Title
Organizing Community: Commonwealth Citizens and Social Activism in Britain, 1948-1982

Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8dj028cs

Author
Natarajan, Radhika Anita

Publication Date
2013

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation
Organizing Community: Commonwealth Citizens and Social Activism in Britain, 1948–1982

By

Radhika Anita Natarajan

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

in the

Graduate Division

of the University of California, Berkeley

Committee in Charge:

Professor James Vernon
Professor Thomas Metcalf
Professor Cybelle Fox
Professor Jordanna Bailkin

Fall 2013
Abstract

Organizing Community: Commonwealth Citizens and Social Activism in Britain, 1948–1982

by

Radhika Anita Natarajan

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Berkeley

Professor James Vernon, Chair

This dissertation studies the intersection of social democracy and decolonization in postwar Britain. By analyzing the formation of local voluntary councils to integrate Commonwealth migrants into British society, I demonstrate that welfare was not only a national formation, but a local and an imperial one. Commonwealth Citizen, a legal category created in 1948, extended to all in the empire and Commonwealth, and entitled those citizens to migrate freely to Britain, to seek employment and services as equals with native-born white Britons. In the face of discrimination and hostility towards these citizens, social workers and Commonwealth Citizens fought for equal access to state services, and sought to explain Commonwealth migrants to British society and vice versa. In an effort to secure Commonwealth Citizens’ social rights, social services turned to cultural essentialism to explain migrants. Commonwealth Citizens likewise claimed the authority to speak for themselves on the basis of their distinctive culture, and rejected the ability of social work professionals to adequately represent their claims. These tensions came to a head in the 1970s, particularly after the British Government’s sponsorship of these efforts to manage diversity. From a variety of perspectives, critiques of community relations undermined the singular social democratic community organized around a citizens' social rights. This led to a new, unstable consensus around the idea of a multicultural Britain in the early 1980s, which shaped the forms of participation of ethnic minorities within the nation.

As this dissertation shows, the dream of collective security always involved the negotiation of community, in local, national, imperial and global terms. To Commonwealth Citizens and their allies, social democracy was always a question of standing, of identity, and equality in the community. Achieving this vision of community involved a reckoning with the imperial past and its continuing legacies.
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ii

Introduction: Commonwealth Citizens and Community 1

1. **Social Democratic Community and the Problems of Commonwealth Citizens, 1948–1958** 18

2. **Migrant Services Division and Colonial Community Development, 1954–1962** 47

3. **The Turn to Culture: the Ideological and Institutional Investment in Community, 1957–1968** 81


5. **The Ends of Community and the End of Community Relations, 1967–1982.** 156

**Conclusion** 185

**Bibliography** 190

**Appendix** 201
Acknowledgements

This dissertation is itself a product of migrations and owes much to the homes in which I found myself. Many people helped me, and this is my too short thanks to them.

My parents migrated from India to settle in the rural United States and left behind more than they probably care to acknowledge. I owe so much to my grandparents, Mani and Thiyu and Krishnamurthy and Rajam, who wanted more for their children and grandchildren than the world they had been born into allowed. So much of my work is an attempt to understand that world, which they left too soon. My parents, Natarajan and Sundari, made valiant efforts to both honor the culture they left behind and also settle in rural Ohio. They have only a historian and a gardener to show for their efforts, but I hope they know that my sister and I learned from their determination to balance here and there, to stay true to the world they had been brought up in and also to make a home in the often frigid Midwest.

I left Ohio as soon as I could, and the friends I made in New Haven and New York provided a refuge during those strange, blessed years of young adulthood. I moved west for graduate school at Berkeley, but not alone. Deepa, who is not only my sister, but I am glad to say my friend, and her husband Gautam were my first roommates in Berkeley. They inspired those around them with their commitment to discovery, and I am grateful for all of the library books they returned in benefit of my creative growth.

In my graduate career, I have been supported by many in the history department and in the broader intellectual community at Berkeley. My sincerest thanks to the two history faculty graduate advisors in my time in the department, Carla Hesse and Maureen Miller, who offered advice and assistance. My special thanks as well to Student Affairs Officer Mabel Lee, who is not only extraordinarily capable, but patient and kind in her dealings with graduate students. In seminars, I learned much from both the professors in the department and fellow participants, and that influence appears throughout the dissertation. I also benefitted from a supportive and challenging group of peers—Megan Adams, David Anixter, Grahame Foreman, Riyad Koya, Carrie Ritter and Tehila Sasson—who contributed their time and offered their criticisms on drafts of this dissertation. Ryan Acton, Chris Shaw and Julie Stein helped in material ways and also provided good company, especially in the last few months of writing. I have loved talking history with all of them and the many cohorts of British history graduate students at Berkeley.

Research took me from Berkeley to Britain, and financial support from the history department and three University of California, Berkeley centers—the Center for British Studies, the Center for Race and Gender, and the Institute of International Studies made research for this dissertation possible. My thanks to Elizabeth Cotton, Jedd Fenner, Stephen O’Connor, Marty Shore, Fotini Vasilopoulos, and John Yandell for opening their homes to me during my research trips. In London, archivists at the following institutions not only provided help in tracing documents but spoke with me about some of the events this dissertation addresses: the Bernie Grant Archives at Middlesex University, the Black History Collection at the Institute of Race Relations, Brent Archives, Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre, Hackney Archives, Islington Local History Centre, Lambeth Archives, London Metropolitan Archives, Tate Archive,
Acknowledgements

Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives, Southwark Local History Library, and the Women’s Library, formerly at London Metropolitan University. I am particularly indebted to Sarah Garrod at the George Padmore Institute for the enormous amount of work she has put into the collections there. She and the many other archivists and librarians showed not only tremendous knowledge of their collections, but also insight into the local histories of London.

Outside of London, I found knowledgeable and helpful staff at Nottinghamshire Archives and Nottingham Local Studies Library; West Yorkshire Archive Service in Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Leeds; Keighley Library; York Archives and Local History; the Manchester Room @ City Library and the Greater Manchester County Records Office; and the Labour History Archive and Study Centre at the People’s History Museum. I am grateful to the staff at each of these institutions for their commitment to their collections and to making those collections available in an era of cuts to services, staff and public hours.

As this dissertation has been written in transit, I owe special thanks to an exceptionally generous committee that supported this distance learner even when that distance allowed me to stay out of communication. Tom Metcalf offered enthusiasm, encouragement, and exhortations to always keep empire in the picture. Gautam Premnath suggested many wonderful and useful things to read. Cybelle Fox, an Americanist and a sociologist provided this British historian with comparative insights and appeals to think more broadly. Jordanna Bailkin’s work was an inspiration from the beginning of this project, and I benefited from her discerning criticism throughout the dissertation process. Lastly and especially, James Vernon’s commitment to the best version of this project helped me in moments when I was not sure if there was a story to be told in community relations. His insights are too numerous to name in individual footnotes, and I thank him for his engagement and encouragement.

My most recent migration has brought me to Halifax, Nova Scotia. In many ways, the Atlantic coast of Canada has been the ideal place to write this dissertation as every day I encounter material echoes of the imperial past and discover new imperial connections. I could thank Paddy Riley for bringing me here, but that would be glib. He is the last person to thank, and reflecting on this long process, it is difficult to find words to adequately describe let alone acknowledge all that he has done. To sustain this project, Paddy offered criticism, praise, emotional support, financial assistance, jokes, groans and sighs. Wherever I go, he is my home.
This dissertation examines the organization of community in postwar Britain. The idea of community embodied the greatest hope of the postwar era, the social security of all citizens, a commitment forged by years of political struggle through depression and war. Community would be the site where welfare created equality among citizens. Community, however, was also the site of unique challenge, as the rise of the postwar welfare state intersected with the end of empire. As Commonwealth Citizens settled in Britain and tried to gain access to social services—to gain standing in the British community—they brought into question the fundamental meanings of social democratic community. Who belonged in the postwar welfare state: only native white Britons or all members of the Commonwealth? How would different groups negotiate with each other, and the state, over the provision of social services and the legitimation of social rights? Could social democracy achieve its communal ends in a nation so deeply formed by empire? In addition to its affective and nostalgic forms, these questions propelled a civic and institutional organization of community to reconcile the tensions between social democracy and the end of empire.

Rather than a singular project, as the location where social policy met societal action, community became the site of ongoing contestation. A variety of actors participated in the organization of community to accommodate the welfare needs of Commonwealth Citizens. Commonwealth Citizens were not only the objects of these forms of organization, but actively participated in local communities. Commonwealth Citizen, a category created by an act of parliament in 1948, extended to everyone in the empire and Commonwealth and entitled those citizens to migrate freely to Britain and seek employment and services as equals with native-born white Britons. As Commonwealth Citizens settled in Britain, they became visible not only through popular narratives of riots, disorder, and disease but also through efforts to secure their social rights. Commonwealth Citizens were themselves social workers, educators, trade union members and leaders, politicians, participants in the range of associational life that flourished in the era of social democracy. Commonwealth Citizens did not simply withdraw into an autonomous social life in the face of white racism. Instead, they participated in the making of welfare at the community level. Examining this participation is crucial to understanding the ideal of community, as well as its limitations to secure Commonwealth Citizens’ status as ordinary Britons.

The local delivery of social services, as well as the conditions of the late empire, shaped these forms of community mobilization, called community relations. While historians have looked back to the longer history of empire to explain the structural conditions of racism and national exclusion, a growing body of work is beginning to examine the particular conditions of the late empire that shaped the accommodation of Commonwealth Citizens in Britain. Telling the story of community in social democratic Britain through the struggles to accommodate the social rights of Commonwealth Citizens illustrates the importance of incorporating local and imperial conditions into the story of the postwar reconfiguration of the nation. It also expands the range of actors who participated in making the welfare state as well as the locations in which welfare was made. The postwar investment in community was the product of particular
Introduction

political processes, and in tracing its history in local, national and imperial registers, I show the ways the singular community of social democracy gave way to multiculturalism and a vision of British society composed of discrete cultural communities.

I. Welfare, Citizenship, Community

From the inception of the postwar state welfare, community became the site of struggle to mediate between the citizen and the state, between the individual and the market. 1948 seemed to inaugurate a new era of state welfare services in Britain, with its cornerstone in the National Health Services, inaugurated on 5 July. The day before, Prime Minister Clement Attlee claimed the provision of social services as a signal achievement in British history: “Tomorrow, there will come into operation, the most comprehensive system of social security ever introduced into any country. We may be proud that Britain, which has given the lead in so many things in the world is still in the forefront of social advance.” In his speech to the nation, Attlee presented a vision of Britain’s new moral leadership as one based in social democratic citizenship. He stressed the growing recognition that Britons “must combine together to meet contingencies with which we cannot cope as individual citizens.” As a plan for collective security, the Labour Government’s social program met the needs not of a “particular section of the community,” but created a service that was “comprehensive and available to every citizen.” Instead of defining poverty and welfare in individual terms, collective provision would make the equality of citizens within the community possible.

Attlee’s speech paid tribute to those individuals working through voluntary organizations, who provided insurance and services in the era now coming to a close. The new social security plan came into effect “not as the ending of your work, but as its fulfillment.” He hoped these individuals would “find a field for your generous impulses and public spirit.” The inauguration of comprehensive social services did not “disinherit” the voluntary spirit, as Frank Prochaska has argued, but reframed and redeployed its energies. Voluntary organizations who had long provided welfare assistance at the local level, would find a new role helping citizens access state services. Their place in the community would not only assist citizens secure their social rights, but also to continue their historical role as pioneers of new forms of social work. While voluntary agencies could properly be described as “governing institutions” as sketched in the work of Pat Thane and Helen McCarthy, their work invested in the local delivery of state welfare. While government funds financed state welfare, local offices delivered

---

2 Ibid.
3 Frank Prochaska, Christianity and Social Service in Modern Britain: The Disinherited Spirit (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
Introduction

national services. In addition to the local offices of the National Assistance Board and Labour Exchanges, the local authority oversaw the provision of education and health services as well as a broad range of utility services such as water, sewage, and garbage. In an era of significant local government reorganization, voluntary agencies operated within a local authority unit, and they made their claims to the elected council and the bureaucratic offices of the local authority, whether London borough, metropolitan county, or shire county. The local provision of services shaped the type of work locally based community relations councils performed.

Despite the ambitions of welfare to create equality within the community, the migration of Commonwealth Citizens brought the problems of welfare provision into sharp relief. As Virginia Noble has argued, Commonwealth Citizens, particularly single women, encountered bureaucratic hostility in their efforts to claim National Assistance. In partnership with Commonwealth Citizens, social workers formed local voluntary organizations called community relations councils to address the welfare needs of Commonwealth Citizens. Local community relations councils acted as conduits to express the welfare needs of Commonwealth Citizens and to mobilize the community to provide solutions. The council brought together representatives of various sections of the community—the local authority, voluntary social service agencies, concerned citizens, and importantly, Commonwealth Citizens themselves. With an emphasis on welfare needs, the local community relations councils sponsored a variety of programs, from housing associations to employment advice centers to nursery facilities and English language classes. In addition to these advisory and welfare services, they also educated social workers and educators working within statutory agencies and the wider public on the backgrounds of Commonwealth Citizens and their reasons for migration. In doing so, they mobilized communal forms of representation to secure the social rights of Commonwealth Citizens. They advocated, as a community, to the local authority to more equitably provide services. Claiming to represent the whole community of a local area entailed constant debate over the question of who participated on these councils, particularly when it came to securing appropriate representation of Commonwealth Citizens.

Welfare created the terms through which citizenship was negotiated in the era of social democracy. Community relations operated in the space between citizens and the state, between the recognition of Commonwealth Citizens as Britons and the discrimination they faced in the labor and housing markets. In an effort to promote the universalist goals of social democracy, state investment contributed to the expansion of community relations throughout Britain. Paradoxically, however, community relations would also deepen the sense that Commonwealth Citizens were defined by their belonging to distinct cultural communities.


II. The Growth of Community Relations

From the onset of state welfare services in 1948, Commonwealth Citizens encountered public intransigence concerning their social rights and scrutiny for the potential strain they placed on welfare. Local authorities often supported early community relations councils as a solution to “the immigrant problem,” but the councils themselves responded to the immigrant’s problems. The incidence of difficulties in securing employment and housing faced by Commonwealth citizens spurred the activity of local citizens to create community relations councils. These concerned citizens included clergymen, social workers, and Commonwealth Citizens themselves. Importantly, these local councils mapped the territory of their work within local authority boundaries and sought to facilitate the provision of welfare in that area. The boundaries of these local authority areas contained the community of social democracy and shaped these local forms of civic and institutional participation.

In 1960, nine community relations councils existed in Britain (figure 1).

![Voluntary Liaison Committees - 1960](image_url)
Introduction

Early councils operated in the Midlands and in North London, areas that became particularly known for their “immigrant problem.” Community relations councils liaised with the Commonwealth Citizens in their midst to help migrants adjust themselves to British conditions. These councils not only responded to and attempted to change local conditions, they incorporated imperial ideas of community development and management as well as a range of personnel associated with the decolonizing empire.

