainty as to how to respond.

There is little evidence, at this stage, that any of the denominations saw a connection between the development of racialised relations in Britain with that in the United States, with the exception of the Society of Friends. In 1961, the Quakers' Race Relations Committee rejected the Commonwealth Immigrant Bill as discriminatory and also set in motion two new initiatives. The first involved a project in Brixton which was designed to assist black school leavers with the problems they might face and was based on the example of the work of Friends in Harlem. Then, building on this, in 1962, a plan was prepared to open a hostel and start a community scheme which would offer advice on apprenticeships and hold information regarding local accommodation.

iv. 1963 to 1967- The Middle Years

Through the middle years of the 1960s the Society of Friends continued to take an active interest in the issue of racial harmony in Britain and developed an increasing interest in the situation in America. The Minutes of the Race Relations Committee reflect this by recording various transatlantic visits, both by British members visiting the States and then reporting back to the Committee, and by visiting Americans being invited to address the Committee. In 1965, a British couple, the Radleys, reported to the Committee on their six week tour of the Southern States²⁹ and in 1966 John and June Yungblut, Directors of the Quaker House in Atlanta visited the Committee and reported on the desegregation work they had been involved in since 1959.³⁰ The Committee also received a visit by Hugh Mitchell, an American, in 1966, who described his work in New York which concentrated on organising educational programmes.³¹ The following year, 1967, Hugh Mitchell again addressed the Committee and the Minutes record that he stated that "Valid comparisons could be made between the U.S. and Britain if the situation is left to deteriorate."³²

During this period plans were also set in motion to utilise American experience in such instances as the decision to purchase an interracial project for children produced in the United States,³³ the decision to enlist the help of Judy Finch, an English Quaker volunteer, who was working at a project in Harlem, on her return³⁴ and the decision to invite a Civil Rights leader to undertake a speaking tour of Britain. The chosen leader was Julian Bond and he visited Britain in December, 1965 and addressed fifty meetings. An interview with Bond in *The Guardian*, according to the Committee Minutes, "showed that [he] had an influence far beyond the meetings themselves"³⁵ in that these meetings were public and attracted wider audiences than just local Friends; thus his ideas were more widely disseminated. The Society of Friends affiliated with CARD from its start. This is not surprising as Marion Glean, who was a founder member of this organisation, was also a Quaker and had addressed the Committee even before CARD was launched. The Committee was also anxious to make contact with other groups in Britain that were working towards racial harmony, such as the Willesden Friendship Council who invited Paul Stephenson, (who had organised the Bristol bus boycott) to speak after his NAACP funded American tour.³⁶

Prior to this, in 1963, the Committee had already made contact with the Islington Friendship Council with a view to setting up a project in the area.³⁷ It is interesting to note that the Minute referring to this initiative concludes with a quotation from Martin Luther King in which he argued that although addressing a problem could create tension, if handled rightly, it could be 'creative tension'. King's non-violent approach was one which met with universal approval amongst Quakers with their long history of pacifism. There is evidence that, at least one member of the Race Relations Committee, Kenneth Lee, was in correspondence with King. In late 1964 Lee wrote to Ramsey with reference to arrangements for King to meet British church leaders whilst he was visiting England.³⁸

These connections, however, with the racial situation in America are not demonstrated amongst the records of the other Christian denominations in Britain despite the fact that the World Council of Churches was clearly aware of the internationalisation of 'race' as demonstrated by its Statement in 1963. With reference to the United States this Statement argued that,

The movement in the United States has now become a tide which cannot be turned back. Nor is it any longer a purely internal issue. It is rather an integral part of world-wide racial tension and as such has become a matter of deep concern for Christians everywhere...We must remind ourselves that the references to South Africa and the United States present a challenge to our consciences to do in our countries, cities and churches, all that we should for racial justice and Christian fellowship.³⁹

It thereby instructed all Christian churches to work towards racial equality in their own countries. In December 1964, when Martin Luther King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and was to be in London for a few days an invitation was issued to King to visit Archbishop

Ramsey. According to the records it would seem that the meeting was not possible to arrange but it is a demonstration of a growing interest in the work of the Civil Rights Movement.⁴⁰

The following year, however, there was evidence, at least through the pages of the *Church Times*, of a growing awareness. There were five reports on racial tensions which drew parallels between the situation in Britain and that in the United States, and following the Watts riots, further evidence of increased interest through the correspondence pages. These letters took widely differing stances, from one which advocated not simply an end to immigration, but repatriation, arguing, that "only through this can we avoid developing the situation here that obtains in the US."⁴¹ This letter was in response to a communication from a vicar in Nottingham who, advocating legislation to outlaw racial discrimination, had stated that, "This is not a time for waiting...Los Angeles shows us what happens if you wait and do nothing".⁴² These two letters, setting out the two main opposing views, were then followed by others arguing for one side or the other which continued over the next few weeks. Archbishop Ramsey, however, clearly took an interest in racialised relations in Britain even though there is little evidence that he considered parallels with America as valid. This is demonstrated by his acceptance of the role of Chairman of the newly formed National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NCCI) in September, 1965 and his criticism on the White Paper which he stated had created "a grave and ominous situation".⁴³

It would appear that the Catholic church took no particular interest in racialised relations in Britain nor in the increasingly tense situation in the United States. In 1963 Pope John XXIII died and was succeeded by Paul VI and this event took up much of the Catholic press reports. During this time the Catholic Church was subject to a slight wind of liberalism through the Second Vatican Council which took a more open attitude to other denominations and denounced discrimination, stating, "The church rejects, as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination against men or harassment of them because of their race, colour, condition of life or religion." As a result of this, Cardinal Heenan agreed to accept the position of joint Chairman, with Archbishop Ramsey, of the Council of Christians and Jews.⁴⁴ The Vatican had ruled that Catholics should dissociate themselves from this body in 1954 and consequently this step on the part of Cardinal Heenan marked the end of a ten year rift. There are few reports on the American struggle in the Catholic press but in December 1964 the *Catholic Herald* carried a piece on the sermon of Martin Luther King at St. Paul's. This article also referred to the Lambeth Inter-Racial Council which included Anglicans, Methodists and members of AJEX. The *Herald* reported that when three local Catholic priests had been invited to join there had been no response. When the reporter interviewed these three clergymen, two stated that they did not want to be involved and a third denied any knowledge. The report then made a plea for greater concern and involvement from the Catholic church.⁴⁵ Although it is not specifically stated, the fact that the two items were linked together in one article demonstrates that a connection had been made.

In contrast to this limited interest, the *Jewish Chronicle* carried an increasing number of reports on the Civil Rights Movement and the rise of Black Power. It has been stated that the *Jewish Chronicle* generally restricted its coverage to items that were of interest to the Jewish community but as the events in the United States had a particular impact on the American Jewish community this was reflected in reports in Britain. The question was raised in British Jewish reports as to why there was little Jewish interest in black/white racial relations in Britain and whether there should be more. The arguments against greater involvement were: that the issue was of no more significance to a Jew than to any other member of the British population; that it was a British political issue and should be left to the politicians; that to become involved was to risk being linked with another minority when it would be more beneficial to the Jewish community to, rather, strengthen links with the majority; that anti-racist activity would attract the attention of racist organisations and risk an increase in anti-Semitism and, finally, that blacks and Asians would not welcome such participation and that there was, furthermore, evidence of anti-Semitism amongst blacks.

Indeed, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported on evidence of black anti-Semitism in the United States⁴⁶ and damage to Jewish property during riots⁴⁷ as well as reports on the Jewish involvement in the Civil Rights Movement. The paper, generally, favoured Jewish support for the struggle for equality and argued that this referred to Britain as well as to the United States. Under the directorship of William Frankel from 1958 the *Jewish Chronicle* was subject to a degree of modernisation. According to David Cesarani, in his history of the *Jewish Chronicle*, Frankel gave the paper a

distinctly liberal inflection, particularly in its comments on race and immigration issues. He was impressed by the courage of American friends, rabbis, who participated in the Freedom Marches in the southern states of the USA. The paper commended the activities of the civil rights movement in America, consistently criticised apartheid in South Africa and lent its support to liberal voices in the Jewish community there. Editorials frequently pointed to the links between anti-Semitism and anti-black racism, condemned racial violence in British cities and the colour bar, and praised legislation on race relations.⁴⁸

The arguments for a stronger response from the Jewish community were that, with their history of persecution and discrimination, Jews should be in the forefront of any struggle to counter these ills, and furthermore, that fighting racial inequality could only benefit the Jewish community as well. As a leader in the *Jewish Chronicle* stated, "the racist doesn't discriminate between minorities, KKK doesn't distinguish Jew from Negro...Jewish teaching and experience should predispose the Jew to counter injustice wherever he sees it, for if Jewish history has a meaning and Jewish survival a purpose it is surely, this, that the Jew must act as the conscience of mankind."⁴⁹ The reference to the Ku Klux Klan in this report was particularly relevant because of the wave of KKK activity in Britain during that year. In fact in racist nationalist circles, Jews were often regarded as responsible for the arrival of Black immigrants from the

Caribbean and Africa. In a similar way Jews in the United States were often accused by neo-fascists of stirring up African Americans.

In contrast to this, the Board of Deputies initiated no activity although they did welcome the Race Relations Act but also pressed for the inclusion that would have covered Jews, that is, a reference to 'creed or religion' perhaps giving the impression that their welcome was on the part of Jews rather than the 'coloured' immigrants the legislation was designed to assist. The message from the Board appeared to be that, if any initiatives were taken, they should be from individuals rather than from the Board and through existing organisations rather than specifically Jewish bodies. Many Jews, however, did take an active role in fighting for racial equality but it was on a personal level. There were many Jewish Labour Members of Parliament during this period, such as Barnett Janner, Sydney Silverman, Paul Rose, Maurice Orbach and Reg Freeson and they gave support to both the 1965 and the 1968 Race Relations Acts. Jewish lawyers like Lord Anthony Lester, who was also a leading figure in CARD, and Geoffrey Bindman, who became Legal Adviser to the Race Relations Board in 1968, helped draw up the legislation and Aubrey Rose was particularly active defending immigrants' claims against discrimination. E.J.B. Rose held the position of Director of the wide-reaching *Survey of Race Relations* and was a member of the Institute of Race Relations. Maurice Ludmer, who was a member of AJEX, was also very active. He was a founder member of the Co-ordinating Committee against Racial Discrimination (CCARD)⁵⁰ and involved with the production of the *Searchlight* journal which was dedicated to the opposition of fascism and racialism and was edited for a time by Reg Freeson, M.P.

Despite this list of Jews who stood up for racial equality, activity amongst Jews was low key in comparison to those in the United States. In 1963, half of the white marchers who joined Martin Luther King's march on Washington were Jewish and much of King's financial support came from Jews. Edie Friedman, an American Jew who settled in Britain in the early 1970s and founded the Jewish Council for Racial Equality, recalled that there was a "dearth of Jewish communal responses to social issues - so radically different from my American experience."⁵¹ Although it should be remembered that British Jews were financially weaker and much smaller in number and that American Jews enjoyed a greater sense of security and political muscle than those in Britain.

v. 1967 to 1968 Rising Tensions

The last two years of the period under review, 1967 and 1968, were years in which it would have been difficult to ignore the issue of racialised relations either in Britain or in the United States. America was torn by further riots, the demand for Black Power was increasingly heard and Martin Luther King was assassinated. In Britain, the PEP Report highlighted the extent of discrimination in Britain, there were prosecutions under the Race Relations Act, and the

hurried passage of the 1968 Commonwealth Immigration Bill and the speeches of Enoch Powell both raised awareness.

In September of 1967 the Archbishop of York, Dr. Coggan, stated that "it was hard to see why the race riots that have disfigured the U.S. could not happen here." and went on to argue that the same factors operated in Britain and concluded by stating that, "The happenings in the States should be a salutary warning to us, who, have a share, however small, in the responsibility for housing or welfare of the not inconsiderable proportion of our population that is non-white."⁵² In November of the same year the Church Assembly also discussed a report entitled "Race Relations in Britain" which had been produced by the Board for Social Responsibility. The reports in the *Church Times* emphasised connections with the situation in America, stating that "Warnings that Britain may face troubles similar to those experienced in the U.S. were heard in Assembly."⁵³ This report also argued that it was time to abandon the Church's present laissez-faire attitude. This attitude was reflected throughout as the leadership of all the major Christian denominations and the Jewish community began to be put under pressure to speak out. As the issue of British racialised relations took on a high profile so the religious bodies were obliged to make their positions clearer. 1968 saw the publication of an ecumenical work on race, a Statement on Race Relations by the Society of Friends and a report based on the findings of a Working Party, set up by the Board of Deputies.