While voluntary councils worked in partnership with governments of the Commonwealth to secure the social rights of Commonwealth Citizens, investment by the domestic British state in the 1960s expanded and transformed the nature of community relations. In 1965, in an attempt to respond to increased public outcry, both against and on behalf of migrants, the government decided to fund local community relations councils on a wide scale. The government assumed responsibility to manage diversity, in financial terms, but the work remained devolved to local councils. This financial investment spurred the growth of local community relations councils and reconfigured the relationship between the Commonwealth Citizen and the local community. Community relations became the counterpart to race relations, legislative efforts to make discrimination illegal. The domestic British State took over from the voluntary sector and the governments of the West Indies and Pakistan to become the main source of information on community relations. They organized conferences and professional training, prepared guidelines on the work of community relations, and sought to bring local variations into a coherent strategy for managing diversity.

In 1970, 81 community relations councils operated in Britain (figure 2), not only in large cities, but in provincial towns and even rural areas throughout England.
The growth in the number of community relations councils changed the pattern and shape of their work. In the early years, community relations councils emphasized local circumstances and the structural conditions of the late empire that governed migration. With the growth of new councils and new community relations officers, the patterns of information as well as the nature of the work shifted, as community relations officers began to insist that Commonwealth Citizens must organize themselves. The central commission began to direct the forms of community relations work and set the qualifications for the ideal community relations officer. As the funding body for the post’s salary, the commission exerted influence in the local committees’ choice of candidate, changing the terms by which individuals could claim to represent the whole community. The shifting terms of the community relations officer also signaled a change in the pattern of the work of community relations councils. New initiatives favored a community development approach that made communities responsible for organizing their own welfare. Increasingly, community relations councils defined Commonwealth Citizens by their belonging to cultural communities.
Introduction

The 1970s saw a further growth in community relations, not only throughout England, but in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. By 1980, there were 103 committees (figure 3).

With the inclusion of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, community relations could now claim to be a truly national program. Of course, each of these locations had long histories of managing diversity. In Cardiff and Glasgow, long-standing populations of imperial subjects settled in each of these cities to work in the shipping industry, and the Government of Pakistan maintained a welfare office in Glasgow. Social workers from Wales and Scotland became involved in the project of community relations from its beginning, through their participation in conferences, workshops and journals, but because of the older forms of voluntary welfare established in those areas, they did not form community relations councils until the provision of state funding. Of course, the moment of growth in community relations in Wales and Scotland coincided with the growth of nationalism in each of those areas. In particular, Scottish community relations officers argued for a more devolved structure of community relations that accommodated the particular conditions of Scotland. One of the terms by which Scots argued...
for independence from Westminster, was in their ability to better represent the communities of Commonwealth Citizens settled in Scotland.

Northern Ireland presents a different challenge to providing a geographic account of community relations. Community relations came to be favored by the government as a solution to the growing troubles in Northern Ireland in the 1960s. Rather than accommodating Commonwealth Citizens, community relations in Northern Ireland responded to the communal tensions between Protestants and Catholics. The Irish case points to the complex relationship between community relations at the local and national level. Increased government funding supported the expansion of community relations councils throughout Britain, but each council insisted on the importance of the local conditions of welfare. In addition to a growing consensus that separate ethnic communities possessed discrete “cultures,” the spread of the post-1965 community relations model increasingly challenged the abilities of a national framework to accommodate its internal differences.

By the 1980s, four challenges brought the particular configuration of community relations to an end. First, policy makers, social workers and Commonwealth Citizens turned to the language of cultural separatism. Beginning in the early 1960s, community relations workers explained Commonwealth Citizens’ welfare needs in terms of their cultural background. By the 1970s, Commonwealth Citizens likewise challenged the ability of the whole community to secure individual social rights. They mobilized cultural arguments of their own to claim their ability to represent themselves and critiqued the universal provision of welfare services. The second challenge to community relations came through passage of the British Nationality Act in 1981. The act brought an end to the category Commonwealth Citizen. The Commonwealth Citizen was now an ethnic minority Briton, defined by political belonging to the nation, but mediated by his or her cultural identity. These two conditions dovetailed with a new right critique that claimed the cultural accommodation of Commonwealth Citizens perpetuated their disadvantage and replaced the language of communal provision with a language of individual choice. Fourthly, community relations saw a decline in government funding and local authorities assumed the burden of ensuring the access to services of Commonwealth Citizens. No longer would the whole community come together to meet the individual’s welfare needs. Instead, ethnic minority Britons negotiated the terms of their welfare as members of distinct cultural communities.

III. Historiography: Britain’s Diversity

This project engages with histories of the late empire that argue for an imperial social formation, for a shared, although uneven, social structure shaped by the traffic between the metropole and colonies. These histories emerged from the very conditions this project engages. Community relations shaped the forms of knowledge produced to discuss Britain’s diversity, not only the social science literature created in the period, but the imperial histories written since. Community relations appears in this literature but is often unaddressed in favor of understanding diversity in terms of race and migration. Examining the contestations of community heightens the visibility of the moments when particular forms of identification
emerged and the ends to which they were mobilized. Produced by the particular social and political conditions of the late empire, the social categories forged in the era of community relations created the terms by which we understand diversity in Britain today, and the stories we tell to explain it.

Social scientists in the period produced the first attempts to understand the changing social demographics of Britain. Recent scholarship on the social sciences in imperial Britain demonstrates the ways academic research was an institutional product of the state and also sought to shape its forms of rule. However, the state also limited the mobility of researchers deemed radical, creating the conditions by which anthropologists studying the forms of modernity in the empire turned to studying the cultural forms of Britain. This turn to producing an academic study of Britain shaped the way Britons understood themselves and helped to create a sense that British society was undergoing tremendous change. These conditions of production shaped the study of the settlement of Commonwealth Citizens in Britain, and the social scientists whose work is discussed here appear in later chapters of the dissertation as participants in community relations. This engagement between social scientists and social service practitioners produced the conditions by which historians turned to empire to explain the place of ethnic minorities in the nation.

The first era of studies solidified a sense of Britain as a homogenous community by examining the adaptations of newcomers and the extent to which these newcomers constituted a community. One of the first studies of Commonwealth Citizens, Kenneth Little’s *Negroes in Britain*, studied an area of Cardiff called Bute Town. Little defined his community as geographically discrete and formed through the common interests of shared professional work in the shipping trades. His most famous students Michael Banton and Sheila Patterson contributed to this field with their studies of London. Patterson argued that West Indians in London did not constitute a community because they did not share common interests. In this early work, social researchers did not believe that West Indians constituted a discrete community, but instead integrated themselves into the local communities of Britain.

While social researchers of the Edinburgh school focused on problems of employment, housing and leisure, social psychologists turned to the problems of identification faced by Commonwealth Citizens. Henri Tajfel contributed to studies of “in-groups” and “out-groups,”

---


Introduction

which showed that groups were constituted internally and externally”. In addition, social psychologist Marie Jahoda translated her studies of anti-Semitism to understand the ways native Britons turned their negative feelings towards the newcomers into dislike for the entire group. These studies showed the importance of understanding British hostility as a limit to successful integration, and British prejudice came to be understood as a fact of community life. These two authors frequently participated in social work conferences, and more broadly, the interdependence of researchers and community relations workers is shown by the extent to which social scientists turned to social workers to conduct local surveys.

Scholarship in the 1950s and early 1960s produced studies of local areas and painted an unchanging British culture, slowly adapting to the presence of Commonwealth Citizens. After 1958, optimism towards successful integration soured, and the public looked to the state to limit the numbers of immigrants and also ensure fair treatment towards Commonwealth Citizens. The status of Commonwealth Citizens increasingly became a political issue as the press debated how many migrants Britain could successfully integrate. From the mid-1960s, social scientists began studying relationships between black and white Britons and presented those relationships as deeply conflictual. Studies by John Rex and Robert Moore and Michael Hill and Ruth Issacharoff argued that the inefficacy of community relations councils contributed to the depoliticization of black communities. Through a survey of Nottingham, the American Sociologist Ira Katznelson added to the view that local community relations councils exercised a form of social control to pacify black populations. While rooted in case studies conducted at the local level, these studies produced a theoretical understanding of racialized conflict. They contributed to a sense of the enormous divide between white and black Britons and argued that black Britons must organize themselves in their own interests and to gain political standing in the nation. Importantly, this set of scholars argued that white racism, in daily encounters and political institutions, produced discrete black communities.

While these authors deployed Marxist forms of analysis in the interests of reforming the racism of British political institutions, others argued that the state itself propagated racism. A. Sivanandan at the Institute of Race Relations examined the ways race and class contributed to the disadvantage of Commonwealth Citizens in Britain. Sivanandan argued that racist sentiment deployed by elites divided the working class and kept it from realizing its revolutionary

---

Introduction

potential. By the late 1970s, these analyses of British society portrayed deep and insurmountable divisions between the interests of white Britons and black Britons.

Scholars not only sought structural forms of explanation for the disadvantage faced by black Britons, they also sought to understand the ways that culture reinforced their exclusion from the nation. For many scholars involved with the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, analyzing the forms of racism motivated them to seek different frameworks from Marxist analysis. In their discussions of cultural politics, mobilization around the nation excluded those Britons whose family histories were rooted elsewhere. These scholars continued to present a deeply divided society, but in presenting cultural forms of explanation they changed the terms of participation and exclusion experienced by ethnic minorities in British society. It was not political power or economic equality that black Britons needed, but forms of national identity that acknowledged their place in the nation.

The Scarman Report of 1981, which looked into the roots of the 1981 riots, confirmed the racism of state institutions and the continuing discrimination experienced by Black Britons. Social scientists succeeded in raising awareness of the domestic problem of race, and historians became the experts of choice to explain the imperial roots of racial inequality and the routes by which it maintained a hold on the British Isles. One set of scholars sought to uncover the longer history of the “black” presence in Britain, arguing against narratives that people of color first arrived on British shores in 1948. Another set of scholars showed the ways that the metropole and the empire constituted each other. This scholarship paid attention to the ways the imperial context shaped domestic categories of race, gender, nation, and sexuality. Not only did historians look overseas to understand the conditions that produced contemporary race relations, but scholars historicized Britishness to explain the ways exclusionary practices framed national understanding in the face of changing global circumstances. This historical work showed the ways imperial engagements shaped British society and accounted for the presence of ethnic minorities in the nation through a longer shared history of empire.

Historians not only looked out to the empire to show its impact domestically, they also located the particular struggles of imperial migrants in Britain in the context of these imperial contestations. In the late empire, a sense of imperial Britishness imbued colonial subjects’

15 *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and Racism in 70s Britain* (London: Hutchinson in association with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, 1982).
Introduction

arguments for recognition and rights, and this language of imperial belonging also shaped their struggles in Britain. Laura Tabili examined how colonial subjects in port cities in Britain mobilized the rhetoric of imperial belonging in the face of local officials who did not recognize their standing. Scholars of immigration law, who argue that securing the international status of Britain in the era of decolonization motivated the creation of the British Nationality Act in 1948, have also shown the distance between the rhetoric of imperial belonging and reality of exclusion. The ability of Commonwealth Citizens to migrate freely to Britain provoked criticism within Britain and led to a succession of laws beginning in 1962 that limited the numbers who could enter the country to those in possession of a work voucher and those with kinship ties to Britain. In the era of decolonization, an increasingly limited definition of Britishness excluded those Commonwealth Citizens who migrated to Britain.

At the time and to this day, a variety of commentators understood the relationship between immigration controls and the status of Commonwealth Citizens in Britain. In the era of decolonization, the increased presence of Britons of color produced a reactionary mobilization of whiteness. As Chris Waters and others have shown, the study of migration itself was shaped by these larger political processes and changing ideas of national identity. Much of this scholarship reinforces a sense of Britishness as white and colonial subjects as perpetual outsiders of the nation.

More recently, scholars have interrogated the terms of race relations to instead chart the emergence of multiculturalism. Jordanna Bailkin has shown the ways decolonization impacted the domestic British state through her study of deportation, marriage law, and the forms of welfare available to Commonwealth Citizens in Britain. Bailkin shows the competing claims of different arms of the state to accommodate the cultural difference presented by Commonwealth Citizens in Britain. She argues that the exigencies of re-engaging newly independent nations shaped these forms of welfare in the metropole. While Bailkin places the emergence of multiculturalism in the context of the domestic British state’s management of decolonization, David Feldman argues the state worked in concert with white, middle-class, Anglican elites to preserve their status. Their efforts to accommodate the cultural difference of

---


Commonwealth Citizens ensured their place as the facilitators of diversity. In Elizabeth Buettner’s estimation, even working class Britons became privileged arbiters of minority culture. “Going for an Indian” came to stand for a multicultural stance that asked very little of native Britons, while masking the complicated histories of the migrants whose restaurants they patronized. As these authors show, multiculturalism emerged from a larger engagement with the politics of culture in the late empire, depended upon forms of representation and authority, and occluded the lived experiences of Commonwealth Citizens.

My research builds on this work, and extends it by further engaging the political and social conditions of the late empire and paying attention to the local contestations of community and diversity. The shifting language of the whole community and the production of discrete cultural communities within that framework shows the ways social democratic community created the conditions for multiculturalism. Highlighting local stories, but in their articulation with national, imperial, and global currents, expands the range of actors who participated not only in community relations, but also in the making of welfare.

In arguing for the relationship between local and imperial practices of community, I show the ways local voluntary societies incorporated a variety of imperial personnel and their ideas of community management. The social politics of the late empire mobilized both an imperial identity through which colonial subjects made their claims for independence, but also produced a sense of cultural nationalism that defied forms of imperial rule. Community relations incorporated different ideas of colonial community in different moments, and these engagements reproduced the conditions of imperial politics within Britain and redeployed their vocabularies of culture and community. Community development as a strategy for promoting the internal development of communities found favor from the late 1950s, but with the return of imperial administrators from posts in the decolonizing empire, imperial strategies of policing and visions of communal discord increasingly impacted the form of community relations. Throughout the postwar era, the tensions between wider belonging and more exclusive identities resonated in the local communities of Britain.

Efforts to mobilize community incorporated a variety of actors who sought to ensure the social rights of all Britons. This civic and institutional form of community buoyed investment in the individual citizen’s participation in the social democratic nation. If Commonwealth Citizenship categorized the acceptance, with conditions, of migrants from the former empire for this entire period, then it allows us to pay attention to when and how community relations mobilized different categories of belonging and the ways in which cultural forms of identity emerged and gained currency. In this respect, my work has been influenced by scholars in

26 Mrinalini Sinha, Specters of Mother India: The Global Restructuring of an Empire (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Banerjee, Becoming Imperial Citizens.
Introduction

South Asian history, whose work pays attention to social categories and the moments in which they become important to the state, but also to individuals who are compelled by these forms of identity and identification for personal and political reasons.27

I am also indebted to scholars working in the field of cultural studies, particularly Stuart Hall, who has gestured to the ways identity as a historical process is shaped by struggles of consciousness and self-recognition, particularly in societies structured in dominance.28 The articulation of cultural identities within social work discourse was not aberrant to the project of social democracy nor did it not simply present its limits. Rather, the cultivation of cultural difference through the languages of community was itself based on the forms of corporate identity and pluralist representative structures through which social democracy worked. Commonwealth Citizens were not inherently members of cultural communities, but the cultural basis of their participation emerged in particular moments and through the particular forms of community organization in the era of social democracy.

This participation occurred in national and imperial registers, but understanding the politics of participation at the local level is crucial to the argument of this dissertation. By emphasizing local archives, I expand the actors involved in the story of integrating Commonwealth Citizens in the nation. This not only allows me to argue for the ways imperial forms of community management filtered into localities, but to also show the local terms of engagement. Expanding beyond parliament, Whitehall, and cosmopolitan London also shows the vernacular engagements of those who were invested in securing the social rights of Commonwealth Citizens. Importantly, I take seriously the involvement of Commonwealth Citizens within local voluntary councils to show the terms of their participation in the project of community relations. In doing so, I show the range of associational life of Commonwealth Citizens, those who worked within community relations as well as those who rejected this model of organization. Rather than abject objects of discrimination, they were citizens, and important actors who participated as social workers, community relations officers, members of voluntary societies, newspaper publishers, writers, and as recipients of state welfare. Examining the terms of their engagement shows the deeply conflictual project of community relations—a project whose ambition was to realize the project of universal social rights, but whose structures ultimately confined Commonwealth Citizens to their belonging to specific communities.

By the 1980s, the project of universal social provision gave way to a multicultural understanding of the nation. Rather than being inherently opposed to each other, these two models of social provision demonstrate the persistent problem of community in postwar Britain.

Introduction

Looking back at the social democratic formation of community relations allows us to rethink the terms of participation of citizens in society and consider alternative forms of civic engagement.

IV. Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is structured in a loose chronology to show the rise and fall of community relations, accounting for the particular political and social context that produced it as well as the changed context that saw its demise. I begin and end in particular localities to show the ways that creating a national infrastructure for community relations changed the terms of participation at the local level.

In chapter one, I show the ways the late imperial politics of welfare made Commonwealth Citizens particularly visible in Britain. In the late 1940s and 1950s, local voluntary organizations made efforts in partnership with Commonwealth Citizens to secure their social rights. Social democracy created the citizen’s access to services as a social right, and social workers sought to provide information and advice ensured the equitable delivery of services. These early community relations efforts countered discrimination in employment. When these efforts failed, they increasingly turned to preparing Commonwealth Citizens for the workplace, offering advice on cultural norms training in technical skills.

As social workers employed by community relations councils assisted Commonwealth Citizens’ access to employment, housing and services, they turned to the Migrant Services Division of the West Indies Commission for advice. The second chapter examines how this agency of the federated government of the West Indies informed local social workers and the forms of integration they advocated. They increasingly favored a community development model, which organized community around the charismatic charm and bureaucratic ability of leaders. Community relations recognized Commonwealth Citizens as both British and colonial, and these overlapping identities created them as part of both the community of social democracy and members of local ‘coloured’ communities.

In the third chapter, I examine the British framework of community relations. The introduction of government funds for community relations did not create a new structure, but deepened and extended forms of voluntary association. In the 1950s and early 1960s, social workers depended on academic expertise to share their knowledge of Commonwealth Citizens, the patterns of prejudice, and diverse societies. As social workers discovered Pakistanis, they turned to experts chosen by the High Commission of Pakistan to understand their social and cultural background. Commonwealth Citizens were increasingly understood as members of discrete communities, remade in Britain after their migrations. When the domestic British State took responsibility for “the immigrant problem,” it framed a British way of community relations around these patterns of understanding culture to facilitate welfare. The government looked to community relations councils and also examined efforts by other European nations to deal with immigrants and welfare. Meanwhile, Commonwealth Citizens, influenced by the American Civil Rights movement, challenged the efforts of the government to define the problems of diversity, and demanded institutional protections against discrimination. The British way of community relations invested local communities with the responsibility to foster integration, and
Introduction

increasingly local community relations councils turned to organizing the cultural communities of Commonwealth Citizens.

In the fourth chapter, I examine the role of the community relations officer, the professional social worker charged with managing local community relations councils. Although financed by government funds after 1965, the community relations officer was nevertheless responsible to his voluntary local council. Debates over the role of the officer show conflict over the nature of community relations work: did community relations work on behalf of the whole community to secure individual social rights, or did they work on behalf of communities of Commonwealth Citizens? I examine the ideal community relations officer through both the training recommended by the Community Relations Commission, as well as the ways community relations officers represented their work. While in the earlier era of community relations, the officer was embedded in local communities and the Commonwealth Citizen represented one of a range of challenges to the provision of services, increasingly, the implementation of a general practice of community relations presented Commonwealth Citizens as a community apart from the local communities of Britain.

In the fifth chapter, I show the ways community relations fell apart from below through cultural critiques of the universal provision of social services. Even as the government invested in promoting community development within communities of Commonwealth Citizens, two movements in London identified with black cultural nationalism rejected the model of community relations and its claims to organize on behalf of black Britons. While in London, these movements critiqued the colonialism of community relations, in West Yorkshire, the community relations council respected the traditionalism of the Asian family and worked to secure their particular social rights based on a sense of their culture. These two challenges to community relations represented a new politics of identity and discounted the ability of the whole community to secure the social rights of individual citizens.

V. Conclusion

Community relations formed the institutional infrastructure by which ideas of discrete cultural communities became embedded in British social life. It drew from older forms of corporate representation and also from imperial visions of communalism. Understanding community relations makes visible the forms of information and advice that made welfare possible and illustrates the relationship between voluntary organizations and the state in the provision of services. Most importantly, examining community relations shows the ways community identities shaped the participation of Commonwealth Citizens in broader society. Community relations, by drawing from both voluntary social service and forms of imperial rule, created the conditions for multiculturalism, which has made identity with cultural communities a fact of these Britons’ lives.

Recently, multiculturalism has been challenged from the right and the left in Britain. The Conservative Prime Minister points to the dangers of migrants’ self-segregation without
Introduction

acknowledging the structural inequalities that produce their separation. Ken Loach’s 2013 film, *The Spirit of ’45*, argues for a return to the initiative and demands of social democracy, but in doing so presents a homogenous, white British community. The problems of producing the equitable community envisioned by Clement Attlee continue to challenge citizens in Britain and in many others nations in an age of increasing economic inequality. As this dissertation shows, the dream of collective security always involved the negotiation of community, locally, nationally and internationally. In order to understand both the history of social democracy and its possible future, we must think not only in terms of ideology and state bureaucracy, but in terms of what state welfare meant on the ground. To Commonwealth Citizens and their allies, welfare was always a question of standing, of identity, and equality in the community. The long conjuncture of social democracy and the end of empire produced the Commonwealth Citizen and community relations; returning to the history of this era and foregrounding the contested nature of community provides alternatives to the contemporary conventional wisdom that cultural diversity and solidarity are mutually exclusive.

---


Chapter 1: Social Democratic Community  

In popular memory and historical writing, the *Empire Windrush* serves as an iconic symbol of the “irresistible rise” of multicultural Britain. Since 1988, Afro-Caribbean Britons have celebrated the ship’s landing as a landmark date of arrival, marking their “staying power” in Britain.\(^2\) The docking of the *Empire Windrush* at Tilbury on June 21, 1948, marked a historic event, but not for marking a new presence of colonial subjects in the metropole. By 1948, Britain had been a multi-ethnic empire for over two centuries, the metropole shaped by a long-standing traffic with the colonies.\(^3\) The arrival of the *Windrush* is notable not for the “sudden

---

1 TopFoto, *Jamaican Immigrants on Board the Ex-troopship, Empire Windrush at Tilbury. An RAF Recruiting Officer Speaks to a Group of Men Who Want to Join the Airforce*, 1948.
presence of colonial subjects in the metropole, but for the increased visibility of these subjects in the context of forging state welfare and insuring access to its services.

This chapter examines efforts to secure Commonwealth Citizens their social rights. After sketching the particular conjuncture of the late empire and social democracy that made the welfare struggles of Commonwealth Citizens particularly visible, I turn to the work of a voluntary social service council in Nottingham. After racially-motivated “riots” in 1958 in Nottingham and Notting Hill, Nottingham came to national attention as a site of racial disturbance and the “immigrant problem.” Commentators rarely defined the immigrant problem, but it often implied the social stresses, neighborly and official, brought by Commonwealth Citizens. As more local authority areas in Britain came to see themselves as potential sites of “the immigrant problem,” they looked to Nottingham as a model of how a city coped with this change. Nottingham then, was not a paradigmatic or typical site for demographic reasons, but came to serve as a model of community organization that could be replicated throughout Britain. This chapter examines not only how Nottingham came to be perceived as a community adapting to the increased presence of Commonwealth Citizens, but how the city experienced this change.

This chapter focuses on the early years of the Nottingham Commonwealth Citizens Consultative Committee, its relationship to local West Indian associations, and its attempts to integrate Commonwealth Citizens into the regular social life of the community. In the 1950s, it was largely West Indians that came to the attention of social workers through the challenge they posed to social democratic community. Although increasing numbers of Indians and Pakistanis entered Britain in these years, and they were also Commonwealth Citizens, their status as citizens of independent nations kept them at a distance from social workers. The colonial status of the West Indians propelled social work discourse and practice, and they became the representative Commonwealth Citizen. The attention they received from both domestic British social workers and the West Indies Commission in Britain, produced them as both British and colonial subjects and propelled the organization of community around them. The second chapter will examine the work of the West Indies Commission, but here I consider how social democratic community mobilized to aid Commonwealth Citizens secure their social rights.

I. The Windrush and Commonwealth Citizenship

The Empire Windrush’s maiden voyage participated in a larger migratory moment that prompted a broader rethinking of borders and national identity in the wake of World War II. The Second World War occasioned one of the largest population movements in human history, one felt in Europe and throughout the world. This not only involved soldiers, demobilized from military service, but millions reclassified or left stateless by the emergent geopolitical settlement. In the summer of 1945, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration housed seven million displaced persons in camps throughout Europe, facilitating their

---

5 At the time and to this day there is dispute about the nature of the disturbances. However, they became a national narrative seized upon by those who desired to limit migration. Chapter 2 will discuss the “riots” further.
Chapter 1: Problems

repatriation, occasionally against their wishes. The other major displacement of persons occurred not as a direct consequence of the war and its peace, but through the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947. Scholars estimate that 21 million people crossed the new borders created at partition, Hindus and Muslims relocating to align their religion, nationality and citizenship. This particular movement saw a spectacular amount of personal violence throughout Northern India and Pakistan and foreshadowed the complicated extrication of nation-states from the British Empire in the years of decolonization. It was not only the new nations of Europe and the Commonwealth that experienced a rethinking of citizenship through reconciling national identity and minority status—Britain too would have to negotiate changes in national identity at the end of the empire.

In addition to those compelled to cross these changing borders, there were also those forced by the war to remain still. On June 8, 1948, The Times published a letter from W. G. Hendricks of Black River, Jamaica:

There are ... a number of persons in Jamaica who wish to visit Britain but who are finding it, and have found it, very difficult in obtaining passages. It appears to me that these persons have some money to spend in the Old Country. Some have relatives and would like to visit them: others would like to put their children at school. Cannot something be done to relieve the situation?

Hendricks reminded the metropole of its obligations to the imperial family overseas. The Hendricks were an old Jamaica family, making their money in logwood. Nine Hendricks had signed a letter in support of Governor Eyre after his suppression of the Morant Bay Uprising in 1866. Hendricks refers to the “Old Country” to signal the ties of blood and descent that attracted those Jamaicans on whose behalf he is writing. His language demonstrates the stratifications of class and color taken for granted by the elite of Jamaican colonial society. In fact, the possibility of increased transportation to Britain excited all sections of Jamaican society, not just those who celebrated ties of ancestry to Britain. Looking back, a passenger


10 “From the Inhabitants of Jamaica to His Excellency, Edward John Eyre, Esquire, Governor of Jamaica,” in *Jamaica: Addresses to His Excellency, Edward John Eyre, Esquire, &c., &c.*, 1865, 1866 (Kingston: M. Cordova and Co, 1866), 56–83.

Chapter 1: Problems

from the Windrush remembered the great anticipation news of the boat’s passage to Britain caused in Kingston to those working class Jamaicans facing rural poverty, urban underemployment, and the closing of long-standing labor migration routes to the United States and Western Caribbean.12

It was not lost on the passengers that the ship sailed from Kingston on Empire Day, May 24, 1948. The Windrush’s 1,027 passengers represented the breadth of late imperial society, including those returning to Britain after the fulfillment of colonial service and private commissions, those in transit elsewhere, and those moving to Britain to begin new lives. The ships passenger list recorded 418 of these passengers as British subjects traveling ‘A’ Class. These travellers were largely families—men, women and children. The passenger list records their occupations as missionaries, planters, lawyers, civil servants, spinsters and students. Some stated their plans to live permanently in Britain, while others intended to live elsewhere in the British Empire. The Windrush also carried 23 seamen travelling ‘B’ Class, all but one classified as English, and all intending to make their homes in England. The last recorded and largest segment of the passenger list was ‘C’ class, comprising 504 British subjects, including 435 men identifying their “Country of Last Permanent Residence” as Jamaica.13 The ‘C’ class fare was £28.10, and Sam King recalled his father sold three cows to raise the money for his voyage.14 It is significant that the stated categories included occupation, country of residence, Ticket Class, and age. Importantly, all of these passengers were considered in common as British subjects.

The main political distinction of the passenger list was the distinction between British subjects and aliens. 73 aliens traveled on the ship, including 65 Polish women and children returning to Europe from Mexico. 10,000 Poles fled at the start of the war to camps in the British Empire and Mexico. In Mexico, they worked at an agricultural camp organized and supported by funds from Polish organizations in the United States. While many traveled to the States at the closing of the work camps, on the Windrush passenger list, the families marked their destination as camps in the Midlands and the North of England, perhaps joining husbands and fathers who had migrated to Britain as European Voluntary Workers.15 The postwar Labour Government recruited 345,000 European aliens to supply labor for the expanding British economy. Kathleen Paul argues this recruitment was a response to government anxiety concerning the declining birth rate, a shortage of labour, and the demands of paying back the

---

12 The McCarren-Walter Act of 1952 would formally close the United States to migrants from the Caribbean. It would also serve as a weapon in the hands of the U. S. Government against radicals, such as Claudia Jones. John Munro, “‘Holding the Whole Ball of Wax Together’: Imperial History, McCarthyism, and the African American Freedom Movement” (presented at the Stokes Seminar, Department of History, Dalhousie University, 2013). “S. S. Empire Windrush - Jamaican Unemployed - Memo by SoS for the Colonies,” June 18, 1948, CO 876/88, The National Archives (hereafter TNA); Sam King, “500 Jamaicans” (Lambeth Council, 1988), 0/759, Lambeth Archives.
13 They were joined by one eight-year-old boy, Aston MacLachlan, presumably traveling with his brothers Edward and Godfrey to Limehouse. “Summary of British and Alien Passengers,” n.d., BT 26/1237, TNA.
government’s war debt. While this group of migrants experienced some hostility on the part of unions and individual employers, largely, they were accepted by British society on the basis of their shared experience of the war. In Keighley, West Yorkshire, for instance, the local paper recorded the pride with which long-standing residents welcomed their new European neighbors.