Criticism of the role of religious bodies was being heard in various quarters. Articles in the *Jewish Chronicle* urged stronger leadership from the Board of Deputies and accused the Board's Defence Committee of being 'rusty and antiquated'.⁵⁴ In 1966, the National Council for Catholic Youth Clubs produced a report which was critical of the inactivity of the church on this issue.⁵⁵ The Report of the Youth Service Development Council, which published its findings in 1967, raised fears about the future creation of a large number of unemployed and alienated young blacks and Asians which led to press reports prophesying race riots on an American scale. This report referred to:

churches which collect large sums to support missionaries overseas yet the members are not as active as they might be in offering personal friendship to coloured residents in the neighbourhood. This seems to be a curious kind of specialisation. Perhaps local churches should address themselves specifically to this opportunity for Christian fellowship and ask what specific gestures of friendship are demanded by their faith.⁵⁶

The Catholic press took differing lines on the issues of the Commonwealth Immigrants Bill and the extension to the Race Relations Act in 1968. The *Catholic Herald* reported on the appointment by the Catholic Institute for International Relations of a Fr. Donnelly, to initiate education programmes⁵⁷ who was later reported as urging the pro-Powell marchers to stop their march.⁵⁸ A letter from a Wolverhampton lecturer complained that the "attitude of the Church is very disturbing"⁵⁹ and Humphrey Berkeley M.P. stated that he "would like the Catholic hierarchy to take as uncompromising a stand as Ramsey. It would be nice to hear

Cardinal Heenan make a statement to this effect."⁶⁰ Cardinal Heenan did, in fact, issue a pastoral letter on the issue of the treatment of immigrants soon after and also commented on the Commonwealth Immigrant Bill in the form of a letter to *The Times*, in which he argued that the Government, although having every right to limit immigration, was abandoning an honourable undertaking in this instance and that this was unacceptable.⁶¹ *The Tablet*, however, appeared to be less critical, arguing that "Unless and until we assimilate the immigrants already among us we are in no state of health as a community to accept any more" and on the Race Relations Bill stating that "Racial barriers cannot be removed by the simple statement that they are unChristian or inhuman." and that "such hot-gossiping gets us nowhere".⁶² The ideas in this report, reflecting attitudes which other denominations were beginning to see as outdated, are in contrast, however, to the contributions by Catholics in the symposium which was published as an ecumenical statement on race and the sentiments expressed in the Foreword were supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Heenan and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council.

In the introduction David Mathews, Director of Catholic Overseas Appointment, was critical of those who argued that, "All will be well in time, if people were left alone and given a chance to settle down. The speakers do not see that their attitudes are seriously at fault; that they have to rethink all their old assumptions in the light of the new multi-racial situation....Such apathy does much to increase racial bitterness. People are evidently able to deplore prejudice without perceiving that they are one of its causes."⁶³ This symposium also contained three contributions from un-named immigrants, from India, Africa and Jamaica. All three are critical of the leadership of the churches. The piece from a Catholic Indian argued that it was difficult to distinguish a Christian from a non-Christian by their behaviour and that the churches have been "far too content to follow public opinion rather than trying to change it. The Catholic church is no exception..and up to date has done less than other Christian churches."⁶⁴ This view of the inactivity of the British Christian denominations was confirmed by the contribution from the Jamaican Anglican who stated that the reception that many receive is "not unlike a cold and bleak February day" and that "too often the Church reflects rather than formulates opinion".⁶⁵ The inclusion of these three contributions in the symposium demonstrates that, at least, some members of the Christian churches were beginning to recognise that the problem of racism was perhaps a white rather than a black problem and that there was an argument for seeking the opinion of those most affected. These contributions themselves, however, demonstrate the failure of the church to take any sort of leadership on this issue, despite their well-sounding pronouncements.

Although, the Christian Symposium did display increased concern and an attempt to improve understanding, amongst their congregations, there is little overt evidence that the situation in the United States was a factor in this progression. We do know, however, that concerns that Britain might be following in the footsteps of America, towards racial violence,

existed from the Church Assembly debate the previous year. The publication by the Jewish community in the same year, however, drew quite openly on the American situation. This was in the form of a report based on the conclusions of a Working Party set up by the Board of Deputies to look into the issue of racialised relations in Britain. The introduction by Sir Samuel Fisher, quoted Bayard Rustin who was described as "an outstanding Negro leader" who stated, "I urge Jews.. to remember ...that the problem is man's inhumanity to man and must be fought from that basic principle regardless of race or creed."⁶⁶ In a later section, however, the report stated that,

The Working Party considered very carefully and frankly the unfortunate fact that a small number of coloured people in the UK. have been indoctrinated with antisemitism. This problem should not be confused with an entirely different situation in the U.S.A. Although these antisemitic manifestations and occasional anti-Israel attitudes by coloured people have partially prevented some Jews in this country from an active commitment to the cause of coloured people's rights, it is essential that this should not deter the Jewish community from fighting discrimination and prejudice whatever its source and whoever its victims.⁶⁷

It is interesting that, although the report stated that the situation in the United States was quite different from that in Britain, it did not describe in what ways they differed but admitted that this may have been a factor, amongst the Jewish community, in creating concerns about taking an interest in working towards better racial relations. These concerns reflected pronouncements by advocates of Black Power, such as Stokely Carmichael in the United States, which had been mirrored by some radical black leaders in Britain.⁶⁸ The Board of Deputies Report was important because it was the first time an initiative had been taken which concentrated on an aspect of racialised relations which did not relate directly to Jewish affairs. The findings of the Working Party, however, showed that the level of interest amongst the Jewish community was low; the response to a questionnaire was poor, only 5% were returned, and it would seem that even if the Report raised awareness, its impact was very limited.⁶⁹

The fears expressed in the Board of Deputies Working Party Report about the growth in support for Black Power and rejection of white support are echoed in the Minutes of the Society of Friends Race Relations Committee. Concern about possible black racism, however, had already been noted by the Committee as early as 1965 when a delegation had been sent to Preston to investigate the strike at Courtaulds at which delegates from RAAS had also been active. The Quaker delegates were critical of the intervention by RAAS and were recorded as stating that, when a peaceful settlement had been reached, they felt that their own "course of action had frustrated the efforts of those who sought to use the men as mere pawns in their own chess game". They also expressed concern at talk of organising a black union.⁷⁰

In 1967, Dudley Barlow reported to the Committee on his recent visit to the United States and stated that an African American Friend had told him that many 'blacks' believed that

Christianity was used by whites to further their aims.⁷¹ Early the following year Walter Birmingham, the ex-Secretary of the Committee also reported on a recent visit and reported that Black Power advocates spurned white contact.⁷² It was becoming clear to the Committee that, according to Mariyan Harris who had carried out a survey, there was also evidence in Britain of feelings hardening on both sides, a danger of the formation of segregated communities and distrust for the voluntary liaison committees.⁷³ The Committee, however, continued to value the input of American experience which was demonstrated by their employment of Anne Power, a recently returned British Quaker volunteer who had been working in Chicago, to run an adventure playgroup in the Islington project⁷⁴ and Jim Kirby, a visiting American Friend, to undertake an housing survey in Ipswich.⁷⁵

Just as 1968, the year of crisis, was the one in which other religious bodies made their position clear, it was the year in which the Quakers issued a statement. This reflected the sentiments in the others, stressing that all are members of the human race and equally worthy but goes further with regard to inter-racial relations, when it stated, "For our part, we are glad to welcome them as neighbours in our streets, as colleagues in our work, as friends in our homes and as relatives by marriage in just the same way as those who are already a part of the community." There was some dispute as to the use of the word 'are' which some argued should be substituted by the word 'should' on the grounds of honesty but in the event it was allowed to stand.⁷⁶ The issue of inter-racial marriage had not been faced by the other denominations but in this the Quakers had answered this difficult question with a firm 'yes'.

On the basis of this statement it would appear that the Society of Friends took a more uncompromising stand on racial equality than the other denominations although by 1968 it was clear where all the churches stood on this issue. There are at least four reasons for this: firstly, they had a strong traditional interest in racial equality through their work for abolition; secondly, theirs was a smaller organisation, in which the themes of democracy and action were well developed, which meant that, not only was communication between the different members more immediate and direct, but that involvement was encouraged; thirdly, they did not suffer the sense of insecurity or fear of fascism that to some extent limited Jewish involvement and finally, their strong links with the United States meant that there existed a direct flow of information regarding the situation there and that lessons and examples could be used which put the Quakers at the forefront of the struggle for racial equality in Britain amongst the religious denominations.

Although it would seem apparent that the response to coloured immigration on the part of the major Christian denominations was a case of too little, too late, the death of Martin Luther King became a focus for action on the part of some leaders. One of these who had been particularly inspired by King's message was John Collins, Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral and the founder of Christian Action and a leader of CND. Canon Collins had been in touch with King and had arranged for him to preach at St. Paul's in 1964. On King's death he encouraged

the setting up of the Martin Luther King Memorial Fund. Other key figures in this organisation were the Rt. Rev. David Sheppard, Bishop of Liverpool and Bishop (then Rev.) Wilfred Wood of Croydon. The primary aim of the Martin Luther King Memorial Fund was "to build here in Britain a genuinely non-racial and integrated society: to ensure justice and equality of opportunity for all and the preservation of cultural diversity in an atmosphere of racial justice."⁷⁷

The main focus of the activity of this body was addressing the problems of young people. In order to do this an employment agency was set up to assist them in getting work or apprenticeships. Wilfred Wood was very conscious of the problems facing second generation Afro-Caribbeans and Asians when they left school and faced the discrimination of the work place. He could see that black/white friendships made at school did not survive the tensions created when whites moved into employment and blacks and Asians into the dole queue.⁷⁸ A further concern of this body was the damaging racism amongst the police and Wilfred Wood, as an immigrant himself and even a victim of this racism on occasion, was aware of the alienation that this created in the mind of the young black who no longer had the option of another homeland.

vi. Pentecostalism

Alienation from British society, even within first generation immigrants, was one of the main reasons for the growth in Pentecostal congregations. In his book, *God's People*, however, which was a survey carried out in 1964 on behalf of the Institute of Race Relations, M. Calley argued that even without the experience of discrimination these sects would have been imported from the Caribbean, mainly from Jamaica, as they were already established there. In 1964 Calley found that the largest black Pentecostal sect had a total of 23 congregations in Britain but two years later a survey carried out by Clifford Hill recorded a total of 61 such congregations with a combined membership of 10,500.⁷⁹ As stated, one of the factors in this development was a sense of alienation from British society. Many of the goals set by this society were felt to be unobtainable and there was, therefore, comfort in the rejection of them and of traditional churches, a symbol of white domination, and in a belief that they would be judged by a higher authority. Membership of such a body also brought an opportunity of participation in a social life. This particular benefit mainly applied in the early days of immigration when the majority of migrants from the West Indies came as individuals leaving families behind and reflected the intention on the part of most of them that their stay would be temporary and therefore not worth the anxiety of attempting to become accepted in a local white church.

Although some white clergymen were critical of the spread of black Pentecostalism and the development of segregated congregations and viewed them as American imports, it would

seem that initial links with similar congregations in the United States were minimal although many of the sects had originally developed there. Calley wrote that a few had affiliated with bodies in the United States and that as they developed probably more would do so,⁸⁰ such affiliations bringing greater authority and possibly even funding. Although the spread of black Pentecostalism was seen as a rejection of British society it could not be viewed as a rejection of Christianity. For this one needs to look at Rastafarianism which in the late 1960s was attracting second generation blacks. This was a wholly Caribbean import, with slight input from Garveyism, and owed almost nothing to America yet it was fed by the message of black pride emanating from there and from Africa.

vii. Conclusion

The success of Pentecostal sects and the spread of Rastafarianism amongst second generation Afro-Caribbeans underlines the failure of the traditional churches to hold the allegiance of those immigrants who were already established Christians before their immigration. This failure, however, needs to be seen in the context of the whole situation which was developing even as the churches attempted to adapt. Few anticipated the strong feelings that would develop over the issue of immigration and the development of a multi-cultural society. Added to this the areas into which most of the immigrants moved were already areas of high social deprivation in which the local churches were often poorly supported, both financially and in terms of congregation. In *Colour and Citizenship*, Rose was critical of the role of the Churches, particularly the leadership, pointing out that the impact of even the most motivated single clergyman in a particular area would be limited without the support of his higher authorities. This being particularly true when dealing with such matters as use of buildings and intake in denominational schools.⁸¹

It would seem that the impact of the situation in America was limited as far as the response of the major Christian Churches in Britain is concerned. Only by the late 1960s, did an increasing awareness develop which went hand in hand with a recognition that a laissez-faire approach was not going to be sufficient. There is evidence that there were individuals who for reasons based on their religious faith became interested in the problems facing non-white immigrants and were active in attempting to alleviate them but would have probably acted in this way regardless of the situation in the U.S. The exception to this is the Society of Friends where the American experience was clearly examined and which gave them examples from which to draw initiatives and which led them to be, as a body, the most constructive. This is in contrast to the response of the Jewish community, which was also very much aware of the experience of Jews in America and their involvement with the Civil Rights Movement but in Britain responded in a rather more cautious way. There are many examples of individuals who were active on the part of non-white immigrants on a personal level but the general attitude of

the leadership demonstrated a certain insecurity in this post-war situation. In order to be more effective many of these personally motivated individuals joined secular bodies and the next chapter examines the activities of liberal secular organisations.