Popular memory forgets many of the passengers who traveled on the *Windrush*. At the time, a figure of “492 Jamaicans” was widely reported, and this subset has been reproduced as the entirety the *Windrush*’s passengers, not the “954 British Subjects” and “73 aliens.” In the midst of this global movement of people and reconfiguration of political identities, how did one set of *Windrush* passengers—male, British subjects from the colonies—come to prominence, while the other *Windrush* passengers were obscured in popular memory? The answer concerns the provision of welfare in the late empire. The West Indians travelling to Britain on the *Windrush* were not citizens of Jamaica or Trinidad, or considered foreign nationals like the Poles, but were Commonwealth Citizens and British Subjects. The British Nationality Act, passed in 1948, created the political unit the United Kingdom and Colonies and extended the category British Subject and Commonwealth Citizen to all in the decolonizing empire. This Commonwealth now included not only the settler dominions of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa, but also the republics of India and Pakistan, and the remaining formal colonies of the British Empire. The British Government extended citizenship to all in the Commonwealth as a political maneuver to claim international authority and as a concession to colonies to stave off further independence movements. Kathleen Paul argues policy makers understood the status Commonwealth Citizen and British subject as a political category and not as a national identity. Ensuring the social rights of Commonwealth Citizens in Britain would test the boundaries of social democratic citizenship, revealing the slippages between political inclusion and national exclusion.

The *Windrush* was not the first ship to carry West Indian passengers to Britain after World War II, but it was the first to arrive after the onset of state welfare services. The S. S. *Ormonde* landed in Britain in May of 1947, and the S. S. *Almanzora* arrived in Southampton in December, 1947. Local branches of the Ministry of Labour found employment for the hundred or so West Indian passengers aboard the *Almanzora*. When the Colonial Office asked the Ministry of Labour how many of these passengers found employment, the Ministry of Labour replied that they would not provide regular updates on the employment status of these

---

18 Paul, *Whitewashing Britain*.
Chapter 1: Problems

colonial workers. On May 11, 1948, a “bombshell” arrived to the Colonial Office in the form of a telegram from the Acting Governor of Jamaica “[regretting] to inform” them that perhaps 450 Jamaicans were booking troop deck passage to Britain on the Empire Windrush. The news initiated a flurry of activity, as officials in the Colonial Office coordinated a number of government departments as part of “Operation Wind Up.” The Colonial Office believed that the men would find employment without a problem; it was the question of accommodation that concerned them. Officers worried for the political consequences in the West Indies and in Britain if this large number of Commonwealth Citizens created a “scandal” by sleeping on the streets of Tilbury on their arrival.

The impending arrival of the Windrush required that the Colonial Office educate their peers in the status of West Indians and the management of the empire. An internal Colonial Office document records Prime Minister Clement Atlee asking why the passengers could not be diverted to other colonies, for instance to East Africa for the groundnut scheme. The Colonial Office prepared a memo for the Prime Minister and the Cabinet on the economic and political situation in Jamaica, which emphasized the migrants’ status as British Subjects. They reported unemployment and underemployment figures of 50,000, and the efforts made under Colonial Development and Welfare Grants to boost rural agriculture in Jamaica. The Colonial Office emphasized the material restrictions of the post-war moment to excuse their responsibility for not having already developed the economy and thus preventing the “exodus.” Politically, they reported on the progress towards self-government in Jamaica and relayed to their colleagues the impossibility of dictating from London that Jamaica legislate migration restriction. They urged the Cabinet “unless there is to be a public scandal and the possibilities of disorder, some


22 Apparently, the Colonial Office had considered West Indian Labour for the groundnut scheme, but to aid in its implementation, not as a solution to the labour problem in the West Indies. By 1949, debate in the Commons should that MPs were suggesting migration to East Africa as a solution to both the problems of the groundnut scheme and to underemployment in the West Indies. W. D. Watson to A. H. Poynton, June 15, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA. The Groundnut Scheme, a plan for large-scale intensive agriculture in Tanganyika to help solve the fat shortage of the postwar years, was deemed a failure in 1951, only 4 years after it was first implemented. It was heavily commented upon at the time, and has become emblematic of the ambitions and failures of colonial development, particularly of state-driven public-private ventures. Economic projects such as the Groundnut scheme would also shape the need for community development in the colonial setting. Arthur Creech Jones, Secretary of State for the Colonies, Commons Sitting of Friday, 4 February 1949, 460 Parl. Deb., H.C. (5th Ser.) (1948–49) 2065–72, n.d., House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, http://parlipapers.chadwyck.com/hansard/fullrec.do?source=config5.cfg&id=CDSSCV0460P0-0014&DurUrl=Yes. Alan Wood, The Groundnut Affair (London: Bodley Head, 1950); James C. Scott, Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed, Yale Agrarian Studies (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).
arrangements must be made to deal with the situation.”  

In addition to educating the Cabinet on the status of West Indians and the West Indies, the Colonial Office liaised with other departments to secure accommodation and services for the passengers. Discussion with the Clerk of the London County Council and the Ministry of Health revealed the newness of state welfare. Despite the effective end of the Poor Law on May 13 with the coming into effect of National Assistance, the Colonial Office asked Poor Law Authorities in London to take responsibility for any West Indians who arrived without means. Both the London County Council and the Ministry of Health argued they could not house 500 men arriving at once, but the Clerk of the Council stated that if any of the Commonwealth Citizens did have to apply for relief under the Poor Law Act, the council would provide it by admitting them to the Camberwell Reception Centre for “wayfarers.” The difference between the *Almanzora* and the *Windrush* concerned the public provision of welfare and the negotiation of rights and resources shaped the delivery of welfare to Commonwealth Citizens.

In the minds of Whitehall Civil Servants, the Commonwealth Citizens aboard the *Windrush* were in danger of setting a precedent of preference for their welfare needs above those of native Britons and potentially encouraging further migration from the colonies. The Ministry of Labour and National Service reported that its hostels, which housed European Voluntary Workers and other laborers, could not be used for the West Indians. Even if beds were available, they did not want to establish the precedent. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour wrote, providing them housing “would be treating these men very much more favourably than our own people in this country, and furthermore it would undoubtedly we think encourage a further influx.” The Colonial Office perceived the Ministry of Labour’s position as an instance of “anti-colonialism.” Letters between officials at the Ministry of Health and the National Assistance Board further reveal their belief that the provision of services to the *Windrush* passengers would entice to further migration. The West Indians should not know “how easily people can draw a considerable income from the State.” A note from Herbert Morrison’s Office further tied the provision of welfare as an encouragement to migration:

The Lord President hopes that...the Secretary of State [for the Colonies] will be ready ...to explain what he is doing to ensure that further similar movements either from Jamaica or elsewhere in the Colonial Empire are detected and checked before they can reach such an embarrassing stage, otherwise there might be a real danger that

---

23 “S. S. Empire Windrush - Jamaican Unemployed - Memo by SoS for the Colonies.”
24 H. A. Turner to I. G. Cummings, June 8, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA; Clerk of the London County Council to A. H. Poynton, June 18, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA.
25 Ness Edwards to Lord Listowel, June 15, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA.
26 Note by I. G. Cummings, June 10, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA.
27 S. F. Wilkinson to J. E. Ballard, June 18, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA; J. E. Ballard to S. F. Wilkinson, June 18, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA.
successful efforts to secure adequate conditions for these men on arrival might actually encourage a further influx.28

More than the numbers of Commonwealth Citizens arriving in Britain, the Cabinet was concerned that the provision of social rights to these British subjects would attract further migrants. The imperial government would not treat these West Indian arrivals too well.

The final arrangements made by the Colonial Office show the multiplicity of personnel involved in the provision of welfare to the *Windrush* passengers. Officials convinced the Ministry of Transport to provide free travel vouchers to the *Windrush* passengers who had made prior plans and to provide transportation to a colonial servicemen’s hostel for those who wished to re-join the services. The Colonial Office housed the remaining passengers at the deep air raid shelter in Clapham Common for the price of two shillings per night. Officials successfully campaigned for the use of the shelter from the Ministry of War on the condition that a “responsible” person stayed with the men. Built during the later years of the war, the Deep Air Raid Shelter could house 9,600 people, and provided temporary accommodation for army personnel on leave and stranded in London for the evening. The Secretary of State for War argued that the Colonial Office could only use it for 72 hours because the shelter could not provide hot water facilities for the men. The Colonial Office believed that the men would require at least three weeks to search for employment and housing, and successfully convinced the Ministry of War to accede to the request. The length of time and the previous experience of a group of West Indians staying at the shelter displaying “unsatisfactory” behavior and “insanitary” habits, prompted the request for Colonial Office staff to supervise those staying at the shelter. In addition to a member of the welfare staff, two Jamaican social science students in London stayed with the men in Clapham.29 The Ministry of Labour arranged for a member of the Stepney Employment Exchange, experienced with dealing with “colonial labour” to work at the shelter to help the men register for and find employment. West Indians were not only the objects of welfare, but served as one of the many providers of welfare services to the *Windrush* passengers on their immediate arrival in London.

In addition to these bureaucratic efforts to prepare for the arrival of the *Windrush* passengers, Members of Parliament of both parties questioned the Minister of Labour and the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the House of Commons as to plans for the West Indian passengers. Their discussions reveal the ambivalent acceptance of West Indians as British subjects. Some parliamentarians asked why their migration could not be managed by the state, the way the Ministry of Labour recruited European Voluntary Workers and settled them in camps according to demand for their labor. The government repeatedly stated that they could not manage West Indians in the same manner as European Voluntary Workers, since as British subjects, West Indians enjoyed the right to independently make travel arrangements to Britain and to seek employment freely. While some MPs asked the government to ensure West Indians possessed skills needed in the British economy, others took the opportunity to criticize the

28 David Stephens to N. D. Watson, June 15, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA.
29 E. Shinwell to Lord Listowel, June 17, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA; Note by Cummings, June 18, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA.
Chapter 1: Problems

governments of the West Indies for the high unemployment rates that encouraged migration. Earlier, discussion had been raised concerning discrimination against people of colour—both Britons and Americans—in seeking accommodation and in being served at restaurants. Frank Soskice, the Solicitor General, stated racial discrimination was “so harmful to good relations in the British Commonwealth,” but the government could do nothing to legislate against discrimination.\footnote{Simon Driberg, Commons Sitting of Tuesday 15 June 1948, 452 Parl. Deb., H.C. (5th Ser.) (1947–48) 225, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&res_dat=xri:hcp-us&rft_dat=xri:hcp:hansard:CD5CV0452P0-0002; Frank Soskice, Solicitor General Commons Sitting of Monday, 26 April 1948, 450 Parl. Deb., H.C. (5th Ser.) (1947–48) 19, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&res_dat=xri:hcp-us&rft_dat=xri:hcp:hansard:CD5CV0450P0-0001.} This early discussion in parliament concerning what the government could and could not do for British Subjects highlights the ways Commonwealth Citizens exposed both the ambitions and limitations of social democracy. This discussion also reveals the ways the government accommodated West Indians with an eye towards conditions in the West Indies: both the structural conditions that encouraged migration, as well as the ways their treatment in Britain carried political consequences in the colonies.

At the highest levels of government, officials attempted to reconcile Commonwealth Citizens and social rights. Their efforts reveal the very political nature of social welfare not only in Britain, but in the colonies as well. The arrival of the \textit{Windrush} was bookended by the introduction of two landmark services of state welfare in Britain: National Health and National Assistance.\footnote{13 May 1948 – National Assistance Act; 5 July 1948 – NHS.} Of the 1,027 \textit{Windrush} passengers, the government transported 52 to the Colonial Servicemen’s hospital to rejoin the services; provided 204 with travel vouchers and a special train to transport them from Tilbury to central London; and housed 236 in the Clapham Deep Air Shelter.\footnote{West Indian Workers: Interim Progress Report, n. d., CO 876/88, TNA.} Of the 1,027 \textit{Windrush} passengers, the 492 who sought and received assistance officially counted, in official bookkeeping and also in wider narratives of Imperial migrants.

The booming postwar economy quickly incorporated this set of migrants from the Commonwealth; within a week the Minister of Labour could report to the House of Commons that 148 of those housed by the Colonial Office had already been placed in employment.\footnote{Simon Driberg, Commons Sitting of Tuesday 15 June 1948, 452 Parl. Deb., H.C. (5th Ser.) (1947–48) 225.} In the final account, National Assistance covered the charges of those Windrush passengers who could not pay the two shillings for their nightly accommodation. This story of the \textit{Empire Windrush} shows the ways race, colonial status and welfare heightened the visibility of one set of postwar migrants but rendered their broader contexts invisible. The British Government may have wanted to control West Indian labor, but there was nothing they could do to stop Commonwealth Citizens from seeking work in Britain.\footnote{Clive Harris, “Post-war Migration,” 22–27.} The discussions in the Commons demanded comparison of Commonwealth Citizens to European Voluntary Workers as laborers, revealing the desire of lawmakers to manage workers’ mobility in the interests of the economy and marking the bodies that could and could not be commanded. The discussion also
Chapter 1: Problems

emphasized that the Commonwealth Citizens were full British subjects, entitled to the same rights and the same freedoms. While the Ministry of Labour could not regulate the dispersal of West Indians, their local branches aided these men in their pursuit of work, and the Colonial Office, local government welfare agencies and voluntary organizations provided them with services to aid them on their arrival.

The disproportionate attention to the working class West Indians of colour reflected an attempt to reconcile the late empire and social democracy, indicative of the tensions that shaped the status of Commonwealth Citizens in Britain. West Indians were recognized as British by the state, local authorities and voluntary organizations. However, the racism they encountered in their search for employment and housing made them a particularly problematic category of person to welfare agencies not yet at the national level but at the local level. They could not be given special treatment, nor could statutory and voluntary agencies ignore their difficulties. The process of ensuring Commonwealth Citizens their access to social services, negotiated locally, brought Commonwealth Citizens to prominence as a problematic population in the era of social democracy. The solution was to be found in community.

II. Social Democracy and the Community of Welfare

The implementation of state-sponsored welfare after World War II incorporated older voluntary services, created new categories of care, and remade the relationship between the individual and the community. The National Assistance Act formally brought an end to the system of poor law relief and the workhouses that sheltered those unable to support themselves. If under the New Poor Law, welfare was conceived as outside of citizenship, then the coming of state welfare made access to services a fundamental right of citizenship. While many had received assistance outside of these institutions in the earlier era, the provision of services by local authority areas now metaphorically mapped the community onto the local authority area.

T. H. Marshall’s definition of citizenship concerned full participation in the community, not only a political community, but the full range of social life, including work and leisure. The majority of his essay, Citizenship and Social Class, concerned the historical tension between the ideal of equal citizenship in a shared community and the economic structure of market relations in Britain. He contrasted citizenship as a project of social justice with the competition necessitated by market relations. Social democracy would not necessarily transform the economic structure, but it would, he claimed, raise the basement, through the guarantee of a minimum on the part of the state. In addition to the rights the citizen could draw upon, the citizen’s duties “require that his acts should be inspired by a lively sense of responsibility towards the welfare of the community.” Marshall and others who theorized the relationship between the state, the community, and the individual sought to ensure that these relationships were reciprocal, and that one category did not subsume the others.