Chapter 7 White liberal secular groups

i. Introduction

Many of the secular groups that developed during the late 1950s and the 1960s also attracted individuals who already had connections with religious bodies but saw these secular organisations as a further opportunity to assist in the integration of Afro-Caribbean and Asian immigrants. Examples of this can be seen in the membership of the Council of Citizens of Tower Hamlets, which included W.W. Birmingham, who was also a member of the Society of Friends Race Relations Committee, and Rev W. Simpson, who was the Secretary of the Council of Christians and Jews, and in the Sparkbrook Association whose Chairman was Rev. Jack Reed.

These groups varied considerably in their effectiveness; in some cases their main purpose was social and in others it tended to be more practical, such as the provision of English language classes, but their broad aim was to promote peaceful integration. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, as stated, the Government's attitude was *laissez-faire* and to a large extent relied on the voluntary nature of these groups. It was only under the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NCCI), created under the 1965 White Paper, that an attempt at co-ordination was conceived, at which time those that were deemed to meet the criteria set by the White Paper were given the title Voluntary Liaison Committees.¹ Prior to that date, however, groups arose through a variety of sponsors, some being set up by the local council social services or other local bodies or groups of individuals. The degree to which the local black or Asian immigrants joined also varied.

ii. Race Riots and Voluntary Liaison Committees

The events of 1958 led to a growth in such groups and, despite the fact that the violence had been initiated by whites, the general sense was that the problem was the presence of non-whites. Thus, the argument was that there was nothing basically wrong with British society and all that was required was that the hand of friendship should be offered, together with practical assistance to these new immigrants on how best they might adapt to British society. It reflected the general consensus that all would be well given a little toleration, on the part of the host, and time for the new immigrants to settle in. Wallace Collins, a Jamaican carpenter described, in a telling way, the experience of some of these bodies, in which "the middle-class elite, MPs, reverends and idealists...unblinkingly faced the robustness of the migrants, and with their beautiful English manners politely observed the invisible gulf which existed between themselves and their dark brothers; that bridge which could be crossed only by the new West Indian quasi-elite, who inserted himself in the middle, in a kind of no-man's-land."²

A further handicap to the effectiveness of these groups was the limited commitment of the local authorities which, in most cases, were reluctant to become involved, given the sensitive nature of this issue for someone who relied on election. The result of this was a lack of funds and resources. The creation of the NCCI, which apart from its co-ordination role, was authorised to allocate funds to these bodies, changed this situation. However, the White Paper, under which the NCCI was created, was associated in the minds of many West Indian and Asian immigrants with the stringent discriminatory immigration controls which marked the end of faith in the Labour Party's intention to represent them. This disillusionment had a negative effect on support for official initiatives, such as the Voluntary Liaison Committees. By then, as Sivanandan put it, "To ordinary blacks these structures were irrelevant: liaison and conciliation seemed to define them as a people apart, who somehow needed to be fitted into the mainstream of British society - when all they were seeking was the same rights as other citizens."³

From their conception the Voluntary Liaison Committees faced tensions which were built in through their defined functions which were to advise whilst also promoting community development. As Deakin described it, "From the start there was tension between these two roles. The function of liaison demanded the holding of a very delicate balance at local level between the local authority and the members of the local immigrant community in order that mutually accepted policies could be evolved. But, simultaneously, the committee had to discharge the function of advice-giving in such a way as to command the Government's attention without jeopardizing its conciliatory posture in local situations".⁴ The tensions that existed between control by the local communities and that exerted by officials is reminiscent of those which developed between neighbourhood groups and local officials under the Community Action Programme set up under President Johnson's War on Poverty. Although this programme was designed as an attack on poverty, as demonstrated by Johnson's interest in the poor of the Appalachians, it nevertheless took on racial overtones. Under this initiative, in contrast to the way in which the NCCI and the Voluntary Liaison Committees were organised, there was a greater commitment to involving those most effected, in what was termed "maximum feasible participation". Sar Levitan carried out a survey on the American programme for the Centre for Manpower Policy Studies at George Washington University in 1969. He found that "Within two years of the Economic Opportunity Act's⁵ passage, a Christian Science Monitor survey of 40 major cities across the country [United States] found that 'poor people ...have gained a foothold in running many local antipoverty programs' and that 'there is no denying the fact that in many cases CAA's (Community Action Agencies) gave the poor unprecedented opportunity to plan and participate in programs.'⁶ This success, however, resulted in a backlash in areas where it was perceived by whites that African Americans had taken complete control and, as support for black power grew, radical African

American community leaders argued that only 'brothers' could seek to represent the poor in their community.

By contrast in Britain, immigrants from Asia and the Caribbean were too diverse, small in numbers and in many cases unsure of how committed they were to staying in the UK and this limited the degree to which they were able to influence the Voluntary Liaison Committees. Furthermore, by maintaining too great a hold on control, and through the destructive action of immigration controls, the NCCI barely succeeded in achieving 'minimum feasible participation'. Hill and Issacharoff make the point that the decision to locate the ministerial responsibility at the Home Office drew criticism from immigrant organisations because of the Home Office's preoccupation with immigration control.⁷ Certainly at the time some saw the initiative as simply a Government attempt, as Sivanandan put it, to "divide and rule, in true colonial tradition".⁸ Michael Dummett expressed similar views at an Institute of Race Relations conference in September 1968, when he argued that through the NCCI the government had sought the support of the less militant multiracial organisations and thereby drawn support from "the embryo civil rights movement" and argued that a considerable proportion of the committees could:

now only be described as propagators of a moderate racialism, a great many more are shackled to local authorities determined to treat them as a department of the Council and of the bulk of the rest, the most charitable thing one can say is that they have no conception of what an adequate response to the current racial situation would constitute: further, even if individually effective in their local areas, collectively they have lost all resolution or capacity for initiative.⁹

Some of the more successful Voluntary Liaison Committees were those that were already established before the launch of the NCCI, such as the Sparkbrook Association in Birmingham, the Council of Citizens of Tower Hamlets and the Willesden and Brent Friendship Council. The Sparkbrook Association was started in 1960 and saw its aim as improving conditions for all residents of the area. In this way it did not set out to tackle issues related to immigration. By January 1965 it had a full-time staff of twelve and was already running several local initiatives.¹⁰ Willesden's International Friendship Council was launched in 1959 and was a response to the riots in nearby Notting Hill Gate. It was very critical of the 1965 White Paper and initially refused to join in the activities of the NCCI. The membership of the Executive was approximately half immigrant and half English and was elected annually.¹¹ A key figure in its development was Reg Freeson, one of the new Jewish Members of Parliament, who pressed for anti-discrimination legislation and was also editor of the anti-racist magazine *Searchlight*. Part of its success was its recognition that simply bringing the white and immigrant population together was not enough to forge relationships. They, therefore, looked for activities which would involve the participants in more than an "essay in good race relations" and developed the Jazz Ballet Group which has had

considerable success. The third body, the Council of Citizens of Tower Hamlets, also owed a certain amount for its existence to Jewish involvement for it developed out of a voluntary organisation which began in the 1930s with the aim of countering fascist activity in the area. During the early 1960s, however, it began to recognise that the new immigrants should also be part of its concern.¹² Indeed, where these bodies were successful and had the support of the local population and government, they proved to be an effective counter to the activities of anti-immigrant groups. Even in Southall where John Bean had some electoral success and the Southall Residents' Association propagated racism, the Friendship Council did much to ameliorate their effect. As Paul Foot described, "Every violent letter that gets into the Press is always coolly, reasonably answered".¹³

In other local initiatives at promoting racial harmony, individual examples of prejudice could often make these attempts counter-productive. Pansy Jeffries described, in an interview with the author,¹⁴ her role with the Citizens' Advice Bureau where she was employed after the Notting Hill Gate disturbances to "deal with the special problems encountered by West Indian immigrants". In effect, she recalled, she was simply there to deal with any black face regardless of the issue, thereby relieving the other staff of the responsibility. Thus what was intended to be a move to promote racial harmony, in practice became seen as another act of discrimination. She also described the development of the Notting Hill Social Council, which was a multi-racial initiative designed to counteract the lack of activity on the part of the Council. She was quite clear, however, that this initiative could not be viewed as an example of 'self-help' because the people it was designed to benefit had no input into its creation for they tended to be too busy trying to survive. They were facing the daily demands of making a living and finding accommodation, although naturally they were happy to make use of the housing trust, the after-school playground, the evening surgeries for women and children and the law centre once they were operating.

There is little evidence that the situation in the United States had any relevance to either the development of the Voluntary Liaison Committees or the other initiatives that came from a mixed response by multi-racial groups. They were responses to locally perceived problems although the links, in the press, between the 1958 racial riots in Notting Hill Gate and Nottingham and the disturbances in Little Rock, at the same time, may not have gone unheeded. During the mid 1950s to early 1960s, however, there were major differences between the African American population in the United States and the West Indians and Asians in Britain. The black population in Britain was much smaller in number, it was also diverse and, as groups of Pakistanis, Jamaicans and others gathered, they tended to form their own societies or clubs for welfare and social reasons. Their diversity hindered the formation of combined nation-wide movements and they were also hampered by the very fact of being immigrants and consequently faced practical problems and the insecurity of a new situation.

In the United States, apart from the Native Americans, all citizens of America were from immigrant stock, and this fact gave support to the claim of African Americans for equal treatment. Indeed, many of them could claim a longer American ancestry than many of the whites but the 'melting pot' did not appear to apply to African Americans. In Britain the perception was widely held that the UK was not an immigrant country despite the large numbers of Europeans and Irish that had settled there during this century and before. Earlier immigrants had also included numbers of individuals from further afield and of different colours but during the 1950s it was colour that marked out this new wave of immigration. Despite official statements defending the rights of West Indian and Asian immigrants settled in Britain the effect was invalidated by discussion of immigration control which argued that controls were necessary to avoid social tension. As Kathleen Paul has described,

The general public, hearing that "immigration" needed to be further controlled in order to reduce the associated social problems, would find it difficult to distinguish migrants of colour already resident in the United Kingdom from migrants of colour seeking admission. Rather than the number of years of residence, overt physical characteristics became the markers for opinions on whether or not a particular migrant was part of the problem. Despite kind official words to the contrary, both settled and would-be migrants would likely be regarded as troublesome non-British immigrants.¹⁵

When white liberals sought to assist these immigrants, their attempts could be hampered by the question of colour. They might see themselves as providing support; as people who knew the way the society worked and already had contacts in, at least, some of the agencies of power and influence. The danger lay in this co-operation being perceived as leadership. Even in the United States where whites could contribute, as rank and file members, and where large national organisations already existed, such as NAACP and CORE, by the mid 1960s white support was resented by advocates of black power. Offering assistance to these newly arrived diverse immigrants by whites in Britain was a very delicate task. As John Rex has argued, "In America there had been more than a decade of militant black activity before civil rights programmes were launched. The programmes represent at least a partial victory won by the black people for themselves."¹⁶

It would appear that to some degree there was a gap between the approach of white and non-white anti-racists and the impact of the American struggle was a factor in this. The experiences of Brian Klug demonstrate this effect. He was a student at University College, London, during the late 1960s and joined a local body dedicated to the fight against racial discrimination, ACCORD (Association of Camden Committees Opposed to Racial Discrimination). He also started a branch at the University. He recalled that his motivation was a concern for racial equality and argued that his feeling was that whilst the Commonwealth was the responsibility of the British, the struggle for racial equality in the United States was "their problem" and not relevant to a British context.¹⁷ Despite this, the pervasive

Americanisation of conflict is apparent in the choice of this student group to threaten a 'sit-in' in response to a proposed visit by Enoch Powell.

Klug further recalled walking out of a talk delivered at the Students' Union by members of the American Black Panther Party in 1969. He stated that he was shocked at the hostility directed at the audience of well-meaning white students. He also stated that he was surprised to learn that, at the same time, there were supporters of the Black Panther Movement in Brixton, not far from Camden. He had not experienced such aggression from the non-whites with which he came in contact in Camden. It is possible that these visiting Americans, assuming some complacency on the part of the students, intended to shock. It is also quite likely that Klug would have found Black Panthers in Brixton moderate in comparison to the Americans, albeit more radical than residents of Camden. At the time he felt that the Americans' attitude was far removed from that of non-whites in Britain. The labels, however, made the link and it was this that was picked up by press reports. For the majority of the British public, including most journalists, with even less personal experience with which to judge, British news about non-white radical organisations could be overlaid with an American image.