Marshall’s essay presented a vision for policy, but this remaking of relationships between the state, citizens, and welfare was uneven and incomplete. In addition to Marshall’s

vision of community as the site of equal status, in tension with market relations of contract, there were other powerful articulations of community, particularly as regarded the community of the white working class. These meanings of community were tied to both material circumstances and ethical commitments. In cities that experienced extensive bomb damage and those that had not, engineers and urban planners put forth visions of the ways local governments would remake their cities. These municipal plans focused on the economy, housing, and the movement of people. Between 1955 and 1985, in the name of slum clearance, local authorities demolished 1.48 million houses in England and Wales, causing 3.66 million people to move from their homes. This shift in the working population from urban centers built in the nineteenth century to housing estates fueled social scientific research into community life in villages and the urban working class. This investigation produced a nostalgic vision of the working class past through pessimistic narratives of the break down of contemporary social relationships.

Historians have challenged this narrative, proposing a more fractured sense of the day-to-day solidarities and rivalries that constituted white working class communities and the conditions that produced nostalgia for a more cooperative past. The largest basis for this nostalgia was the rising affluence and changing gender relations of the white working class. At the time and to this day, class has been the dominant category for understanding British society. Ferdynand Zweig’s studies in the 1950s and 1960s represent the increasing consciousness that rising affluence was transforming the relationship between the individual and the family, a relationship also marked by the increase of women in the workplace and their changing roles as mothers and wives. In addition to the mobility of workers seeking housing in new public and private construction, this affluence led to the decline of working class communities made by mutual help and support in the face of insecurity, as workers could now be financially self-sufficient. Affluence, argued James Cronin, allowed the working class to

Chapter 1: Problems

participate as consumer-citizens in society. \(^{42}\) At the time, this individualistic participation contributed to a sense of decline in community.

While much of this literature charting the decline of working class community insists on face-to-face encounters and personal relationships, there was also a civic and institutional sense of community that animated much of social welfare in the postwar era. In addition to rising wages, the onset of state services contributed to the destabilization of these older ties and institutions, as it was the state and its services that now ultimately protected individuals from insecurity. Community did not simply mean the totality of social relationships in a given area, or the personal relationships on a street or in a neighborhood. The displacement of individuals and the loss of older bonds meant that community could not be taken for granted, but was now something to be actively fostered and managed.

In the facilitation of community under social democracy, social workers employed by voluntary agencies played a special role, mediating between the citizen and the state, between the individual and the market. If the state now guaranteed a minimum quality of life, then voluntary organizations perceived their role to promote active citizenship and ensure the equitable delivery of services. This ideal made community the site where the gift relationships of welfare were exchanged. In response to the 1945 Manchester Plan for redevelopment, F. Douglas Weeks, the secretary of the Manchester Council of Social Service, wrote:

> This conception of a community starts from the needs of the family and the individual within the family. It relates the family to the neighborhood, the neighborhood to the district, and the district to the city. It has all the possibilities of a social revolution. Building on the experience of voluntary organisations and service units in the development of informal education, it makes possible a social life which not only has cultural value of an aesthetic kind, but which opens the door to fuller and more intelligent understanding of life in the widest range. \(^{43}\)

This ethical sense of community that emerged in relation to plans for physical reconstruction was fractal in its nesting of smaller units within ever larger ones. The type of informal education this social worker described would not only be supported through new community centers and new community associations, but would be based more broadly on democratic values of participation. This sense of the dynamic relationship between the individual and the community would impact much of the way voluntary societies saw their work as not simply complementary to the delivery of services by the state, but ensuring the independence of the citizen and the practice of democracy.

---


Weeks was employed by the Manchester Council of Social Service, a local branch of the National Council for Social Service. While the expansion of state welfare was centered on local government units charged with providing services within their boundaries, this process also initiated a shift in the role of social workers employed by voluntary agencies. The most significant of these agencies was the Council of Social Service, which was founded in 1919, building from previous organizations such as the Guilds of Help. In the interwar era, the local councils of social service sought to make the provision of services in a local authority area as efficient as possible, reducing the amount of scarce time and money squandered on repeated activity. While working locally to coordinate services reinforced the boundaries of local authority units, they also created a national network of councils, organized through central administration in London, to share information on legislation and government services, and the experiences of their members with each other and other social workers more broadly. As Pat Thane and Helen McCarthy argue, the National Council of Social Service and other voluntary organizations claimed a national role in advising government on welfare needs and contributed to pluralist forms of democratic participation in the post-war era. In coordinating the local work of welfare, Councils of Social Service believed they provided a broad perspective about the needs of the whole community.

In addition to offering support to those providing welfare, Councils of Social Service also facilitated individual access to services. During World War II, Councils of Social Service established Citizens’ Advice Bureaux, a network of volunteers to help Britons navigate the personal and official problems unleashed by the war. The Bureaux drew on older forms of personal case work, but their mission rejected the paternalistic welfare of an earlier era. In providing “information and advice for citizens by citizens,” the Bureaux aided all Britons, and equalized the relationship between providers and receivers of care, in this case, information and guidance. After the onset of state services, the provision of information and advice continued to be central to the work of welfare. Local authorities sponsored information offices, Citizens’ Advice Bureaux flourished, and local Councils of Social Service presented themselves as facilitators between individuals and the various welfare agencies. They continued to provide direct services, conduct surveys, disseminate information on welfare, and importantly, coordinate voluntary and statutory services in local authority areas throughout Britain. In doing so, they attempted to provide a “holistic” service focused on the individual, rather than the narrow, transactional provision of services by separate bureaus. In the logic of these voluntary social service organizations, community facilitated individual fulfillment and also connected ever-larger units: the individual, the family, the neighborhood, the district and the city. Thus an individual’s capacity to access services was an index of social democratic community.

---


Chapter 1: Problems

In considering social service broadly, voluntary social service agencies made claims for the connections between the provision of services to individuals and the making of community. With the onset of state services, these voluntary councils argued for their continued importance. The chairman of the Manchester Council of Social Service described their mission as one on “the frontiers of the social services where pioneers are needed to open up new territory.” In addition to advocating for those they saw at the margins of the social body, like troublesome youth and the elderly, they also provided programmatic and administrative advice to the developing community association movement. Social workers employed by Councils of Social Service organized the cultural and social centers emerging on newly built council estates and new towns, and focused on teaching community members to organize themselves. In parallel to their efforts to organize community in these newly built social spaces, social workers employed by voluntary agencies would serve as midwives to the multi-racial communities coming into being in town centers throughout Britain.

III. “Coloured People” and the Work of Community

In this section, I consider the ways employment became the predominant mode of understanding the experiences of Commonwealth Citizens. Employers turned Commonwealth Citizens away on application for jobs; paid them less than white employees, resulting in unions rejecting them to protect the incomes of their members; and forced them into certain positions based on perceptions of their racial and cultural difference. In their repetition, the problems of Commonwealth Citizens seeking employment and housing and accessing services becomes banal. But it was in their accumulation that these problems acquired significance and became visible to voluntary organizations as a challenge to social democratic community. The state, acting through local authority agencies, would not offer special accommodations to Commonwealth Citizens in fear of provoking the ire of native Britons. This inattention provided the opportunity for voluntary councils to organize the community on their behalf.

The city of Nottingham was a pioneer in efforts to integrate Commonwealth Citizens and created a model that would come to be implemented throughout the country. In the late 1940s and 1950s, Commonwealth Citizens were understood as “coloured people” or “colonial workers” by the Council of Social Service, part of the general population, but marked as distinct because of their skin pigmentation and imperial status. A particularly active Council of Social Service worked in Nottingham, and the intransigent local authority refused to hire a special officer to liaise with migrants such as the ones hired in Birmingham and Hackney, North London. In those latter areas, a local government official mediated Commonwealth Citizens’ access to services. In Nottingham, the voluntary consultative committee model brought together representatives of sectors of the community considered influential: local government, churches, industry, voluntary services, and Commonwealth Citizens themselves. In claiming to be widely representative, the Consultative Committee served as the focal point for discussions of racial discrimination and the place of Commonwealth Citizens in the local community.

Chapter 1: Problems

Examining the work of the Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People (NCCWCP) in the 1950s shows the ways voluntary organizations understood Commonwealth Citizens, the constraints on their work, and the broader networks that shaped the integration of Commonwealth Citizens. The NCCWCP translated Commonwealth Citizens to white citizens and vice versa, and in doing so mediated understanding of Commonwealth Citizens.

III.i. The Colour Bar, Clubs and Community

The formation of a committee in Nottingham in 1954 arose from discussion locally and nationally of “The Colour Bar” in Britain. Keith Waterhouse, a reporter for the Daily Mirror interviewed Liverpuddlians to emphasize the numbers of Britons of colour, born in Britain who were told to “go back to your own land,” or in one case “go back to Mau Mau land.” 48 In another article, Waterhouse wrote of the code words “respectable,” “experienced,” “regular” that signaled the reservation of homes, jobs and public houses for white Britons. 49 While many reporters were sensitive to the racism encountered by Commonwealth Citizens, other articles stoked fears that West Indians took advantage of social services. One article reported: "many of them are genuinely seeking work, genuinely hoping to settle down as decent citizens. But thousands just want to come and loaf—to sit on your back and mine and cash in on National Assistance, the health scheme, and all the other Services of the Welfare State.” 50 This author and others questioned the Commonwealth citizenship that allowed West Indians to enter the country and seek jobs and assistance freely. The possibility that Commonwealth Citizens would become happily dependent on state welfare services was a widely reported anxiety in the press. The reality, as encountered by voluntary agencies, was remarkably different.

In Nottingham, these national themes were repeated, but centered on two events in 1954. The first was the rejection by the City Council’s Planning Committee of the Methodist Missionary Society’s proposed hostel for Nottingham University students “of all races.” The Planning Committee insisted that their rejection of the proposal was strictly a matter of zoning, claiming they wished to “safeguard” the area “very closely for the type of resident who lives there. The house proposed would be most unsuitable for the district. I assume the committee would take the same objection if a lodging house for white people were proposed.” 51 The Methodists cried foul, pointing out the existence of offices in the area, as well as homes for children and the elderly. In doing so, they emphasized Commonwealth Citizens’ status as “Britishers” and equated Commonwealth Citizens with other marginal populations served by state welfare.

A host of religious leaders castigated the Planning Committee for its perceived racism. Rev. K. L. Waights, chairman of the District Synod of the Methodist Church blamed the Planning

---

Committee’s refusal on the wishes of the residents of the neighborhood, stating, "We shall have to fight the prejudice of people who don’t want coloured persons living next door. I am not going to be party to a spirit which says it is quite willing to be brotherly to coloured people in Nottingham as long as they don’t live next door.” Rev. J. A. Heyes insisted on the importance of local anti-discrimination work, "It is not much good going to the ends of the earth with missionary work when it is here to be done in Nottingham for overseas people." Rev. J. P. Hickerton, a native of the Rhondda Valley and the leader of the Eastwood Baptist Church, negatively compared his new home to Trinidad, where he served as a missionary for five years. In Trinidad, he served a mixed congregation and perceived no colour bar. He declared the colour bar was “absolutely contrary to Christian thought.” Like these ministers, for many of the white residents of Nottingham, addressing the problems of Commonwealth Citizens would inspire missionary zeal. Whom their mission served was never entirely clear.

The second major event of 1954 that instigated the formation of a Consultative Committee in Nottingham concerned the colour bar operated by the Nottingham Transport Workers against the employment of Commonwealth Citizens on the buses, despite the need for an additional 200 drivers and conductors. Reports of the colour bar prompted the Nottingham and District Trades Council to launch an investigation to guarantee the right of “colonial workers” to earn a living. They “[condemned] the action of employers and trades people who discriminate against coloured people” and they pledged to “help the Colonial people in Nottingham to integrate themselves fully with the rest of the community.” The resulting discussion, however, showed the ways some Nottingham residents believed the full integration of Commonwealth Citizens would result in the loss of their own economic standing. Many of those who wrote in to the Nottingham papers in favor of the ban, explained the transport workers feared a decline in wages and loss of overtime pay on the employment of additional labor. The view of “experienced” labor as white was revealed by “Dorothy” who wrote in on behalf of her husband, a bus driver of 25 years, “Will we ever get better conditions if they agree to the employment of coloured men? We doubt it. Most of us are English, Nottingham-born and bred. In all honesty, should not our interests come before any, whatever their colour?” With economic security newly won, these native of Nottingham refused to lose their position as a result of a larger labor pool.

The issue became political in debates in the Labour-controlled Nottingham Council. Conservative councilor D. M. Keegan relayed the “insulting” reasons representatives of the Transport and General Workers Union gave to the Corporation Transport Committee explaining their objections to working with coloured staff. They believed that it would encourage immorality for white women to work with coloured men; they said that they would not share a

52 “City Hostel Will Cater for Students of All Races,” *Guardian Journal*, February 1, 1954; “Corporation Ban to Be Tested.”
common drinking cup with a coloured man; and they believed that the migrants had “no background of British labour, and that they would have a chip on their shoulder if subjected to any disciplinary action.” The Union staunchly denied the issue concerned overtime or wages, emphasizing instead the outsider status of Commonwealth Citizens and the ways they perceived Commonwealth Citizens would charge their supervisors with racism upon censure. The transport workers did not appreciate Keegan’s portrayal of their vies, and as a result of mistaken identity, a group of bus workers attacked a reporter they believed to be Keegan after a further meeting.

The Nottingham branch of the Transport & General Workers Union came off badly locally and nationally in reports of the story. They did not have the support of their national union nor the broader Nottingham Trades Federation. In Nottingham, most of the letters published in the local papers were against the colour bar, and often against the white workers:

“There is something definitely wrong with the spirit of these workers to-day;”

“I am ashamed at the attitude of the white workers;”

“May I register my disgust at the refusal of the bus crews to work with coloured men?”

“A large percentage of our own workers are content to sit back while others do the fighting so long as the results are included in their pay packets.”

In addition to these denunciation of the attitudes of the transport workers, several writers relayed personal experiences of receiving good care from coloured doctors, from meeting or serving with coloured soldiers during World War II, or from witnessing an act of racial discrimination. Many letter writers called on a spirit of “fair play” and common humanity to ensure the coloured workers “an equal chance in life.” One letter writer wrote, “I stand for what is right and just against any oppressor, be it political, religious or closed shop.” A few letter writers called on the churches for moral leadership.

Nationally, the leader of the Liberal Party, Clement Davies, denounced the Nottingham union’s attitude as monstrous, and used the opportunity to denounce the labor movement more broadly: “Who is setting up a colour-bar to-day? The very people who used to shout: ‘Workers of the world, unite.’ But they shall only unite if they are born here and of a certain colour.” The National Union of Conservatives and Unionist Associations translated anti-colour bar action to support for unrestricted migration within the Commonwealth. At their annual meeting, they passed a resolution affirming the “right of any members of the Commonwealth to come freely to Britain.” They also, however, hoped to extend laws for deporting aliens to

“undesirable” Commonwealth Citizens. One member of the association, in objecting to the resolution, foresaw the popular backlash against such displays of Commonwealth solidarity. Lt. Col. Howard Green, a prospective Conservative candidate in the 1955 election stated, “We shall do our party a very great deal of harm if we pass this resolution.”

Under such local and national scrutiny, after eighteen months of deliberations and public discussion, the Nottingham transport workers agreed to the employment of coloured workers, and the first coloured trainee conductors began their work on March 16, 1955. In reporting the story, the Nottingham Guardian Journal optimistically declared, “A friendly smile as they handed up their fares indicated that Nottingham will accept them.” The transport workers agreed to their employment with assurance from the City Transport Committee that the union would be consulted should the number of coloured workers reach 65 and that no coloured employee would be trained to drive in preference to “present” conductors with experience. Nottingham accepted Commonwealth Citizens, but always with an eye on their numbers and not above the interests of white workers.

In addition to the problems of Commonwealth Citizens as workers, concern for their leisure propelled contact between West Indians and the Nottingham Council of Social Service. In 1949, Laurent Phillpotts, a printer, originally from Jamaica and a serviceman with the Royal Air Force during the war, appealed to Dorothy M. Wood of the Council of Social Service for help in establishing a club and hostel for single West Indian men. Inspired by his experiences in the services searching for accommodation while on leave, and appalled by postwar living conditions and the rents offered to West Indians, he sought a house that could be converted to shared accommodation. On reading an appeal by the League of Coloured Peoples for £5000 to build a social center in London, Miss Wood wrote to that organization asking if they might help in Nottingham. The League could not support Mr. Phillpotts’ project, but Miss Wood continued to assist Mr. Phillpotts, writing to organizations on his behalf to solicit funds and furniture. After some time spent in Jamaica settling the affairs of his grandmother, he eventually bought a house with the help of a Building Society loan and the advice of the Council of Social Service, and opened the hostel and club in 1952. Miss Wood wrote to the National Council of Social Service and the local Ministry of Labour asking for them to help publicize the hostel to any West

Indians who might be searching for lodgings. She stressed the respectability of Mr. and Mrs. Phillpotts and the importance of supporting their venture.

Mr. Phillpotts’ respectability was always under scrutiny and required defense. While Mr. Phillpotts did not easily find residents to live in his rooms, coloured American and colonial servicemen frequented the Hostel when on leave. On November 2, 1952, the police raided the premises, discovering 1440 “uncustomed” American cigarettes, unlicensed beer sales, and a disorderly house. Phillpotts claimed that Canadian soldiers complained to the police to exact revenge on him. In defense of his character, he called on his status as a military veteran, the status of the servicemen who stayed in his hostel, and his relationships with social workers. He also refuted any claims of immorality by calling as a witness a Women’s Royal Army Corps private who testified that she had visited the club several times, and that Mr. Phillpotts defended her when an American had made a pass at her. Mr. Phillpotts was nevertheless fined £40, the justice claiming his good name prevented him from being sentenced to jail time. This incident did not prevent Mr. Phillpotts from becoming a leading citizen amongst Nottingham’s “coloured community,” but it shows the ways Commonwealth Citizens never easily secured respectability. Mr. Phillpotts and Miss Wood needed each other in some senses—Mr. Phillpotts gained respectability for his project and a communications network through his contact with Miss Wood. Miss Wood gained the benefit of representing herself to her national organization and the Ministry of Labor as someone who could speak for the activities of West Indians in Nottingham. Mr. Phillpotts, however, was the one who paid the price, financially and publically, for not following the letter of the law.

 Nevertheless, Miss Wood collaborated enthusiastically in the early years of West Indian associational life, aiding West Indians establish contacts with existing organizations in Nottingham. In 1952, Phillpotts and Eric Irons, another former RAF serviceman, employed as a clerk in the Chilwell Ordnance Depot, issued a “Call for Social Organization...To the Coloured Peoples of Nottingham.” They urged West Indians “to organise, and build up, a sound and healthy social life, which will ensure for the coloured men a place for relaxation, recreation, and entertainment, in an atmosphere of brotherhood, and free from tension.” Their organization, the Nottingham Cosmopolitan Social Club merged with the West Indian Carib Cricket Club in 1953 to form the Nottingham Colonial Social and Sports Club. In the suggested names for the club the term “coloured” appeared in several of the submissions, however, they chose “colonial” for the name of their group, choosing imperial status over skin pigmentation as their

64 Shared rooms and meals were £2.15s per week. Dorothy M. Wood to W. F. Eddowes, Ministry of Labour and National Insurance, Nottingham, October 7, 1952, DD/CR/22/1, NoA; Dorothy M. Wood to Richard Clements, Secretary, National Council of Social Service, October 7, 1952, DD/CR/22/1, NoA.


66 Laurent Phillpotts and Eric Irons, “To the Coloured People of Nottingham...,” January 18, 1952, DD/CR/22/1, NoA.
Chapter 1: Problems

identifying marker. 67 The Sports and Social Club elected Miss Wood Vice-President, and she often attended the meetings, typing up records and securing physical space and material resources for the club. The club met first in a Methodist Church, and then were offered space in the Cooperative Society showing just one set of interactions of this organization in the wider associational life of Nottingham. The club served as a safe space for West Indians and their allies to meet for music, games, and social evenings, and their cricket team played matches against other club teams in the area.

While the association chose colonial as an identifying marker, Miss Wood frequently referred to the organization in her correspondence and notes as the club “for coloured people.” She did not see the club as a private members’ organization, but as representative of all Commonwealth Citizens in the city. On the club’s formation Miss Wood wrote to other social workers aiding Commonwealth Citizens in cities throughout Britain. In Manchester, Charles Mougne the Warden of Stanley House, a “Community Centre for Coloured People and their Friends,” reported their situation to Miss Wood. They had physical premises, founded with a grant from the Colonial Office, and perhaps most significantly, their membership was 25% white, members joining to take advantage of the sporting facilities. Miss Wood worried about the self-segregation of the early West Indian clubs, asked Mr. Mougne:

Do you find that the members prefer not to admit white people to the Club as full members? Our local Group, although they used the name ‘Cosmopolitan’ seemed to prefer to limit membership to coloured people. If it was open to white people, do you think there would be any requests from others than people who are interested ‘to do good’? 68

Mougne replied that white members did not join “to do good,” and supported her efforts, “I think your idea of their being affiliated to the local community associations is a very good one, particularly if they can become assimilated in the club and are not just a lone black group segregated from the white.” 69 The community associations and centers, however, were located away from the city center, where most of the Commonwealth Citizens lived, making them unreasonable sites for club premises, if they did not refuse to host the club. 70 This correspondence reveals the anxieties that the Colonial Social and Sports Club’s existence provoked, and the ways that Miss Wood could not understand the desire on the part of the West Indians in Nottingham to limit their membership to coloured people to create a space free

---

68 Dorothy M. Wood to C. A. Mougne, Warden, Stanley House Community Centre for Coloured People and Their Friends, February 10, 1953, DD/CR/22/1, NoA.
69 C. A. Mougne to Dorothy M. Wood, January 21, 1953, DD/CR/22/1, NoA.
70 Dorothy M. Wood to K. Baird, Assistant Director of Education, City Education Office, Nottingham, October 30, 1954, DD/CR/22/1, NoA.
Chapter 1: Problems

from “tension.” Instead, she desired West Indians integration into the “normal” social life of Nottingham

Miss Wood mediated the Colonial Social and Sports Club’s interaction with local government, churches and the general public of Nottingham. She wrote on their behalf to the Director of Education and the Wardens of churches to try to obtain premises for their meetings and socials. She frequently fielded requests from people who wished to meet “the coloured people.” In doing so, she also apologized in advance for their slowness, and offered to “hurry” them up if necessary. What Miss Wood did for the Colonial Social and Sports Club, the formation of the Consultative Committee would do for West Indians more generally. This organizational structure created avenues of representation and contact among white Nottingham residents and the Commonwealth Citizens, and also created the terms of their participation and perception in the city.

It was against the background of the colour bar and based on the contacts formed between the Council of Social Service and the Colonial Social and Sports Club that a Consultative Committee formed in Nottingham. On September 27, 1954 representatives of the Council of Churches, the Council of Social Services, the Colonial Office and the Colonial Social and Sports Club met to discuss the problems of Commonwealth Citizens. The members of the Colonial Social and Sports Club initiated the meeting, with the advice of Ivo De Souza, an officer of the British Caribbean Welfare Service of the Colonial Office. Eric Irons, born in Jamaica, was a former RAF officer who settled in Nottingham after the war with a white English wife. Irons worked in the office of the Chilwell Ordnance Depot, and attended the meeting as the Secretary of the Colonial Social and Sports Club. He reported to the meeting that there were 1000 “coloured people” in Nottingham, of whom 800 or so were West Indian, largely male, unskilled workers. He reported that more than troubles finding work, West Indians’ main difficulties were in seeking information and advice when they were out of work. He told the committee how he often served as a translator between the individual West Indians and the officers of the National Assistance Bureau. He urged the formation of a committee to provide advice to the West Indians on settling in Britain and a social worker to help with their problems. Ivo de Souza, the Welfare Liaison Officer employed by the British Caribbean Welfare Service of the Colonial Office, advised the committee on the work being done in Birmingham and Manchester to assist West Indians. In both cities, an officer was employed by the local authority specifically to deal with the problems of Commonwealth Citizens. De Souza urged them to appeal to the Nottingham Town Clerk for the employment of a special welfare officer and to

71 “West Indians are not the best of correspondents and, if you do not hear anything within the next fortnight, perhaps you would give me a ring and I will take the matter up again,” Dorothy M. Wood to F. Taylor, Secretary, St. Ann’s Well Road Congregational Church, October 21, 1958, DD/CR/22/1, NoA. “If there is any delay in hearing from Mrs. Anderson, please let me know and I will hurry her up! I am sure you will already know that coloured people are not renowned for punctuality and speed in dealing with business!” Dorothy M. Wood to H. Popplewell, Public Relations Officer, Education Department, Nottingham Co-Operative Society, December 19, 1956, DD/CR/22/1, NoA.
form a consultative committee to keep abreast of the situation and to provide counsel to West Indians.\(^73\)

The first meeting of the Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People (NCCWCP) met in February, 1955, but the town council would not hire a special officer nor support the work of the committee. An early supporter of the Consultative Committee wrote, “all of the representatives were anxious to make contact with coloured people, but either had tried and failed, or else did not know how to do it. It would seem that the Consultative Committee would be doing good work by acting as liaison.”\(^74\) The Consultative Committee mobilized existing forms of corporate representation within the city and solidified the idea of the West Indians as a discrete community with recognizable leaders who could represent the West Indians to the committee and the committee to the West Indians. The Consultative Committee turned to the persistent discrimination faced by West Indians in their early projects.

III. ii. Work

The Council of Social Service, the Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, and the Colonial Social and Sports Club worked in concert to examine discrimination against West Indians in employment, and their efforts contributed to understanding of West Indians as a discrete community. The Council of Social Service ethic, which shaped the work of the Consultative Committee and its relations with the Colonial Social and Sports Club, emphasized securing the individual’s social rights, most fundamentally the right to employment. They believed doing so would foster the well-being of the larger community. Unemployed West Indians contributed to public perception that they were taking advantage of British state welfare, but the reality of their work experiences revealed the prejudice of British employers. The staff of the Council of Social Service provided aid to individuals who sought their advice, but it was the work of the Consultative Committee to consider the broader picture, not least of all to how the Commonwealth Citizens were perceived more broadly in Nottingham. The chairman relayed their mission to the *Nottingham Guardian* on the committee’s formation: “It's the committee's job to help them to solve this problem of adapting themselves to life in a strange town in a strange country, of which, however, they also are citizens.”\(^75\) The chairman represented Commonwealth Citizens as belonging to the political community of Britain but not the social community. The Consultative Committee shied away from publicity such as that surrounding the Nottingham Transport colour bar discussions. Their work was to be behind the scenes.

While the public rhetoric of the committee emphasized working with Commonwealth Citizens to settle themselves, they believed their most important work was in negotiating

\(^{73}\) “Notes on Meeting Between Representatives of the Council of Churches, Council of Social Service and the Colonial Social and Sports Club Held on Monday Sept. 27th, 1954 at 7.30 p.m. at 45, Castle Gate,” September 27, 1954, DD/CR/1, NoA.

\(^{74}\) John W. Green to A. F. Laird, Chairman, Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, March 20, 1956, DD/CR/22/1, NoA.

Chapter 1: Problems

between Commonwealth Citizens seeking work and employers. The Consultative Committee held weekly information sessions and panels to advise West Indian job seekers on British qualifications, hiring practices and unions. Through these conversations West Indian men were figured as universal workers, theoretically accepted as “British Labour” on the part of the Employment Exchange, firm managers and trade unions. In practice, however, questions of their under-qualification for positions in Nottingham firms marked them as different.

The Consultative Committee organized meetings to air the dissatisfaction of West Indian men with their working conditions and to provide employers the opportunity to explain their hiring practices. Employers in Nottingham rationalized the employment of West Indians in low-skilled jobs through recourse to the “suitability” of workers to particular positions. The Manager of the Nottingham Labour Exchange explained to the Consultative Committee in response to a question as to why skilled workers were forced into unskilled jobs: “so many of the workers are placed on their own assessment and it is found that they are not up to the standard required in this country.” A few years later, another manager of the Labour Exchange reported in a survey of conditions in Nottingham: “I think that the question of suitability is the vital point. The standards of education and of speed set by employers in this City are relatively high and some coloured workers cannot meet them immediately.”

This type of argument, repeated regularly to the Consultative Committee, served to both elevate the status of British firms, and denigrate the quality of West Indian labour. The manager defended the notion of suitability even in cases where fired workers accused their employers of prejudice, and after such accusations, the employer refused to hire any coloured workers. These examples of management desire for peace in the workplace show the ways raising the issue of prejudice could be a bar to employment not only for individuals, but all Commonwealth Citizens. This Manager could acknowledge these incidents, but he could not see that it was racism. He claimed for Nottingham: “The general picture, however, is one in which integration is moving quietly and steadily forward and in which the coloured man or woman is considered solely on the grounds of his suitability.”

The assessment by Nottingham employers of West Indian suitability contributed to a larger understanding that they were only fit for manual labor. They were given jobs as servers in canteens and cleaners in factories. They performed “bye-work” in coal pits, carrying and

76 “Labour Officer of a local firm who employ a number of coloured people,” quoted in Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, “Replies from Members of the Employment Sub-committee Regarding Employment of Coloured People in Nottingham, with Particular Reference to the Attitude of Trade Unions and Employers,” May 1960, DD/CR/34, NoA.
77 Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, “Draft Minutes of a Meeting Held September 27, 1956,” n. d., DD/CR/1/1, NoA.
78 A correspondent for The Times stated, “though they are not workshy, two immigrants have the productivity of about one good English workman in the kind of rough, heavy jobs to which they are usually set in factories.” Our Special Correspondent, “The West Indian Settlers,” Times, November 9, 1954, Times Digital Archive. Web.
79 The Manager, Employment Exchange, quoted in Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, “Replies from Members of the Employment Sub-committee Regarding Employment of Coloured People in Nottingham, with Particular Reference to the Attitude of Trade Unions and Employers,” emphasis his.
Chapter 1: Problems

carting heavy burdens, but they were not allowed the prestigious work at the coal face, identifying and mining the ore.\(^8^0\) In service work, it was taken as a given that white customers would not like to be waited on by coloured assistants. In response to instances of West Indians unable to find employment in fields in which they had training, Allan Morais, Assistant Trade Commissioner of the Commission in the UK for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, urged social workers to investigate this problem. He asked, “Can it be said that either the UK economy of the West Indian operative is getting the fullest benefit from such an arrangement?”\(^8^1\)

Agriculture was another area in which employers unfavorably assessed the suitability of West Indian labor. Agricultural camps throughout Britain recruited those interested in work-holidays and gangs of labor during the agricultural season from May to October. In May, 1958, Miss Wood learned that agricultural camps were “desperately short of labour.” At Wellingore in Lincolnshire, in exchange for £3.3s board and lodgings, the camp director would facilitate campers’ employment at neighboring farms. The camps did not guarantee employment, but suggested that workers could earn at least £7.10s per week. Miss Wood approached several agricultural camps in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire and asked if they would be willing to take on gangs of Pakistani and West Indian men desperate for work in Nottingham. In Nottingham, she, Mr. Irons, and Mr. G. I. Chowdary arranged for West Indians and Pakistanis to receive information about the camps. The Council of Social Service even advanced gangs’ transportation costs so that they could more easily travel to rural areas from Nottingham. In her correspondence with the managers of the agricultural camps, she stressed the rural background and the desperate condition of these “unfortunate men, for whom this country has a grave responsibility.”\(^8^2\) It seemed the perfect opportunity to match men from rural backgrounds with farms that needed workers.