In Britain in order to maintain the co-operation of the black and Asian communities white support needed to be effective to avoid being seen simply as the conscience of the establishment. It needed to send out an anti-racial message to the general public and to preclude accusations of paternalism. It would seem that it largely failed in this attempt, although this was to some extent due to the action of Government. The NCCI broke up in confusion in response to the Commonwealth Immigration Bill, which barred admittance to the Kenyan Asians in 1968,¹⁸ and it lost the already limited support of members who represented immigrant groups. Arthur McHugh, who had been a conciliation officer of the Race Relations Board until 1972, also found little support for officially sponsored bodies amongst those they were designed to assist. He wrote:

What I found was that black people in this country are insulted day in and day out, in the normal course of social relationships; that they are often cheated of jobs and houses without even being aware of the fact; that racist ideas are being perpetuated in schools by racist educationists; and that there is a special inferior brand of justice for the black citizen. I found widespread disillusion with the bumbling little race relations committees that potter about in the best tradition of colonial paternalism; and an equally widespread conviction among black people that the two statutory bodies lacked both the imagination to grasp their problems, and the power to deal with them.¹⁹

This brings us to another major difference between the situation in the United States and that in Britain which was the attitudes of the white population in general. White Americans were race conscious in a way which was not true of the British. Selma James, the white American wife of C.L.R. James, in an interview with the author, recalled her surprise on her

arrival in Britain at, "how 'white' the British were, "They even danced white".²⁰ She explained that, to her, the British seemed to be untouched by race in contrast to Americans, who, even those who barely saw a black person, knew almost instinctively about it. This did not mean, however, that the white British population were untouched by ideas concerning race. Ideas surrounding Empire, decolonisation and the creation of the Commonwealth, concepts of superiority and paternalism and the insecurity of facing Britain's fading world position, all left blurred and muddled traces on public opinion. Images of the Empire, the savage in the African bush or the exotic image of the Indian as portrayed by Kipling, gave way to more urban settings as the Indian or Caribbean was encountered in the streets of London or Bradford and the instant parallel was to be found in the image of American novels and films, particularly those based around Harlem. Thus, perceptions of West Indians and Asians were, in the early years, distorting imported images. These images, however, were not fixed and were subject to modification, by direct contact, which could lead to friendly relations between neighbours and work mates or negative ones, based on fears over competition for jobs or housing. This, however, (due to the settlement of the immigrants) was mainly true for the working class and less applicable to members of the middle class who were more likely to become involved with voluntary groups.

iii. National Initiatives

Apart from the Voluntary Liaison Committees there were other organisations that offered an opportunity for white leadership but they tended to either have broader aims than racial equality, such as the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL) or Minority Rights Group (MRG), or to address themselves to a single issue, like the Movement for Colonial Freedom (MCF) or Equal Rights. The NCCL collaborated with CCARD,²¹ the IWA-led body based in Birmingham, in the preparation of a petition pressing for anti-racial discrimination legislation, but racialised relations was only one of its concerns. The organisation MRG, which was launched in 1965, addressed itself to issues of minority groups world-wide, based on the argument that the United Nations was too constrained by its membership, who were often the governments that were the perpetrators of infringements of rights, and that Amnesty International tended to focus on individual cases. The membership of this body reads like a 'Who's Who' of, what more radical groups would later refer to, critically, as the 'race relations industry', containing such names as Professor Roland Oliver, an Institute of Race Relations Council member, David Kessler, of the *Jewish Chronicle*, Marion Glean, a Quaker and founder member of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD), Brian Young of the Nuffield Foundation and E.J.B. Rose, also of the Institute of Race Relations (IRR).²² The body, Equal Rights, provides another example of the way in which the same names appeared on various bodies. The aim of this organisation, which was launched in 1967, was to press for

strengthened anti-discrimination legislation and drew in such individuals as Anthony Lester and Dipak Nandy, of CARD and Nicholas Deakin of the IRR.²³ Equal Rights achieved its aim in 1968, with the Race Relations Bill, and was disbanded, whereas, the MCF, which included such sponsors as Fenner Brockway and Tony Benn, was launched to lobby against Commonwealth immigration control and consequently lost most of its impetus when controls were introduced.

As racism took on a higher profile in Britain by 1967 following the Smethwick election campaign, the evidence of KKK activity and the stringent immigration controls brought in under the 1965 White Paper, the Voluntary Liaison Committees came to be seen, by those the Committees were supposed to help, as ineffective; a product of a hangover of philanthropic patronage that saw the issue of potential disharmony as a problem of the 'coloured' immigrant. The one organisation that had set out to be a form of British Civil Rights Movement, CARD, was seen to be in disarray as it was split over the issue of co-operation with any product of the Labour Government. In 1966 the West Indian Standing Conference and the largest Pakistani organisation withdrew and, in 1967, members, using the rhetoric of Black Power, voted out white members of the Executive.²⁴ It was at this point that Anthony Lester and Dipak Nandy helped to form the organisation Equal Rights. Despite this, some local branches of CARD became effective groups within their districts, particularly when they joined with existing immigrant led bodies. An example of this development is seen in the Willesden Friendship Council which developed strong black community support.²⁵ This was the body that Selma James joined when she became disillusioned with CARD, of which she had been a founder member.²⁶

Parallels can be drawn between the demise of CARD and the debate that raged through the Civil Rights Movement in the mid 1960s as it grew from a Southern based campaign for civil rights to a Northern demand for social and economic equality and white participation came into question. Just as African Americans began to recognise that their unequal status was not simply a matter of Southern segregation but part of American society, so British blacks and Asians began to sense that racialism was deeply embedded in British society, through the education and judicial systems, the police, the social services and the Government. As the action of government and the increasing awareness of discrimination in Britain fed the fears of people of colour, white liberals found their willingness to participate in the struggle for equality less warmly received.

iv. The Institute of Race Relations

The demand for greater radicalism and the rejection of white leadership, also faced the Institute of Race Relations. Although the fight over its future came after the period under review in this study, the seeds of this battle were sown during the 1950s and 1960s. The Institute began its

life as part of the Race Relations Board of the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House at the suggestion of H.V.Hodson and under the directorship of Philip Mason. In a speech, in 1952, in which Hodson expressed his concerns, he argued that there were two current issues that were of prime importance, the first being 'race relations' and the second the threat of Communism. He argued that the one compounded the other and stated that, "both problems are of crucial importance for the survival of our civilisation."²⁷ Thus, in its early years, the focus of the Institute was on issues concerned with decolonisation and the threat of Communist influence in the atmosphere of Cold War. Its function was to provide a centre for research and information on the issues of 'race relations' but at this stage there was no consideration that Britain might itself become an area that required the attention of such a centre except in that Britain was the head of the Commonwealth. Hodson saw pre-war imperialism as moribund and was concerned, as Paul Rich has described it, "that the Commonwealth should progressively evolve on a basis that would erode white supremacy, which in Myrdalian terms acted as a minority segregationist opposition to a dominant liberal creed which was then seen to form the basis of the political values behind the Commonwealth."²⁸ The Institute became an independent body in 1958, with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation. This date does not imply any connection with the race riots that broke out that year as this change in status took place in April of that year and the riots occurred in the following late summer.

Built into the Institute, at the outset, were features that were to become the cause of suspicion and, eventually, resistance amongst the staff. These can be loosely described within three sections. They were, firstly, the composition of the Council, secondly, the method of financing the body and thirdly, the issue of 'objectivity'. The development of the Institute can also be seen as mirroring the development in perceptions about racialised relations during this period as the focus shifted from the 'third world', through the United States and finally to Britain. In order to command international respect the Council membership was drawn from the elite, many were peers or knights or had received some form of distinction and had come through the traditional elite channels, often with some colonial background, of public school, Oxbridge, the civil service or the City, picking up company directorships on the way.²⁹ In this way, the influence of the Council was wide, touching not only the power centres within the country but, through commercial interests, many of the major international corporations.

The prestigious nature of the Council was beneficial, not only in creating a symbol of authority, but, in attracting funding. Both the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation were to support the Institute generously and their sponsorship encouraged others to contribute. Funds came from many international companies such as, Barclays Bank, British American Tobacco, Shell-International and Imperial Chemical Industries who recognised that their economic interests required information in the post-colonial situation and that inter-racial strife was harmful to business. Connections with these large business concerns, however, fuelled

suspicion about their motives among the more radical staff at the Institute. In his history of the 'revolution' at the Institute, Chris Mullard, wrote that, "Ford wanted to re-direct IRR attention away from the philosophical and, it should be said, theoretical underpinnings of its liberal approach so that IRR's expertise and energy could now be employed on essential practicalities."³⁰ Sivanandan expressed a similar perception when he argued that "All Ford required of them (IRR scholars) was not their sophisticated tomes - which were too long in coming anyway - but their interim progress reports and the ground they laid in the course of their fieldwork for winning over the native intelligentsia to Western sociology."³¹ During the mid 1960s, as the attention of researchers was drawn away from the issue of 'race relations' in newly independent countries or those that were struggling for independence, towards the situation in the United States and increasingly to issues related to new black and Asian immigrants in Britain, the Institute negotiated a grant from the Nuffield Foundation for a five-year Survey on Race Relations in Britain. This was colloquially referred to as a 'Myrdal for Britain' in the hope that it might throw light on the English scene in the way Gunnar Myrdal's work *The American Dilemma* had illuminated the nature of the American problem.³²

The third feature of the Institute, that contributed to the eventual revolution that shook it in the early 1970s, was its professed commitment to 'objectivity'. Its *Newsletter*, which first appeared in 1960, informed the reader that the Memorandum of Articles of its incorporation precluded the Institute from expressing an opinion on any aspect of the relation between races. This commitment to objective neutrality was rooted in Chatham House tradition. Paul Rich described the research of the Institute as having:

a strong tendency in many of the early sociological studies of the black communities in Britain to analyse them in an isolated manner typical of the tradition of anthropological fieldwork. The class location of the emergent black communities thus tended to be frequently overlooked in favour of certain inherent traits which were seen as isolating black immigrants, especially the fissiparous West Indians, from the rest of British society.³³

To members of staff, who were to lead the battle against the Council, such as Sivanandan, this was unacceptable, for as he argued, the sensitive nature of the issue under research "throws the investigator back on himself, questions the self-interest (however unconscious) of his 'objectivity'; every observer is a participant and how he participates is already predicated by his history."³⁴ To those who questioned the aims of the Institute, the concept of objectivity was a way in which a commitment to racial equality could be avoided and provide a cover for their true aims which had more to do with maintaining Western capitalist control of the 'third world'.

Sivanandan became the Librarian of the Institute in 1964 and now holds the position of Director of the Institute. From his early days he recognised the potential of the Institute library, which was open to Institute staff or members of Chatham House, for conscious raising and the political education of what he termed, 'the kids on the block' and would, unofficially,

allow them access where they could also attend lunch time seminars.³⁵ He was a key figure within the radical core of staff who led the 'revolution'. He described the Institute before the take-over as "a buffering institution if not an outright instrument of social control."³⁶ A major change took place in 1969 with the appointment of Hugh Tinker as Director, whilst Mason took on the role of Director of the newly launched Runnymede Trust and continued with his work for the NCCI. Tinker, who came from the School of Oriental and African Studies, and whose background was based in academia, brought a more democratic approach and encouraged staff meetings which excluded Council members. At the same time new members of staff were recruited, such as Robert Mast who had experience of the racial conflict in America and Robin Jenkins who was a Marxist and who had also spent time in the United States.

These new members of staff, together with Sivanandan and his supporters, saw the struggle for independence in colonial Africa and Asia as part of the same struggle for racial equality that was rocking America, a message that was also conveyed by Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael on their visits to Britain, and then took the argument back to Britain where, they stated, the same system of white domination was supported by the Institute. In a paper, which proved to be the trigger for the radical revolution, Jenkins argued that, when researchers question 'black' immigrants, they should refuse to cooperate, on the grounds that, by doing so, they would be providing information that would be used by Whitehall and the police. Rather, he argued, the focus of research should be white society that perpetrated the racism that the Institute should be working to eliminate.

A full examination of the revolution that overtook the Institute, is not relevant to this study but, in short, by 1972 the Council was dominated by individuals who espoused these radical views and were dedicated to a complete reversal of the focus of research and to whom it was a question of who should be placed under the microscope. This led to the appointment of the first black Chairman, Wilfred Wood, and a sudden loss of funds. To the trustees of the Foundations that had supported it financially, the Institute was no longer a body with which they wished to be connected but to the black radicals that now controlled it, this funding was not acceptable because it brought with it strings which they could not accept.

The progress of the Institute from a prestigious centre for research, with wide reaching influence, politically and economically, to a radical centre dedicated to the raising of 'black consciousness' and to anti-racism, is a reflection of the way in which 'race relations' moved from concerns related to the end of Empire to perceptions more concerned with the rise of Black Power in Britain. The contents of the Institute *Newsletter* mirror this shift; early editions giving the majority of coverage to events and studies concerned with Africa, Asia and South America, then giving way to an increasing number of pieces on the United States, until, by the late 1960s, the situation in Britain was the major source for reports on racialised relations. In this progression, Sivanandan, saw the struggle in America as a catalyst,³⁷ whilst recognising

that the roots of black power in the States came from a link with the African colonial struggles. Likewise in Britain, radicals argued that black and Asian people should see themselves as part of an international movement which should connect with liberation struggles around the world.

v. Conclusion

In the major work produced by the I.R.R., *Colour and Citizenship*, Rose quoted an individual church worker who described the situation when he stated, "You work away in your own little plot, with your nose to the grindstone, and when you have time to look up, the whole race situation seems to have become worse."³⁸ A similar position faced those liberal organisations and individuals who sought to work towards peaceful integration. Working with a lack of information and experience and from the background of a culture in which vague ideas concerning 'race' blurred the issue, they found it difficult to adapt quickly enough to developments. As they offered the hand of friendship or sought to show a lead, the Government introduced immigration controls which appeared to contradict these symbols of welcome. At the same time that a Voluntary Liaison Committee might be set up by a local council so the employment exchange, under the same council, could act with discrimination. Jamaicans, travelling to attend a church organised multi-racial social event, could be harassed by the police. Philip Mason described this two-way process as a form of self-fulfilling prophecy, when he wrote:

We learnt long ago - it is one of the first lessons in race relations - about the self-fulfilling prophecy; the employer or teacher - assumed to be white - who expects lack of interest or stupidity from employee or pupil - assumed to be black - is likely to get what he expects. But there is a reverse form of the self-fulfilling prophecy: encourage black people to expect unfair treatment, sharpen their suspicions and hostile attitude to authority and you make it more likely that authority will act in the way expected.³⁹

When discriminatory or hostile acts seemed to outnumber those, sometimes patronising although well-intentioned, acts of welcome, the resultant sense of alienation could make the call of black power ring loud and true and feed mutual suspicion.

The impetus for action by some whites to assist the newly arrived New Commonwealth immigrants in Britain was in part based on a concern for social harmony but this alone could have simply led to support for immigration controls. A belief in human rights and in the legal entitlement of citizens of the Commonwealth to settle in Britain, however, produced in some liberal minded Britons a level of support for ideas of assimilation and later integration. In this attempt they were hampered, firstly by lack of governmental support and secondly, by traces of nineteenth-century philanthropic attitudes which concentrated on the difficulties posed by and the problems of 'coloured people'. The third factor was the initial constraints on these new immigrants to provide a greater input into initiatives that were launched by white liberals. By

the late 1960s when Caribbean and Asian immigrants had grown in numbers and become more settled in the country, and possibly in a better position to take a full part in multi-racial activities, the discriminatory response towards them, both on ground level and on the part of government, had left many suspicious of white liberal support.

In the early phase of this new wave of immigration there is little evidence that the situation in the United States was of much significance to white liberals. By the mid 1960s, as an awareness of the activities of the Civil Rights Movement grew, some attempted to take on board their approach. Evidence of this shift is provided by: those that joined branches of CARD and by their work 'testing' for discrimination; those white students that took part in the CARD Summer Projects of 1966 and 1967; and by those members of the NCCL who assisted CCARD in exposing discrimination. Numbers of white individuals involved in these initiatives, however, were smaller than those who supported the Voluntary Liaison Committees. These attempts at promoting racial equality were hampered by the action of the Labour Government which disappointed many by its immigration controls and, in comparison to President Johnson, demonstrated a lukewarm commitment to discrimination control legislation. Furthermore, whilst liberals attempted to shake off colonial attitudes, many of the leaders amongst the immigrant communities appeared to be one step ahead and, taking on the messages of Malcolm X and Carmichael, were advocating the idea that any initiatives to ameliorate the position of black and Asian immigrants should come from and be controlled by themselves.

PART IV - Conclusion

The starting point for this thesis was an awareness of references that were regularly made to the racial struggle in the United States during the 1960s within the debate surrounding the issue of the immigration and integration in Britain of New Commonwealth citizens. Press reports dealing with these issues often alluded to the American experience to draw parallels and make comparisons. This practice raised questions. How close were these parallels? To what extent were they accepted and by whom? If there was a general sense in Britain that it was following an American model, did this have an impact on the way in which the British institutions and organisations responded to the increased numbers of non-white immigrants?

Whilst assessing the impact of the American racial conflict on the response of the white British institutions to the New Commonwealth immigrants, it must be remembered that for the majority of members there was little personal contact with West Indians, Indians or Pakistanis. Firstly, numbers were very small and they tended to concentrate in certain geographical areas, depending upon availability of housing and work. Without this contact their arrival had little impact on the mixture of racist and paternalist perceptions which coloured notions surrounding people from the colonies. Until the 1950s the mythology of blacks and Asians as essentially primitive, rural people in a tropical setting continued to shape thinking about the inhabitants of the colonies. As larger numbers of non-white immigrants arrived and permanent working-class, black and Asian communities began to develop in Britain so a new way of comprehending them was required. The old ideas no longer seemed to apply. Furthermore, the notion that all were equal and an adherence to a belief in common humanity seemed less problematic at a distance. As many of the responses to the 1939 Mass Observation Directive on 'Race' revealed, it was possible to maintain an abstract faith in equality whilst still harbouring an emotional sense of physical aversion.

As was demonstrated in Chapter one, the legacy of Empire was a general sense of inferiority intrinsic to 'colour' rather than any real sense of the true nature of the inhabitants of the colonies. In contrast, America loomed large. The sense of a special relationship, the shared language and the experience of the war all contributed to the idea that the United States was less 'foreign' than other parts of the world. Contact with black GIs during the war and the wide exposure to American film left many British people better informed about African Americans than they were with regard to Tamils or Gujeratis, for example.

Furthermore, in the post-war period America was seen as the world leader, the source of innovation and modernity. Thus, when editors and journalists sought illustrations for reports on racialised relations in Britain, the logical place to look for such information seemed to be the United States. The journalist, Godfrey Hodgson, recalled that when he was working for *The Times* in 1958 he was asked to cover the riots in Notting Hill because he had spent time in America.¹ Confronted with a new situation the average editor could turn round to the one

direction from which he seemed to be getting massive volumes of information. The catch-phrases of 'Harlem', 'Little Rock' and later 'Watts' and 'Black Power' were already recognised through reports on events in America and could be employed for a punchy headline or to illuminate discussion about racialised relations in Britain.

In fact, there were major differences between the relative positions of African Americans and non-white immigrants to Britain. The first important dissimilarity was in terms of numbers. During the 1960s African Americans represented about ten per cent of the total population whereas West Indian, African, Pakistani and Indian immigrants only amounted about two per cent. Secondly, whilst African Americans were never seen as anything other than Americans, so that repatriation was not a choice open to white Americans, the right to come and settle in Britain proved not to be so certain for New Commonwealth immigrants. On the other hand, these British immigrants still had the option of return to the countries of their birth. Thirdly, African Americans were a homogeneous section of the population whereas black and Asian immigrants to Britain were quite diverse. The fourth major disparity lies in the racial histories of the United States and Britain. From its inception America has relied on black labour and, whilst much of British wealth was based on the slave trade and the conquest of India, Britain did not depend on black labour within its national boundaries. It was only when it faced a severe labour shortage in its post-war reconstruction did Britain turn for labour to its colonies. This led to an historic and structured form of discrimination in the United States compared to the more fluid situation in Britain.

During the 1960s, however, these differences began to appear less clear in Britain. Throughout the late 1950s and the early 1960s news in Britain of the activities of African Americans centred on the struggle against segregation and the fight for electoral representation in the southern states. These non-violent dignified campaigners were seen as coming out of a rural tradition in which they had been subject to the structured racism of Jim Crow. The Civil Rights campaign received sympathetic press coverage in Britain. Although concerns were expressed about the level of social disturbance and the violence, those responsible were seen to be white supremacists rather than African Americans. This fed a certain complacency in Britain; a view that the struggles in America were a result of their country's racist attitudes towards 'Negroes'. Although these troubles were a cause for concern they hardly seemed relevant to a British situation. The riots in 1958, however, led many commentators to draw parallels with the United States but the major differences were still apparent. The Civil Rights Movement was fighting for an end to segregation and voting rights. It was argued that there was no need for such demands in Britain, where these rights were already in place.

A marked change in mood took place, however, in 1965 with the news of riots in northern cities, particularly those in Watts. Reports of these riots portrayed an urban working class African American who was not subjected to southern-style segregation but who was still denied equality of opportunity through discrimination. This image corresponded more strongly

with black and Asian immigrants in Britain. Both these immigrants and the African Americans who made the move north during the 1950s were a self-selecting group moving from a paternalistic agricultural setting into a competitive industrial situation. Comparisons might be drawn between those struggling for freedom in the newly emerging independent African nations and the desire for equality on the part of non-white immigrants in Britain. Such analogies, however, appeared less valid, for like African Americans, blacks and Asians in Britain were a non-white minority in an overwhelmingly white setting. Likewise, references might be made to other European countries which were also attempting to absorb citizens from their own colonies. Again such parallels appeared less useful. Firstly, there was a sense that the development of a multi-racial society was further advanced in Britain than in Europe and, secondly, that the British were more closely related to Americans. Following a period of vigorous American cultural importation, the notion of 'America today - Britain tomorrow' was strong.

For the majority of the population with little direct contact with blacks or Asians, media reports formed their only source of information. These accounts tended to highlight the more negative aspects of non-whites and focused on the most extreme. Thus many British whites would have been aware of Michael X but not of the less dramatic activities of moderate blacks and Asians working towards integration. Given the widespread interest in the racial struggle in the United States, references to this issue could increase the drama of a story. Thus, the press played a crucial role in fostering the analogy that the United States and Britain could be facing a similar challenge in terms of racialised relations. There is evidence within the debates in the House of Commons that this analogy was taken on board by many politicians. This was particularly true in the case of discussion over legislation to outlaw racial discrimination. The fact that immigration controls had been part of government thinking since the end of the war would indicate that concerns about America were not a factor in the decision to pass such legislation. Nonetheless, earlier consideration of controls had not resulted in action and concerns about public opinion were among the reasons given. It would appear that by 1962 a majority in the House felt that the public would approve of such controls. The perception of a change in public opinion was based largely on fears over numbers, the notion of being 'swamped', and concerns arising out of the 1958 riots. The way in which discussion of the riots featured regular references to conflict in the United States may also have had an indirect impact on public opinion, or at least politicians' perceptions about it.

Subsequent debates in the House over the maintenance and strengthening of controls contained frequent allusions to the United States. These references came from both sides, those arguing in favour or in opposition; the situation in America could provide grist to either mill. Parallels with the United States were even more widely employed during debates over anti-discrimination legislation. The concept of such legislation itself was not new in Britain but the way in which the Bill was drawn owed much to a consideration of American responses to its

own racial troubles. Factors such as the opposition to the legislation, lack of time, limited experience and other political demands meant that the final results demonstrated a weak commitment. The message delivered was further undermined by discriminatory control legislation. In this way, the Labour government failed to give a strong lead.

The response of the press and politicians, in turn, had an impact on the Pakistani, Indian and West Indian immigrants themselves. Throughout the 1960s many of them found they had to re-examine their positions in Britain. Firstly, the imposition of controls led a majority to decide upon permanent residence rather than a temporary stay in which to make some money before returning home. This change resulted in quite a different approach to conditions in Britain. It led to increasing concern over discrimination. Furthermore, it damaged confidence in the government to support them, particularly after the production of the Labour White Paper in 1965. Reports in the press which commonly employed the term 'immigrant' when referring to all non-white British reinforced the view that they were an homogeneous group and that within British society they were 'other'. Although the subjects of this press attitude would have been perfectly conscious of the differences between them, this common treatment led many leaders to advocate a combined response. Articles referring to the creation of ghettos and the use of a policy of 'dispersal' all conveyed the message that 'they' were a problem and less than welcome. In this atmosphere the African American struggle for equality could be a source of inspiration. Those that employed American images were seen to be successful, as in the case of the Bristol bus boycott, or if not successful at least received attention and returned a message to British white society which reflected black pride. American visitors, such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael, further reinforced the message that there was little difference in racialised attitudes between white Americans and white British.

The activities of anti-immigrant bodies also appeared to demonstrate an acceptance of this view. Local organisations that lobbied for an end to immigration tended to employ arguments that were based on long established attitudes, such as the dangers of race mixing, the threat to British culture and competition over housing and work. When many of these bodies joined forces in a more national campaign through the Racial Preservation Society there was a greater tendency to refer to the increasingly tense racial struggle in the United States to press their arguments. Those groups which were led by fascists began to recognise during the early 1960s that they could be more effective in developing support if they downplayed links with National Socialism. Leaders such as John Tyndall and John Bean turned to the American troubles for a vision of the future of Britain with which to frighten the public and raise support. Just as the press gave greater coverage to the activities of more radical black and Asian leaders so the more radical pronouncements of anti-immigrant organisations demanded attention. Stories of a British Ku Klux Klan were dramatic and strengthened the impression that, as in many aspects of life, Britain was following the United States. This, in turn, had an impact on

the perception of public opinion by politicians and the non-white British population, leading to increasing concern on the one part and further disillusionment, and even fear, on the part of the latter.

The established British religious denominations may have acted in some degree to counteract the negative messages that were being conveyed by politicians, the press and the racist organisations. In this, however, they were hampered by an over-reliance on a faith in the tolerant nature of the British, which led to a sense of complacency, and by a feeling that these questions were political and demanded political solutions. Furthermore, they may have felt little responsibility for people newly arrived from India or Pakistan who brought their own faiths. It was only in the most tense years of 1967 and 1968 that the Christian churches in Britain seriously addressed the issue. During these years statements and actions by leaders of the Christian churches displayed a recognition of the general sense that America was providing an image from which Britain should learn. This was demonstrated by the formation of the Martin Luther King Memorial Fund following the death of King in 1968. By this time, however, they had lost the opportunity of drawing in many of the non-white Christians who had arrived in the previous ten years. The growth in Pentecostal churches was a demonstration of disillusion on the part of many West Indians with the established British denominations. The attraction of Pentecostalism lay partly in a different style of service but also a desire for a church within which members felt welcomed. It seems clear that these churches were, in the main, direct imports from the West Indies but affiliation with American branches grew during the decade and demonstrated a sense of kinship with the segregated but strong African American churches.