In her enthusiasm to facilitate the agricultural labour of Commonwealth Citizens, Miss Wood used the opportunity as an experiment to assess “the capabilities of the varied nationalities.”\(^8^3\) In the first group of West Indians, Miss Wood referred to one of them as a “Jamaican type” of plumber, as in, he called himself a plumber, but that could not be translated to the British sense of what a plumber was or could do. For instance, Miss Wood reported that Lloyd George Brown did not know the meaning of “wiping a joint”, a type of soldering. In response to her letter, the secretaries of the National Farmers’ Unions in Warwickshire, Worcestershire, and Lancashire each reported there was no “suitable” vacancies for West Indians in their counties. The secretary in Warwickshire pointed to the fact that the West Indians did not understand “British agricultural operations,” and demanded too high wages in return for their work. The first gangs sent from Nottingham were considered a failure, and the

---

\(^{80}\) Ibid.

\(^{81}\) Allan Morais, Asst. Trade Commissioner, The Commission in the UK for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras to Barbara Creighton, Acting Secretary, West Indian Advisory Committee, London Council of Social Service, August 6, 1958, ACC/1888/110, London Metropolitan Archives (hereafter LMA).

\(^{82}\) Dorothy M. Wood to Bearley Agricultural Camp, Pingley Farm Camp, Melbourne Agricultural Camp, and National Farm Union Secretaries in Cambridge, Warwickshire, Worcester and Lincolnshire, June 5, 1958, DD/CR/12, NoA.

\(^{83}\) Dorothy M. Wood, “Wellingore and Other Camps,” n. d., DD/CR/12, NoA.
Chapter 1: Problems

Wellingore camp manager asked Miss Wood to send no more workers to him. Others continued to go on their own, and in one case, a camp manager in Pingley, Lincolnshire, demanded repayment from the Council of Social Service for “3 Derby Pakistanis” who had left without paying room or board. They had arrived for Whit weekend, and when no work was available, left without paying. The camp manager assumed that Miss Wood would be able to find the men and/or pay their charges. The agricultural camp experiment shows the ways efforts to manage labour occasioned the deployment of national categories to characterize individual workers and revealed the resistance to outsiders in almost every area of work. West Indians were willing to argue for suitable wages, but employers saw their skills as unsuitable.

British employers understood West Indian men as part of a larger labour pool, differentiated by colour and nationality that placed them on an index of skill lower to British workers. Employers perceived West Indian women, however, as unsuitable for certain types of work based on their cultural attributes. Many social workers considered West Indian women to be slow, lazy and along with West Indian men, to have unrealistic expectations of their abilities. In response to West Indian women’s demands for factory positions, a social worker at the Southwark Diocesan Association for Moral Welfare asked “It would seem the coloured population has come to be part of our daily existence – can anything be done to encourage and educate the people into forms of work which at present they do not seem to consider. e.g. Work in rural areas, trained cooking and catering work, domestic work.” 84 Seeking to reconcile a perceived demand for domestic work, others urged West Indian women to take up this employment. Mrs. J. Sansom, the Nottingham Field Officer of the National Institute of Houseworkers reported that West Indian women were “only able to cope with routine type of job” [sic] and that very few were “trainable.” She noted, “the West Indian is inclined to give up easily and needs constant encouragement.” She relayed that hospitals complained of the West Indian’s “lack of time-keeping and pace.” 85 The National Institute of Houseworkers had been founded in 1946 to raise the prestige of domestic work, a category of labor that included cleaning and catering work for expanding state institutions like hospitals and universities. The institutional nature of “domestic work” in the post-war era troubles the perceived relationship between working class maids and their domestic mistresses that has been a site for the re-envisioning of working class histories. 86 The expansion of “domestic work” to these public institutions demanded a large pool of labor, which many West Indian women were pushed into, despite their desire for factory jobs.

While Mrs. Sansom considered the majority of West Indian women untrainable, when increasing numbers of unemployed West Indian women appeared in 1957 and 1958, Miss Wood began the organization of coursework to train West Indian women for domestic work.

84 M. A. V. Raynes, Secretary Southwark Diocesan Association for Moral Welfare to Barbara Creighton, Acting Secretary, LCSS: WIAC, July 10, 1958, ACC/1888/119, LMA.
85 Copy of a Report by Mrs. J. Sansom to Mrs. M. Beer, National Institute of Houseworkers, September 4, 1958, ACC/1888/110, LMA.
Chapter 1: Problems

She believed in training more generally, and regularly wrote to the Ministry of Labour and the Colonial Office asking for financial resources to organize short-term courses to help migrants “take their place in the ordinary labour force.” In addition to fluctuations in the economy that contributed to West Indian men’s employment, West Indian women also faced the same challenges as their white counterparts in securing maternity leave, finding childcare, and flexible hours to accommodate their family life. The labour exchange acknowledged that these constraints contributed to the high figures of unemployed West Indian women in Nottingham in the late 1950s. The first West Indian women to come to Nottingham refused to consider domestic work, surprising Miss Wood and the Employment Exchange, who believed they would take any work that was available. Although they would still not take up residential domestic work, the women who signed up for Miss Wood’s course said they were willing to work in catering and in the residences and facilities of hospitals and the university. The three-week program included one week of “theoretical” training and two weeks of “practical” apprenticeships. The first week saw representatives of the Gas Board, the Electricity Board and the Coal Utilisation Council demonstrate the use of “up to date” appliances and provide instruction in cooking such “typical” English foods as jam tartlets, custard powder sauce, and grilled bacon, sausage and tomatoes. “Surprisingly,” the students’ initiative and hard work impressed the matrons who supervised them. Three months after the course, five of the women obtained full-time permanent “domestic” work; while the other six women juggled part-time jobs and child care responsibilities. The preparation of the course, the language used to convince the women that they must attend regularly and punctually, as well as the reports of matrons who supervised the students show an understanding of West Indian women as slow, undisciplined, and perpetually tardy or absent.

As in domestic work, factory employers and managers similarly attributed cultural and behavioral characteristics to women in their employ, or as a reason not to hire West Indian women. They criticized West Indian women for their personal habits, in one case, for “drinking beer out of bottles in the toilets instead of going into the canteen” and “spitting and swearing.”


Dorothy M. Wood to Ivo S. De Souza, Welfare Liaison Officer, Colonial Office, February 18, 1958, DD/CR/13, NoA, for support for a class for women machinists.

88 Miss J. E. A. Bazalgette, CEO, Dr. Barnardo’s Homes to Barbara Creighton, Acting Secretary, LCSS: WIAC, August 20, 1958, ACC/1888/119, LMA; M. A. V. Raynes, Secretary Southwark Diocesan Association for Moral Welfare to Barbara Creighton, Acting Secretary, LCSS: WIAC; Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “Report of the Conference of Welfare Workers and Others Concerned with the Affairs of West Indians in Britain, Held at 26 Grosvenor Gardens on Tuesday, 10 November, 1959,” n. d., DD/CR/13, NoA; Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, “Replies from Members of the Employment Sub-committee Regarding Employment of Coloured People in Nottingham, with Particular Reference to the Attitude of Trade Unions and Employers.”

Chapter 1: Problems

in another.\textsuperscript{90} The nurse at a large hosiery firm claimed West Indian women were more susceptible to colds and would not take any form of relief to alleviate them. She attributed their weak constitutions and slowness to their “very low-caloried diet.” Additionally, she emphasized their dislike of the cold as a frequent excuse for missing work.\textsuperscript{91}

These attributes of West Indian women contributed to attitudes towards West Indians as a whole. At a large engineering firm that employed three West Indians out of 8500 total employees, the manager considered West Indians particularly suitable for “hot jobs,” based on their origins in tropical climates. Presumptions of slowness kept management from hiring West Indian women, because they believed white workers would complain of losing wages for piecework. At the large firm and at the national coal board, the unions were purported to determine when and in what manner West Indians would be hired.\textsuperscript{92} And it was due to pressure from trade unions that local courses in welding sponsored by the Nottingham Education Department were canceled.\textsuperscript{93} When the Consultative Committee examined the reality of West Indians’ working lives, they found many employers willingly speaking of the skill, punctuality and popularity of individual West Indian workers. Countering stereotypes of the group, however, remained an elusive goal.

Miss Wood gathered these statements to create a picture of the climate in Nottingham towards West Indian employment. She concluded, “there are not really equal opportunities in every case for coloured people here and of course the employment position is probably at its best just now.”\textsuperscript{94} The discrimination faced by Commonwealth Citizens exposed the limits of the social democratic state to secure fair conditions of work and prompted organization on their behalf by social workers and respectable West Indians. The early work of community relations involved mediating in the labor market to secure better positions for Commonwealth Citizens, provide education in British industrial conditions, and training for particular types of employment. As the consultative committees could not change hiring practices, and could not convince the Employment Exchange to take a more active role in countering discrimination, they turned to Commonwealth Citizens themselves.

\textsuperscript{91} D. H. Muirhead, Industrial Relations Officer, Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “Reports on Visit to Nottingham – 27th and 28th April, 1960,” May 2, 1960, DD/CR/13, NoA.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid. Also hot jobs.
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid. Also hot jobs.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid. Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, “Dorothy M. Wood to Elisabeth R. Littlejohn, Secretary, Group on the Welfare of Coloured People, National Council of Social Service,” July 6, 1960, DD/CR/34, NoA.
Chapter 1: Problems

IV. Conclusion

In *Citizenship and Social Class*, T. H. Marshall presented an optimistic story of a national community, made through the dislocations of the industrial revolution, and fully realized in the onset of state welfare services.\(^95\) Citizenship was a relation of equality, where each individual had common membership in the community. Importantly, Marshall argued for the material basis of equality, for the “universal right to real income which is not proportionate to the market value of the claimant.”\(^96\) Motivated by the ideal of social democratic community, social workers sought to realize the social rights of Commonwealth Citizens. Their efforts, however, often positioned Commonwealth Citizens as ambivalently aligned with the local community of Nottingham.

In popular imagination, World War II ushered in social democracy, but the war also shaped the provision of services to Commonwealth Citizens. Immediately, the lack of housing contributed to the creative repurposing of an air-raid shelter in London to house passengers on the *Empire Windrush*. West Indians found employment in the expanding postwar economy, in physical reconstruction, and in the expansion of hospitals and universities. The status of many of these early migrants as servicemen in the RAF contributed to their acceptance and respectability in Britain. However, as Laurent Phillpotts’ hostel incident shows, both within the imperial armed forces and in the communities of Britain, Commonwealth Citizens were no longer perceived as fellow participants in the war. Competition in the labor market trumped shared sacrifice.

In explaining the presence of the *Windrush* passengers to MPs concerned by a further inflow of colonial subjects, the Prime Minister Clement Attlee emphasized that the passengers were “honest workers”. He went on to explain their status and the ties of custom and necessity that greeted them in Britain:

> It is traditional that British subjects, whether of Dominion or Colonial origin (and of whatever race or colour), should be freely admissible to the United Kingdom. That tradition is not, in my view, to be lightly discarded, particularly at a time when we are importing foreign labour in large numbers. It would be fiercely resented in the Colonies themselves, and it would be a great mistake to take any measure which would tend to weaken the goodwill and loyalty of the Colonies towards Great Britain.\(^97\)

The double recognition of the Commonwealth Citizens as both British and colonial created two constituencies of accountability for government officials in Britain. In Britain, Commonwealth Citizens could not be seen as given preferential treatment over white Britons. Therefore, they were described repeatedly as British, yet at the same time, the welfare departments of the state did little to facilitate their access to employment or services. In taking on the role of

---

96 Ibid., 28.
97 Copy of Letter from C. R. Attlee to J. D. Murray, July 5, 1948, CO 876/88, TNA.
Chapter 1: Problems

managing Commonwealth Citizens’ labor, Miss Wood became their representative, contributing
to the circulation of their reputed attributes and abilities.

Understanding the experiences of Commonwealth Citizens in Nottingham shows us the
importance of voluntary organizations in the work of welfare and also the limits of social
democracy to include all of its citizens. The ethos of community that propelled social
democratic efforts focused on the equality of citizens around their rights as workers. The
experiences of West Indian men, and social work reactions to them, illustrate the importance of
managing male labour in the postwar economy, and matching the “suitability” of the worker to
the position. Suitability became a way to displace racist conceptions of the abilities of West
Indians to perform certain types of work. Meanwhile, the discrimination faced by West Indian
women in employment resulted in the deployment of stereotypes about their innate abilities.
In the face of intractable racism on the part of employers, social workers turned to educating
migrants on the conditions of employment and forms of training.

From the reports of the colour bar that had circulated in 1954, Miss Wood’s efforts to
organize the Consultative Committee and its links with the Colonial Social and Sports Club had
gained the city a reputation within social work circles as well-integrated. Other social workers
invited her to share her experiences at national conferences, and sought her advice on “how to
encourage local people to take an interest in the coloured immigrants and students in their
neighbourhood.”98 While it was important to the consultative committee to gain the support of
wide sections of the “local people” in their work, they increasingly turned to Commonwealth
Citizens themselves. In this, they were assisted by the efforts of representatives of the West
Indian Government in Britain. The ideals of social democratic community, in which an
individual’s access to social services was a measure of citizenship and an indictment of the
whole community, would remain important to the work of community relations councils.
However, the influence of the West Indian Government in the work of the voluntary local
councils would introduce another vision of community: colonial community development.
While also a democratic ideal, colonial community development identified a distinct West
Indian community, one that could be mobilized internally by leaders.

---

98 London Council of Social Service, West Indian Advisory Committee, “WIAC Conference Sub-Committee
Recommendations,” n. d., ca 1958, ACC/1888/110, LMA.
Chapter 2: Migrant Services Division
and Colonial Community Development, 1954–1962

Wat a devilment a Englan!
Dem face war an brave de worse,
But I’m wonderin’ how dem gwine stan’
Colonizin’ in reverse.

Louise Bennett, “Colonisation in Reverse”, 1966

Louise Bennett, the Jamaican poet and folklorist whose ironic verse opens this chapter, spoke to the ways migration was changing British society and turning “history upside dung!”1 A social democratic sense of community motivated social work responses to Commonwealth Citizens in the 1950s, but in the face of intractable racism and especially after the racial disturbances of 1958, voluntary agencies looked beyond mediating in individual employment matters. They partnered with Migrant Services Division of the Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras to better integrate West Indians into the local communities of Britain. Beginning in 1954, an office of the West Indian Government managed migration, educating West Indians as to conditions in Britain, and liaising with social workers in Britain to educate them about West Indian life. More than the presence of Commonwealth Citizens in Britain, ideas of the management of discrete communities filtered from the empire to the metropole to produce a “colonizin in reverse.”