Although the Church of England and, particularly, the Catholic Church were slow to respond positively to the arrival of increased numbers of non-white immigrants, amongst their congregations there were individuals who acted in a personal capacity in support of New Commonwealth immigrants. This was also true of British Jews; there were many who sensed a fellow feeling for these minority groups and acted in their support. Some of the key figures who fought for racial equality, such as Reg Freeson, Maurice Ludmer and E.J.B. Rose were Jews and their work often displayed a concern for the struggle in the United States. Evidence of this concern was also to be found within the reports of the *Jewish Chronicle* which not only gave wide coverage of the American racial struggle but also became a vehicle for the debate about whether Jews should take a more active role in support of non-whites in Britain or not. Arguments in this debate regularly drew on the American experience which was used both in favour of greater participation and against. In the crucial years of 1967 and 1968 when the Board of Deputies responded with the publication of their Working Party Report, the members acknowledged the comparisons being made between racialised relations in Britain and America. Although they downplayed these fears, they also recognised that concerns that American black

anti-Semitism might grow in Britain may have been a factor in the reluctance of some Jews to take a more active role in supporting racial equality.

The Society of Friends was exceptionally active and to a considerable degree made use of their American contacts which had a long history and were strong. The records of the Friends' Race Relations Committee showed that not only was there a high degree of interest in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States but that the frequent transatlantic fact-finding visits demonstrated that they were convinced that lessons could be learnt there and applied to a British situation. Furthermore, the non-violent approach adopted by the Civil Rights Movement was in accordance with the principles of Quakers. This view led them to feel confident about importing American models so that many of their initiatives were based on American examples. By 1968 there is evidence of a growing sense that their initiatives were less welcome as many black and Asian leaders moved towards a position of self-reliance and became wary of white motives. Despite this, their Statement in 1968 demonstrated a firm commitment to the principle of racial equality.

There is little evidence that early initiatives on the part of secular liberal bodies working towards racial assimilation were acting in response to an awareness of racial trouble in the United States. The main motivation on the part of these individuals or bodies was a concern for social harmony, a belief in human equality and a certain sense of responsibility, or even guilt, for Britain's colonial past. The majority of the local groups grew out of local concerns related to the arrival of increased numbers of non-whites and often as a response to the riots of 1958. At this stage, although there would have been knowledge of the Civil Rights Movement, a sense that the struggle in America represented the future in Britain was less strong. However, during the late 1960s, when many appeared to accept this view, many of these local bodies had been drawn in under the NCCI umbrella and were consequently linked with the government White Paper which was perceived by many blacks and Asians as racist. For the most part, these initiatives failed to involve the black and Asian immigrants because firstly, they were too closely linked to government and secondly, they responded too slowly to changes in attitude within this section of the population. A perception that the problem was one which involved assisting these new immigrants to adjust to life in Britain was too slow to give way to a sense that all they were demanding was equal treatment. The one body that did owe its existence to some extent to a consciousness of American racial conflict was CARD. This was due to American links amongst many of its founders, however, rather than to the initiative of Martin Luther King, as was reported in the media. CARD received high profile press coverage but ultimately was broken by conflicts over white or black leadership. A similar fate overtook the only other independent organisation, the Institute of Race Relations. The impact of African American ideas on racial equality can clearly be seen in the challenge to both these bodies.

A major factor in the way in which racialised relations developed during the period of 1958 to 1968 was the imposition of immigration control, firstly by the Conservatives in 1962 and then by Labour in 1965. These two acts resulted in a negative message about black and Asian immigration being transmitted to both the non-white and the white sections of the nation. The negative message conveyed by immigration control was reinforced by the press and encouraged anti-immigrant sentiments and those bodies which represented these views. It led to fear and resentment amongst the New Commonwealth immigrants who looked across the Atlantic for a positive message and strength. Press reports on black power in Britain reinforced a message that Britain was following America towards racial disturbances. Attempts by liberal whites to work towards racial equality found it difficult to draw in the support of non-whites in this atmosphere, as did the rather late attempts by the Christian churches.

In the last two years of the period under examination there was an increasing perception that American-style riots would occur in Britain. This reflected the development of the African American struggle in the United States as it shifted from a rural based non-violent demand for equality to an violent urban expression of frustration and rejection of American society. In comparison to the concerns over the sort of social unrest which resulted from the activities of the Civil Rights Movement, the idea of urban riots appeared to be a far more threatening and realistic danger. The debates surrounding the passage of the Bill that excluded the Kenyan Asians and the extension of the Race Relations legislation show a consciousness of this perceived danger.

In addressing the issue of the increasing number of immigrants from the New Commonwealth there was a tendency in Britain to allow a kind of wash from the United States to colour responses. With little time and experience inappropriate models were borrowed from America and poured into a British mould. The main avenue for this perception was the press and suggestions which stressed analogies between Britain and America were more readily accepted due to the British sense of kinship with Americans and British insecurity about its world position. These analogies could almost be described as clichés but they could still exert a powerful influence on individuals without other sources of information against which to test them.

This tendency within the media to employ American images whenever an issue dealing with racialised relations is news still exists. Police arrests in the summer of 1999 of black gangland members in London led the *Daily Mail* to describe it as a "Bronx-style swoop" and the opening lines of the front page report were, "It could be a dramatic scene from the meaner streets of New York".² It would also seem that racist organisations are still looking across the Atlantic for inspiration. An American connection was highlighted in reports of the neo-Nazi group known as Combat 18 after the bombings in London this year. *The Guardian* reported that, "Now attention is focusing on the other side of the Atlantic. Some observers believe that

whichever group is responsible for the London bombs is drawing inspiration from heavily armed US extremists ...increasingly British groups are espousing the same anti-Zionist, pseudo-millennial philosophies as their American counterparts."³ The development of support for the Nation of Islam in Britain and demands for the removal of the ban on Farrakhan also indicate that black and Asian radicals still find an inspirational message in the United States. The arrival of the Fruit of Islam at the Stephen Lawrence inquiry last year was high profile news. Although membership of Combat 18 and the Nation of Islam in Britain are believed to be tiny as a proportion of the whole population, their extremism brings them publicity.

In the same way riots in American cities and the launch of the Black Peoples Alliance in Britain received attention during the 1960s rather than moderate acts of progress towards racial harmony. The news from the United States acted as a catalyst on British racialised relations. The idea that the racial struggle in America was irrelevant to the position of non-white immigrants in Britain shifted to one in which it seemed that there were similarities in terms of the discrimination that both groups faced. The result was an increased faith in the action of legislation, thereby adopting an American solution. As this legislation appeared to be less than successful with the outbreak of riots in the United States in the middle of the 1960s, so concerns over riots grew in Britain. The actions of government and the impact of reports in the media, buttressed the suspicions and disillusionment arising from discrimination amongst the non-white population. More radical leaders and their supporters who adopted the message of black power identified with such American leaders as Malcolm X and Carmichael. This, in turn, was reported by the press and reinforced the message that American-style racial troubles were on the British horizon. Whilst the response of liberal bodies served during the early 1960s to ameliorate the situation to some extent, it would seem that whilst they were responding to the mood of the Civil Rights Movement, by the mid and late 1960s the perception of many of the New Commonwealth immigrants was closer to those African Americans who argued that racism was institutionalised throughout the western world.

When racial analogies were drawn between America and Britain there was a clear progression during the period of 1958 to 1968. Prior to the 1958 riots there was a sense that the American situation was irrelevant to Britain but this was shaken by the events in Nottingham and London and gave rise to a feeling that although there was clearly a need for action (and in British terms this could simply involve limiting numbers) the scale of the problem was nowhere near that in America. In the years between the Conservative immigration controls in 1962 and those introduced by Labour in 1965 increasing complaints over discrimination in Britain and the activities of anti-immigrant groups led to a perception that it was possible that Britain would follow the United States into similar racial conflict but that it was unlikely and certainly not yet; there was still time to avoid such a scenario. In the last two years of the period under review, as Britain witnessed the crisis in the United States, this gave way to an even greater sense of threat. At home this sense was reinforced by the

results of surveys on discrimination and press reports of 'black power' in Britain. Images of American race riots played their part in the passage of the Bill that illegally excluded Kenyan Asians. They also contributed to support for the passage of the extended Race Relations Bill. In this way this importation of American images had both a positive and negative effect.

Although the Civil Rights Movement had an impact in Britain in the way that it raised awareness of the issue of discrimination it did not carry the same threat as the later development of black power. Firstly, the Civil Rights Movement was non-violent and was demanding rights that most of the British felt were already established for non-whites in Britain and secondly, press reports of their activities were generally approving and stressed rather the aggression of whites. This led many British people to feel that such a situation would not arise in their country. Black power on the other hand was a more potent symbol for British non-whites to affirm their own sense of identity and created a real sense of anxiety within the white majority. The impact of the American racial struggle in Britain, therefore, was subtle and pervasive. Although its impact on the non-white population of Britain has been acknowledged (see Hiro:1971, Sivanandan:1981 and Scobie:1972), the degree to which it acted on British institutions and organisations through various channels has not previously been highlighted.

GLOSSARY

AJEX	Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen
BNP	British National Party
BPA	Black Peoples' Alliance
CAACO	Conference of Afro-Asian-Caribbean Organisations
CARD	Campaign Against Racial Discrimination
CCARD	Co-ordinating Committee Against Racial Discrimination
CDP	Community Development Projects
CORE	Campaign for Racial Equality (US)
GBM	Greater British Movement
IRR	Institute of Race Relations
IWA	Indian Workers' Association
MCF	Movement for Colonial Freedom
MRG	Minority Rights Group
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (US)
NACCI	National Advisory Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants
NCCI	National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants
NCCL	National Council for Civil Liberties
NSM	National Socialist Movement
RAAS	Racial Adjustment Action Society
RPS	Racial Preservation Society
SLL	Society of Labour Lawyers
SNCC	Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee (US)
UCPA	Universal Coloured Peoples' Association
WISC	West Indian Standing Conference

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¹⁷ For example, compare the headlines in *The Observer* and *The People* for 31 August, 1958 on Nottingham riots; *The Observer's* reads "Police in New Clash" and *The People's* reads "Race City Goes Wild Again".

¹⁸ Judd, Denis, 1996, *Empire: The British Imperial Experience*, London, Harper Collins, p.368

¹⁹ Holmes, Colin, 1991, *A Tolerant Country? Immigrants, Refugees and Minorities in Britain*, London, Faber, p.100

²⁰ For a detailed study of black GIs in Britain see Smith, Graham, 1987, *When Jim Crow Met John Bull*, London, Tauris

²¹ *Manchester Guardian*, 8 to 19 May, 1956

²² *The Times*, 11 January, 1956, p.9

²³ Ibid., 25 February, 1956, p.9

²⁴ Ibid., 14 November, 1956, p.11

²⁵ Ibid., 26 September, 1957, p.11

²⁶ *The Observer*, 15 September, 1957, p.11

²⁷ Ibid., 4 October, 1957, p.11

²⁸ Ibid., 29 September, 1957, p.11

²⁹ *Daily Mirror*, 31 August, 1957, p.4

³⁰ *The Times*, 13 May, 1958

³¹ *Manchester Guardian*, 23 June, 1958

³² *The Times*, 27 August, 1958, p.4

³³ *Manchester Guardian*, 28 August, 1958, p.4

³⁴ Ibid., 2 September, 1958,

³⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 30 August, 1958, p.8

³⁶ Ibid., 2 September, 1958, p.8

³⁷ *The Observer*, 31 August, 1958, p.10

³⁸ *Daily Mirror*, 2 September, 1958, p.20

³⁹ Ibid., 3 September, 1958 p.1

⁴⁰ *The People*, 7 September, 1958, p.1

⁴¹ Carter, Bob, Harris, Clive & Joshi, Shirley, "The 1951-55 Conservative Government and the Racialisation of Black Immigration", Policy Papers in Ethnic Relations, Coventry, University of Warwick, Number 11, 1987, pp. 5-6

⁴² *The Times*, 28 August, 1958, p.4 & p.8

⁴³ Ibid., 4 September, 1958, p.11

⁴⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, 27 August, 1958, p.4

⁴⁵ Ibid., 28 August, 1958, p.4

⁴⁶ Ibid., 15 September, 1958, p.6

⁴⁷ See *The Times* report on Little Rock, 22 September, p.9 which argued that it is "unfair to blame the Negroes for living in poverty" and "if they hadn't been pauperized then integration wouldn't be so distasteful". It is further interesting to note that on the same page *The Times* carried a double column 14" report entitled, "The Problems of Feeding India's Hungry Millions".

⁴⁸ *The Observer*, 7 September, 1958, p.12

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- ⁴⁹ For examples see, *Manchester Guardian*, 23 June; *The Times*, 13 May, 1958
- ⁵⁰ *The Times*, 23 September, 1958, p.6
- ⁵¹ *Manchester Guardian*, 11 September, 1958, p.12
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, 7 August, 1958, p.1
- ⁵³ *The Times*, 22 August, 1958, p.10
- ⁵⁴ Banton, M., "Beware of Strangers", *The Listener*, 3 April, 1958, p.565
- ⁵⁵ Frazier, F., "Britain's Colour Problem", *The Listener*, 22 December, 1960, p.1129
- ⁵⁶ *The Economist*, 6 September, 1958, p.723
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 29 November, 1958, p.767
- ⁵⁸ *The Spectator*, August, 1958, p.267
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, August, 1958, p.270
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, September, 1958, p.335
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 24 July, 1961, p.10
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, 21 August, 1961, p.8
- ⁶³ *The Guardian*, 20 & 21 March, 1961
- ⁶⁴ *The Times*, 29 March, 1960, p.13
- ⁶⁵ *The Guardian*, 18 November, 1960, p.1
- ⁶⁶ *The Times*, 23 May, 1961, p.11
- ⁶⁷ *The Guardian*, 23 May, 1961 p.6
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 12 September, 1960, p.16
- ⁶⁹ *The Times*, 13 May, 1961, p.8
- ⁷⁰ *The People*, 14 January, 1962, p.1
- ⁷¹ *The Times*, 17 January, 1962, p.11
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 19 June, 1962, p.8
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, 2 October, 1962, p.12
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 12 October, 1962, p.13
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 18 October, 1962, p.13
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 22nd November, 1962, p.12
- ⁷⁷ *The Spectator*, 5 October, 1962, p.460
- ⁷⁸ *The Guardian*, 10 June, 1963, p.8
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 28 June, 1963, p.10
- ⁸⁰ *The Times*, 20 June, 1963, p.13
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 10 May, 1963, p.13
- ⁸² *The Listener*, 1 August, 1963, p.153
- ⁸³ *The Spectator*, 7 June, 1963, p.726
- ⁸⁴ *The Times*, 30 August, 1963, p.9
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 2 September, 1963, p.6
- ⁸⁶ *Daily Telegraph*, 28 August, 1963, p.10
- ⁸⁷ *New Society*, 12 November, 1964, p.24
- ⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 10 December, 1964, p.5
- ⁸⁹ *The Times*, 7 May, 1963, p.13
- ⁹⁰ *New Statesman*, 10 May, 1963, p.708
- ⁹¹ *The Times*, 7 November, 1963, p.13
- ⁹² *The Guardian*, 17 February, 1964, p.8
- ⁹³ *The Times*, 30 March, 1964, p.9
- ⁹⁴ *The Guardian*, 24 March, 1964, p.1
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 25 August, 1964, p.8
- ⁹⁶ *The Times*, 9 March, p.6 & p.13 October, p.18, 1964
- ⁹⁷ The campaign in Smethwick in dealt with in more detail in the section on racist groups.
- ⁹⁸ Dummett, Ann, op. cit., p.243
- ⁹⁹ *The Guardian*, 11 July, 1964, p.2 & p.3
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 5 December, 1964, p.4
- ¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 7 December, 1964, p.10
- ¹⁰² *Ibid.*,
- ¹⁰³ *The Times*, 7 December, 1964, p.6
- ¹⁰⁴ For more detail on the visits of Malcolm X, see Chapter 4
- ¹⁰⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 8 February, 1965, p.12

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- 106 Ibid., 13 February, 1965, p.9
- 107 *The Times*, 12 February, 1965, p.7
- 108 *The Guardian*, 27 February, 1965, p.8
- 109 *The Times*, 23 February, 1965, p.10
- 110 Ibid., 17 March, 1965, p.10
- 111 Ibid., 5 June, 1965, p.7
- 112 *The Economist*, 7 August, 1965, p.106
- 113 *The Guardian*, 3 September, 1965 p.20
- 114 Ibid., 24 September, 1965, p.11
- 115 *The Times*, 14 August, 1965, p.7
- 116 *Daily Telegraph*, 7 August, 1965, p.1
- 117 Ibid., 14 August, p.1
- 118 *The Guardian*, 16 August, 1965, p.8
- 119 Ibid., 23 August, 1965, p.8
- 120 *Daily Express*, 17 August, 1965 p.6
- 121 *New Statesman*, 20 August, 1965, p.237
- 122 *Daily Telegraph*, 16 August, 1965, p.13
- 123 *The Times*, 16 August, 1965, p.5
- 124 *Spectator*, 20 August, 1965. p.223
- 125 For a more detailed examination of this organisation, see Chapter 4.
- 126 *Spectator*, 12 November, 1965, p.612
- 127 CARD or the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination was a high profile multi-racial body. A more detailed examination of this body is included in Chapter 4.
- 128 *The Times*, 18 to 29 January, 1965
- 129 *The Listener*, 11 November, 1965
- 130 *The Times*, 8 June, 1966, p.13
- 131 Ibid., 6 July, 1965, p.8
- 132 Ibid., 28 June, 1966, p.13
- 133 *New Statesman*, 1 July, 1966, p.5
- 134 Ibid., 15 July, 1966, p.75
- 135 Ibid., 16 September, 1966, p.380
- 136 *The Times*, 20 January, 1967, p.7
- 137 Ibid., 2 May, 1967, p.10
- 138 Ibid., 16 June, 1967, p.1
- 139 Ibid., 21 June, 1967, p.4
- 140 Ibid., 8 July, 1967, p.11
- 141 *The Observer*, 23 April, 1967, p.12
- 142 Ibid., 4 May, 1967, p.1
- 143 This is a reference to *The Street Report* which was published the following November and in the main was an investigation into how anti-discrimination legislation was drawn up and worked in other countries, the bulk of the evidence coming from the United States.
- 144 *The Economist*, 22 April, 1967, p.320
- 145 *The Observer*, 23 July, 1967, p.17
- 146 *The Times*, 19 July, 1967, p.10
- 147 *The Guardian*, 21 July, 1967, p.4
- 148 *The Times*, 21 July, 1967, p.2
- 149 *Daily Telegraph*, 21 July, 1967 p.19
- 150 *The Guardian*, 25 July, 1967, p.1
- 151 *The Times*, 26 July, 1967, p.1
- 152 *Daily Telegraph*, 25 July, 1967, p.1
- 153 Ibid.,
- 154 *Daily Express*, 25 July, 1967, p.5
- 155 *The Times*, 25 July, 1967, p.2
- 156 Ibid., p.1
- 157 *The Guardian*, 27 July, 1967, p.6
- 158 *The Times*, 27 July, 1967, p.2
- 159 *The Times*, 26 July, 1967, p.2 & *The Guardian* 26 July, 1967, p.16

- 160 *The Economist*, 29 July, 1967, p.333
- 161 *The Listener*, 17 August, 1967, p.211
- 162 *The Times*, 11 September, 1967, p.3
- 163 *The Guardian*, 4 December, 1967, p.5
- 164 *The People* 4 February, 1968, p.1
- 165 *Ibid.*, 11 February, p.1
- 166 *Ibid.*, 18 February, p.1
- 167 *Ibid.*, 3 March, p.12
- 168 *The Guardian*, 1 March, 1968 p.10
- 169 C. Jones, et al. op. cit., p.33
- 170 *The Observer*, 3 March, 1968 p.8
- 171 *The Guardian*, 28 August, 1958, p.4
- 172 *The Observer*, 31 August, 1958, p.10
- 173 *Daily Telegraph*, 2 March, 1968, p.10
- 174 *The Times*, 23 February, 1968 p.9
- 175 *Ibid.*, 27 February, 1968, p.9
- 176 *Ibid.*, 2 March, 1968, p.9
- 177 *Ibid.*, 14 March, 1968, p.10
- 178 *New Society*, 17 June, 1968, p.955
- 179 *Daily Telegraph*, 6 April, 1968, p.12
- 180 *The Guardian*, 5 April, 1968, p.8
- 181 *Ibid.*, p.9
- 182 *Ibid.*, p.1
- 183 *The Observer*, 7 April, 1968, p.12
- 184 *Spectator*, 19 April, 1968, p.523
- 185 *Daily Telegraph*, 15 April, 1968, p.6
- 186 *The Times*, 16 April, 1968, p.6
- 187 *The Economist*, 13 April, 1968, p.17
- 188 *New Statesman*, 19 April, 1968, p.504
- 189 *The Observer*, 21 April, 1968, p.3
- 190 *Daily Telegraph*, 22 April, 1968, p.14
- 191 *Daily Express*, 22 April 1968, p.6
- 192 *The Times*, 26 April 1968, p.11
- 193 *Ibid.*, 22 April, 1968, p.11
- 194 *Ibid.*, 27 April, 1968, p.9
- 195 *New Society*, 27 June, 1968, p.955

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- 6 'Immigration of British Subjects into the United Kingdom', CAB 129/44, Quoted in Joshi, S. & Carter, B. (1984) op. cit., p.64
- 7 Paul, Kathleen, 1997, *Whitewashing Britain*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, p.135
- 8 CAB 128/29, C.M.39 (55), minute 7, Cabinet meeting, 3 November, 1955, quoted in Carter, B, Harris, C and Joshi, S. "The 1951-55 Conservative Government and the Racialisation of Black Immigration", *Policy Papers in Ethnic Relations*, Coventry, Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick, October, 1987, p.1
- 9 Banton, Michael, P., 1955, *The Coloured Quarter*, London, Cape, p.91
- 10 *Ibid.*, p.9

¹¹ CAB 129/93, June, 1958.

¹² The Working Party on Coloured Immigration Report states that the "Irish would require restrictions - or we face the accusation of restrictions being based on race, but no attempt should be made to apply them in practice." HO 344/145, 25 July, 1961

¹³ Solomos, John, 1994, *Race and Racism in Britain*, London, Macmillan, p.54

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.62

¹⁵ U.S. State Department Central Files, 841.411/3

¹⁶ *The Times*, 28 August, 1958, p.4

¹⁷ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 596, Cols. 1551-1597

¹⁸ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 649, Col. 782

¹⁹ HO 344/27 21 July 1958

²⁰ HO 344/145 25 July 1961

²¹ CO.1031/3452. Report on the development of Racism in Jamaica, 1961. This indicated a rapid increase in the number of Rastafarians.

²² *Ibid.*, Col.797

²³ U.S. State Department Central Files, 841.411/8

²⁴ See Anthony Howard, "The Irish Question", *New Statesman*, 8 December, 1961 for a description of the politics surrounding the passage of the Bill.

²⁵ For a description of the press responses, see the Chapter 2

²⁶ For a description of anti-immigration groups, see the Chapter 5.

²⁷ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 680, Col. 1102

²⁸ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 685, Col. 406

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Col. 416

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Cols. 421-422

³¹ In his diary Benn records that the whips had passed around a note asking members not to speak but that he was 'so provoked by Cyril Osborne and his racial venom that I launched into him.' Benn, T. 1987, *Out of the Wilderness: Diaries, 1963-72*, London, Hutchison, p.79

³² *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol.685, Col.420

³³ *Ibid.*, Cols. 430-433

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Col. 446

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Col. 445

³⁶ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 721, Col. 445

³⁷ In 1965 John Lyttle of the Race Relations Board suggested to Maurice Foley that there was no requirement for such a divisive policy as the problem could be tackled by controlling school catchment areas. HO 376/139

³⁸ For a detailed survey of the practices adopted see Hawkes, N. 1966, *Immigrant Children in British Schools*, London, Oxford University Press

³⁹ FO 371/168485, 3 September, 1963

⁴⁰ The Smethwich campaign was rather unique. The majority of Conservative candidates took on board the message from Central Office that the issue was too sensitive and could be counter-productive.

⁴¹ Hiro, Dilip, 1971, *Black British, White British*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, p.44

⁴² Solomos, op cit., p.65

⁴³ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 709, Col. 360

⁴⁴ For further detail on these two visits, see Chapter 2

⁴⁵ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 709, Col. 338

⁴⁶ HO 376/68, 9 December 1964

⁴⁷ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 709, Cols. 391-392

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Cols. 426-427

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Col. 430

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Col. 435

⁵¹ See HO 342/83 notes to the Legislative Committee which states "there should be no difficulty in arranging for Brockway's Bill to be blocked without debate." 28 January, 1961. This refers to Brockway's eighth attempt at anti-discrimination legislation.

⁵² HO 376/68, 12 January, 1965

⁵³ Heinemann, B. 1972, *The Politics of the Powerless*, London, Oxford University Press, p.115

- ⁵⁴ Rose was the Director of the major study of 'race relations' in Britain, *Colour and Citizenship*, which was often termed the 'Myrdal for Britain' and Nicholas Deakin was a contributor and on the National Executive of CARD.
- ⁵⁵ BBC Third Programme, transcript, 29 April, 1965
- ⁵⁶ *Hansard*, (Commons), Vol.711, Col.928
- ⁵⁷ Heinemann, B. (1972), op. cit., p.119
- ⁵⁸ *Hansard*, Standing Committee B, 3rd Sitting, 1 June, 1965
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 5th Sitting, 15 June, 1965
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 8th Sitting, 29 June, 1965
- ⁶¹ The setting up of the N.C.C.I. which arose out of this legislation had a greater effect on CARD than simply disappointment. Three members of the Executive took seats on this newly created body and eventually led the break up of CARD. See Chapter 4 for more detail
- ⁶² Thornberry, C., "Commitment or Withdrawal? The Place of the Law in Race Relations in Britain", *Race*, Vol.VII, No.1, July, 1965, p.84
- ⁶³ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 721, Col. 337. Brooke had held the position of Secretary for Home Affairs under the previous Tory government.
- ⁶⁴ This is a reference to President Johnson's new more liberal immigration laws which were passed in September 1965
- ⁶⁵ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 721, Col. 344
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Col. 426
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Col. 278,
- ⁶⁸ HO 376/125, 13 September 1967
- ⁶⁹ Burton, Paul, "Urban Policy in post-war Britain", in Gladstone, David (Ed.), 1995, *British Social Welfare: Past, Present and Future*, London, U.C.L. Press, p.146
- ⁷⁰ Harrington, Michael, 1962, *The Other America*, New York, Macmillan
- ⁷¹ Abel-Smith, B. and Townsend, P., 1965, *The Poor and the Poorest*, London, G. Bell & Sons
- ⁷² Hill, Michael, 1993, *The Welfare State*, Aldershot, Edgar Elgar Publishing, p.84
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁴ See Chapter 7 for more information on these bodies.
- ⁷⁵ FO 371/174337
- ⁷⁶ HO 376/174
- ⁷⁷ CAB 134/2638
- ⁷⁸ *Financial Times*, August, 1965.
- ⁷⁹ For a full description of this election, see Deakin, N., Lawrence, D., Silvey, J. & Lehoe, M.J. "Colour and the 1966 General Election" in *Race*, Vol.VIII, July, 1966, pp. 17-42
- ⁸⁰ Roy Jenkins Address to the Institute of Race Relations at Goldsmith's Hall on 10 October, 1966, quoted in *IRR Newsletter*, October, 1966, p.3
- ⁸¹ This was the report of a Committee chaired by Professor Harry Street to examine the way discrimination in employment and housing was handled through legislation in other countries. Although the Street Committee did not recommend any form rather than another but simply set out the alternatives, it was the American model that was accepted.
- ⁸² The five American speakers were: Ben Segal, Director of Liaison, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; Joseph L. Rauh, Jr., Civil Rights Lawyer and General Counsel of U.A.W.; Bayard Rustin, Executive Director, A.Philip Randolph Institute; Normal Nicholson, vice-President of Kaiser Co., California; Victor Reuther, Director, International Affairs Dept., U.A.W. Quoted in Sheila Patterson, 1969, *Immigration and Race Relations*, London, Oxford University Press, p.126
- ⁸³ Roy Jenkins' speech "Looking Ahead", delivered to the annual conference of the London Labour Party on 13th May 1967, quoted in *Roy Jenkins, Speeches and Essays*, London, Collins, 1967, p.287
- ⁸⁴ See Chapters 2 and 4 for more detailed examination of these events.
- ⁸⁵ FO 7/859 U.S. Social: Racial Discrimination 1967-68
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 28 July, 1967 and 3 August, 1967
- ⁸⁷ *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 18 September, 1967
- ⁸⁸ HO 376/45, April 1968
- ⁸⁹ *Hansard*, (Commons) Vol. 745, Col. 1796
- ⁹⁰ CK 2/34 June, 1966
- ⁹¹ Speech by Mark Bonham Carter, Chairman of the Race Relations Board, to the Conference on Racial Equality and Employment, 24 February, 1967

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- 92 HO 376/139
 93 CAB 134/2906
 94 *Hansard* (Commons), Vol. 754, col. 500
 95 *Ibid.*, Col. 504
 96 *Ibid.*, Col. 519
 97 *Ibid.*, Col. 519
 98 *Ibid.*, Col. 526
 99 *Ibid.*, Col. 535
 100 *Ibid.*, Col. 508
 101 See Chapter 2, pp.30-31 for an examination of the press comment on this Bill.
 102 Boston, Richard, "How the Immigrants Act was Passed", *New Society*, 28 March, 1968, p.449
 103 *IRR Newsletter*, Vol.2 No.3, March, 1969, p.101
 104 Quoted in *IRR Newsletter*, Vol. 2, Number 3, March 1968, p.105
 105 *Hansard*, (Commons), Vol. 759, Col. 659
 106 *Ibid.*, Vol. 759, Col. 1283
 107 *Ibid.*, Col. 1330
 108 Quoted in "The Racial Issue in Britain", *Patterns of Prejudice*, , Vol II, No.2, 1968, p.9
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 110 PREM 13/2314, 23 April, 1968
 111 HO 376/45 (undated)
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 113 *Hansard*, (Commons), Vol. 763, Col. 84
 114 *Ibid.*, Col. 136
 115 *Ibid.*, Col. 137
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 119 *Ibid.*, Col. 145
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 125 Kushnick, L., "Legislation and Employment, A Review", *Race*, Vol.IX, 3, 1968
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 8 Glass, Ruth, & Pollins, H., 1960, *Newcomers*, London, Centre for Urban Studies and Allen & Unwin, p.204
 9 Josephides, Sasha, 1991, *Towards a History of Indian Workers' Associations*, Coventry, Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick, p.11
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 12 *Sunday Times*, 29 October, 1967

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- ¹⁴ Personal communication, Diane Langford, member of CARD, 23 April, 1997
- ¹⁵ Ranjana Ash was a leading member of CARD and friend of Claudia Jones. Her parents were Indians but she had lived in the US for many years and married a white American before moving to Britain. Interview with Nuala Sanderson, 20 May, 1997
- ¹⁶ Glass, R. (1960) op. cit., p.209
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- ¹⁸ Trevor Carter, interview with Nuala Sanderson, 16 September, 1997
- ¹⁹ See Introduction, p.8
- ²⁰ Pansy Jeffries, interview with Nuala Sanderson, 7 May, 1997
- ²¹ Taken from a transcript of a talk by Dr. Ranjana Ash which was a contribution to a Claudia Jones Symposium, held at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies on 28 September, 1996.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ Trevor Carter, interview with Nuala Sanderson, 16 September, 1997
- ²⁴ *The Daily Gleaner*, 29 August, 1963 p.1
- ²⁵ Ibid., 29 August, 1963, p.1
- ²⁶ *The West Indian Gazette*, September, 1963, p.16.
- ²⁷ Ibid., December-January, 1965, p.1
- ²⁸ Ibid., p.4
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ The response of British Jewry is dealt with in greater detail in chapter 6.
- ³¹ Various uncatalogued files of correspondence between CCARD and others held at the IRR.
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- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Glean, Marion, "Whatever Happened to CARD?", *Race Today*, January, 1975, p.13
- ³⁶ Dr. Ranjana Ash, interview with Nuala Sanderson, 20 May, 1997
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- ⁴⁴ Josephides, (1991), op. cit., p.17
- ⁴⁵ Heinemann, (1972) op. cit., p.176
- ⁴⁶ *The Guardian*, 4 December, 1967, p.5; *New Statesman* 1 December, 1967, p.759. See also letter printed in *New Statesman*, 10 November, 1967, p.640 from an American living in London who stated that he was dismayed at "Britain's Civil Rights mini-movement aping the last stage of America's frustration and despair. The solution to Britain's problem, puny in comparison to that in America, cannot lie in hollow repetition of US rhetoric."
- ⁴⁷ Diane Langford, personal communication, 23 April, 1997
- ⁴⁸ Hiro, Dilip, *New Society*, 27 June, 1969, p.955
- ⁴⁹ Modood, Tariq, "Political Blackness and British Asians", *Sociology*, Vol. 28, No.4, 1994, p.859-876
- ⁵⁰ Heinemann, (1972), op. cit., p.221
- ⁵¹ Heinemann, (1972) op. cit.
- ⁵² Dresser, Madge, 1986, *Black and White on the Buses*, Bristol, Bristol BroadSides, p.12
- ⁵³ Hiro, Dilip, (1971) op. cit., 1971
- ⁵⁴ Paul Stephenson, interview with Nuala Sanderson, 13 January, 1997
- ⁵⁵ Roy Hackett, a leader of WIDC. Interview with Nuala Sanderson, 30 January, 1997
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- ⁵⁸ *Bristol Evening Post*, 6 May, 1963
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- ⁶⁰ Malcolm X, 1969, *Speeches of Malcolm X*, London, Peter Owen, p.115

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- ⁶² See *The Guardian*, 12 August, 1967, p.12 for description of his flamboyant behaviour in court. It is also interesting to note that *The Times* identified the person who paid Michael Malik's bail as an American, Mr. Carol Lloyd, 12 August, 1967, p.2
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- ⁷⁶ Roy Sawh, interview with Nuala Sanderson, 20 May, 1997
- ⁷⁷ Ibid., Sawh gave examples of the sort of things he was saying: one was, "You white people, you don't like Pakistanis and yet you go to their restaurants, maybe they should put something hot in your curries," and another referred to South Africa. He had stated that the solution to the problem there was simple; "everyone in South Africa has a black cook and with half a pound of rat poison you could solve the problem."
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⁴ Rich, Paul, 1986, *Race and Empire in British Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p.136

⁵ This Committee was set up in 1928 in response to concerns about the continuation of slavery in the world.

⁶ Institute of Jewish Affairs Archives, File CCJ 9/167, University of Southampton,

⁷ This journal is generally accepted as representing the voice of Anglo-Jewry

⁸ *Jewish Chronicle* 5th September, 1958, p.5

⁹ *Ibid.*

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¹¹ *Church Times*, 26th September, 1958, p.1

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¹³ For twelve years Huddleston had been working in South Africa where he became steadily more involved with African rights. He was recalled to London in 1955 but in 1960 was appointed Bishop of Tanganyika and so returned to Africa.

¹⁴ This paper was a weekly broadsheet carrying general news of issues affecting Catholics with a wide coverage of Irish news. There was also a weekly journal *The Tablet*, which carried more in-depth articles and generally took a more conservative line.

¹⁵ *The Catholic Herald*, 12th September, 1958, p.1

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¹⁷ Society of Friends Race Relations Committee (SFRRC) Minute 3, 1 October, 1958

¹⁸ SFRRC, Minute 72, 5th November, 1958

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²⁰ Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ), Minutes of the Executive Council, Minute 1853, 18th June, 1959.

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²³ *Jewish Chronicle*, 2 March, 1962

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Conclusion

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Combat - journal of the British National Party
Racial Adjustment Action Society Newsletter
Spearhead - journal of John Tyndall's Greater Britain Movement
Sussex News - produced by Racial Preservation Society
Thunderbolt - American Right-wing paper
Universal Coloured Peoples' Association Newsletter

Interviews by the Author

Ranjana Ash. Founder member of CARD. Interviewed on 20 May 1997
Guy Reid Bailey. Bristol Bus Boycott leader. Interviewed on 13 January, 1997
Trevor Carter. Relative and co-worker of Claudia Jones. Interviewed on 16 September, 1997
Eddie Friedman. American, Director of Jewish Council for Racial Equality (JCORE), London. Interviewed on 10 November, 1997

- Godfrey Hodgson.** Journalist, after some years in the United States worked for *The Times* in 1958 and later Washington Correspondent for *The Observer* from 1960 to 1965.
Interviewed on 23 February, 1998
- Roy Hackett.** Member of West Indian Development Council and involved in organising the Bristol Bus Boycott. Interviewed on 30 January, 1997
- Selma James.** American and founder member of CARD, ex-wife of CLR James. Interviewed on 14 October, 1997
- Shirley Joshi.** Secretary of CCARD and widow of Jagmohan Joshi of WIA. Interviewed on 17 April, 1997
- Pansy Jeffries.** Arrived in Britain in 1956 from British Guyana and worked for Kensington Borough Council through the Citizens Advice Bureau in Notting Hill Gate from 1958. Involved in various local initiatives. Interviewed on 7th May 1997
- Brian Klug.** British Jew who was at University College, London during the late 1960s and involved with local anti-discrimination groups. Interviewed on 15th June, 1999
- Aubrey Rose.** Jewish lawyer who represented many individuals whose cases were brought to him by West Indian Standing Conference during the 1960s and member of the Working Party on Race Relations for the Board of Deputies of British Jews.
Interviewed on 30 August, 1997
- Roy Sawh.** Originally from British Guyana, he became a well known speaker at Hyde Park where he expressed radical socialist views. Leader in the Universal Coloured Peoples' Association, RAAS and the Black Peoples Alliance. Interviewed on 20 May, 1997
- A Sivanandan.** Librarian and now Director of the Institute of Race Relations and a leading figure in the 'palace revolution' of 1972. Interviewed on 10 April, 1997
- Paul Stephenson.** Leader of the Bristol Bus Boycott and community relations worker in Coventry and London. Interviewed on 13 January, 1997
- David Udo.** Member of the Brixton Black Panthers in the late 1960s. Currently working for Southwark Diocese Race Relations Commission. Interviewed on 30 September, 1997
- Charles Wheeler.** United States Correspondent for the BBC from 1962-68. Interviewed on 2 April, 1998
- Bishop Wilfred Wood.** Chair of IRR from 1972 to 74. Now Bishop of Croydon.
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USER'S DECLARATION

TITLE: THE IMPACT OF THE

UNITED STATES ON BRITISH RACIALISED RELATIONS

FROM 1958 TO 1968

DATE: 1999

To be signed by each user of this thesis

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