Migrant Services Division created West Indian community in Britain through educating migrants on British social life, educating the British public on the economic conditions of the late empire, and importantly, a program of community development that organized West Indian community around local leaders. Migrant Services Division began educating West Indians as early as 1955 in the process of migration and British welfare services. They represented the situation in Britain to the West Indies and assisted West Indians in local communities in Britain. In partnership with voluntary agencies, Migrants Services Division mediated between the imperial, the national and the local to ensure the social rights of West Indians in Britain. When the 1958 “riots” in Nottingham and Notting Hill revealed the limits of social democratic community, Migrant Services Division began to advocate a policy of community development. From assisting individual West Indians to integrate into the local communities of Britain, West Indians would now be mobilized as a community. The community development approach favored by Migrant Services Division targeted a cadre of leaders to raise the West Indian community as a whole. They educated West Indians on migration, accessing welfare, and organizing West Indian community. This work was performed to make West Indians ordinary Britons, but this also meant minimizing the visibility of West Indian use of state social services. As welfare and employment faded from the public discussion of West Indians in local communities, a cultural sense of a discrete West Indian communities took its place.

Chapter 2: Community Development

I. Make Yourself at Home...

In Samuel Selvon’s *Lonely Londoners*, Moses, a West Indian in London, complains to his friend, “I don’t know these people at all, yet they coming to me as if I is some liaison officer, and I catching my arse as it is, how I could help them out?” In the novella, Moses serves as an informal “welfare officer,” helping the “boys” find housing and jobs on their arrival in London.² The character’s remarks reference the work of the liaison officers of the British Caribbean Welfare Service (BCWS) of the Colonial Office. The name and fortunes of this bureau tracked the changing colonial status of the West Indies. The Colonial Office had first gathered a Consultative Group on Relationships with Coloured People in the United Kingdom in 1952. That group had used the networks of the National Council of Social Service to gather contacts with “all local organisations concerned to promote the welfare and happiness of coloured workers who are in this country.”³ In 1953, the Colonial Office hired two welfare officers, seconded from Jamaica, to aid West Indians, Vivian Harris and Ivo De Souza. A department called the British Caribbean Welfare Service was inaugurated within the Colonial Office in 1956 based on the model of the Migrant Services Division of the Puerto Rican Department of Labour.⁴ That division’s director, Clarence Senior, researched the migration of Jamaicans to Britain with Douglas Manley. Their report, published in 1956, favored a host / newcomer model of social relations and recommended the active responsibility of the government for the problems encountered by migrants. The Fabian Bureau believed in the importance of the report to the extent that they published a pamphlet version titled, “The West Indian in Britain,” and made it available for 1s.6d.⁵ The British Caribbean Welfare Service, and its successor, the Migrants Services Division shaped the participation of West Indians in British social life.

The social workers who staffed the British Caribbean Welfare Service were themselves West Indians, with experience in social work in the West Indies, mainly Jamaica. In E. R. Braithwaite’s *Paid Servant*, a memoir of his time as a children’s officer of the London County Council, Braithwaite provides an extended glimpse of these officers, whom he admired for their collegiality and willingness to help.

---

³ Dorothy M. Wood to Richard Clements, Secretary, National Council of Social Service, October 7, 1952, DD/CR/22/1, Nottinghamshire Archives (hereafter NoA). The Colonial Officer first charged with welfare and liaison, Vivian Harris referred to the group as the Consultative Group on the Welfare of Coloured People; Miss Wood referred to the group as the Advisory Committee on the Problems of Coloured People in Britain. Dorothy M. Wood to J. P. Denny, November 30, 1953, DD/CR/13, NoA; Vivian Harris to Dorothy M. Wood, November 18, 1953, DD/CR/13, NoA.
⁴ “The History and Functions of the Migrant Services Division of the Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras,” n. d., CO 1031/4219, The National Archives, Kew.
Chapter 2: Community Development

They worked together in an easy harmony which had as its basis a similarity of interest in purposeful, helpful service. I knew that they took themselves and their work very seriously, but I also knew that, among West Indians in general, and those hardest hit by the twin scourges of prejudice and discrimination in particular, this image of the Migrants’ Division and its officials was either badly blurred or distorted.6

Braithwaite tried to explain to his readers the role of the British Caribbean Welfare Service to forestall criticism by West Indians that “those black big-shots know how to talk, that’s all.” Braithwaite quoted Ivo S. de Souza, the chief welfare liaison officer, who was well aware of the demands on their services: “We are Civil Servants, and as such are subject to all the bureaucratic limitations which that term implies, but because we are West Indians, our needy compatriots expect much more of us than we are able to give.”7 The BCWS did not provide direct welfare services for West Indians in Britain. Instead, officers provided information and advice to migrants to aid their integration into British welfare services and society. In this, they acted in accord with the variety of advisory services that supported state welfare provision. Rather than a voluntary organization, however, their status as a branch of the Colonial Office placed them and their work askew to the citizenship work performed by voluntary social service agencies. Providing welfare advice to West Indian migrants would create them as a community apart.

In London, the British Caribbean Welfare Service “interpret[ed] the migrant to the agency and vice versa,” by mediating in cases of misunderstanding between individual West Indians and agencies. While in London they could take a more direct role, in the provinces they depended on partnership with voluntary agencies. They visited provincial cities and advised social workers employed by both statutory and voluntary agencies. Rather than providing separate services to those considered nationals, they aided in the “assimilation of West Indians into the normal community life of these towns.”8

Importantly, the BCWS informed migrants of conditions in Britain and assisted their acclimation to local conditions, particularly the delivery of social services. In reaction to the greater publicity surrounding unemployed West Indians in Britain in 1954, Migrant Services Division produced pamphlets to educate West Indians in the etiquette of social democracy. The leaflets encouraged West Indians to formulate a plan before they arrived in Britain, to secure a contact to seek out on arrival, and to inform themselves regarding social services to assist in their search for a job. “Before You Go to Britain,” and “To Help You Settle in Britain” emphasized the differences between conditions in Jamaica and the United Kingdom.

7 Ivo S. de Souza, Welfare Liaison Officer, Colonial Office, quoted in Ibid., 154.
Chapter 2: Community Development

With high hopes and with bright visions of work and prosperity, you are considering counting your fare and applying to the travel agent for passage to Britain; but before you make up your mind, read this phamplet [sic] and try to understand the true position of life as a worker from Jamaica in Britain...Working and living in a cold and wet climate which is as different as it could possibly be from the one to which you are accustomed.  

Pamphlets like the ones prepared by the British Caribbean Welfare Service entrenched a sense of difference between Britain and the West Indies. West Indian migrants would bear the burden of this difference. However, by educating themselves, they could mitigate the disadvantages of the difference between Britain and the West Indies. These materials sought to make the West Indians as ordinary as possible by informing them of British conditions.

In addition to emphasizing a different climate, the BCWS educated West Indians on the cost of living in Britain. They told the migrants they could expect wages of £6 to £7 a week for a male skilled worker; additionally, they listed wages of £2 to £5 a week for maids, laundresses and seamstresses. With skilled work harder to come by, they kept expectations of wages low in comparison with what migrants might have heard from friends and family. In addition to these potential wages, BCWS itemized the household budget of a Jamaican from St. Ann, who lived in Brixton and worked for British Railways. Reminding their audience of the costs of rent, food, national insurance contributions, taxes as well as other basic needs, this worker could save 9/3d from a weekly wage of £6.14.0. They stressed again and again of the need for migrants to bring savings with them to Britain to ensure they did not draw on state services. Doing so would bring them to the attention of welfare authorities and the scrutiny of the wider public, already attuned to those who might take advantage of welfare. British Caribbean Welfare Services sought to make West Indians ordinary Britons by helping them to be free of state welfare services. Reducing individual West Indian dependency on those services, they believed, would reduce the scrutiny of the group as a whole.

In addition to the bad weather and high costs of Britain, the BCWS cautioned the potential migrants on the bureaucratic process of migration. “DO NOT TRY TO FOOL THE CUSTOMS OFFICER,” they warned, preparing them for passport and customs inspection of their luggage. Despite their exhortations to follow migration and customs procedures, the BCWS sought to make government officials a friendly and helpful presence. Officials urged migrants to take advantage of the police department and local statutory and voluntary welfare agencies and make use of their explanatory functions to be assured of their rights to welfare. This they stressed most of all, Commonwealth Citizens were British Subjects: “You have all the privileges and responsibilities under British Law that the ordinary British citizens has. This means that you have the full protection of the law, and that if you break the law you will be subject to the same penalties. You are entitled to make use of the Educational, Social and Medical Services provided

---

Chapter 2: Community Development

for the country."\(^{11}\) The BCWS encouraged West Indian migrants to see themselves as British citizens, and as such, respectable users of welfare. These tensions between minimizing welfare use and ensuring the social rights of Commonwealth Citizens shaped the forms of aid provided by the British Caribbean Welfare Service.

In making newcomers aware of both their rights and responsibilities as citizens, a class of respectable West Indians supported the BCWS through publicizing their opinions. While scholarly attention has focused on the important role of the *West Indian Gazette* in making a West Indian community in Britain, there were a number of short-lived, West Indian produced publications in Britain.\(^{12}\) In the first edition of the *Anglo-Caribbean News*, an opinion piece stated that West Indians were British secure in their political rights.

Essentially, what the Negro is fighting for is social acceptance, and this must be earned on merit. As a minority group it is futile to stand on the sidelines and expect the population of the country to come to him. He must make an effort to understand his new environment and thus alleviate or remove possible causes of friction. He must learn to use and appreciate the various organizations and agencies inaugurated for the benefit and protection of the law abiding citizen. He must educate himself socially and politically and develop greater civic pride and consciousness to enable him to play an increasingly important role in the community of his adoption.\(^{13}\)

For this strand of West Indian opinion, by their actions as citizens, West Indians earned a place in the broader community and contributed to integration.

To this end, officers of the British Caribbean Welfare Service met the boat trains at London stations, helping migrants find their final destinations. They handed out additional leaflets in Britain, with instructions on how the migrants made their first contacts with state welfare. They urged migrants to register at the employment exchange straight away, and to make themselves known to the BCWS regional welfare liaison officer and also local welfare agencies, especially the voluntary ones. “The purpose of these voluntary organizations are to explain about the official and voluntary social welfare services, Government and local rules and regulations affecting ordinary citizens, and to indicate where special or more detailed information of all kinds can be found.”\(^{14}\) The BCWS embraced and furthered partnership with the voluntary welfare organizations, perhaps because of the importance of voluntary societies in the West Indies, where state services were minimal. They kept an up to date list of contact information for local voluntary agencies to distribute to newcomers.\(^{15}\)

\(^{11}\) British Caribbean Welfare Service, “Before You Go to Britain.”


\(^{13}\) Norman Lawrence, “For the Sake of Argument,” *Anglo-Caribbean News*, November 1959.

\(^{14}\) British Caribbean Welfare Service, “To Help You Settle in Britain.”

Chapter 2: Community Development

Newcomers seemed to use these lists: Miss Wood’s correspondence in Nottingham included letters to the British Caribbean Welfare Service concerning newcomers who arrived with nowhere to go. On one occasion, she chided Mr. de Souza, the welfare liaison officer, for sending three West Indians "with a message from you that we might be able to help them obtain lodgings." She and Mr. Irons of the Colonial Social and Sports Club scrambled to find accommodation at quick notice for these newcomers. As she noted in another incident, these unprepared newcomers were a burden particularly on West Indians already resident in Nottingham. She relayed to the BCWS, the offers of hospitality arranged on quick notice to receive guests, with extra bedding purchased especially for the new arrivals:

That these men were completely without financial resources created considerable hardship from the point of view of the hosts who had to give them board and lodging without payment, as for the first weekend they had only 10/- each from the NAB. It also raised the more serious question of why these immigrants are allowed to enter the country without enough money to ensure that they shall have sufficient to keep them for a reasonable time while they are seeking employment.

To counter the lack of responsibility on the part of the individual migrant, the BCWS and voluntary councils worked cooperatively to manage the settlement of migrants more effectively. This was one of the reasons for the formation of the Consultative Committee in Nottingham. This lack of individual responsibility on the part of the migrant also spurred the British Caribbean Welfare Service to send bulletins of the information they received on those coming into Britain each week. Throughout the country, social workers like Miss Wood, received weekly dispatches, informing them of new arrivals from the West Indies:

---

16 Dorothy M. Wood to Ivo S. De Souza, October 18, 1954, DD/CR/13, NoA; N. Swift, Assistant Secretary, Nottingham Council of Social Service to Mr. Khouri, October 13, 1954, DD/CR/13, NoA.
18 Dorothy M. Wood to Ivo S. De Souza, March 4, 1954, DD/CR/13, NoA.
The BCWS did not know where individual migrants were headed, but bulletins like this one contributed to the sense of an unending stream of newcomers, haplessly, but hopefully making their way to communities across Britain. Social workers employed by voluntary agencies prepared themselves to meet those West Indians who might arrive in their town.

The efforts of the British Caribbean Welfare Service to liaise with local voluntary agencies to manage the settlement of newcomers portrayed migrants as unprepared, and also created the appearance of West Indians as uninformed and gullible. In Nottingham, four men appeared at the National Assistance Board office, claiming an unscrupulous taxi driver charged them £20 for the trip from Southampton, leaving them with nothing but the ten shillings they collected from the National Assistance Board. The report traveled from the Nottingham NAB to Miss Wood of the Nottingham Council of Social Service who passed it on to the British Caribbean Welfare Service. Miss Wood often mediated between local offices of state welfare and the BCWS, in whom she placed ultimate responsibility for West Indians in Nottingham.

---

20 Dorothy M. Wood to Ivo S. De Souza, January 5, 1962, DD/CR/13, NoA; Secretary for Ivo S. De Souza to Dorothy M. Wood, January 15, 1962, DD/CR/13, NoA.
response to these kinds of reports, the BCWS included up to date lists of rail fares between the train boats and the provinces in their materials for newcomers.

The British Caribbean Welfare Service guided migrants through their departure from the West Indies to their safe arrival in the hands of local social services. At that point, a host of statutory and voluntary bodies educated the newcomers in local conditions. Birmingham was the first local authority to hire an information officer specifically for the education of migrants, employing Alan Gibbs as a liaison officer in the Information Office, not a services department of the local authority. As a generalist, he spoke, on average, to 40 Commonwealth Citizens per day, sending them to the appropriate local authority department for their concerns.

While a few local authorities hired an information officer specifically for Commonwealth Citizens, it fell to the voluntary committees to educate the newcomers in the ways of welfare. To this end, the committees in St. Pancras and Nottingham produced literature on their local conditions. “To Help you know your Borough” was a simple flier, providing information on the services of welfare, and introducing newcomers to the St. Pancras borough information officer, voluntary welfare societies, and welfare departments. The handbook “Life in Nottingham” was a more complicated affair and brought a variety of actors to produce a professionally printed guide at a cost of £16.10s. The Nottingham District Trades Council contributed £3.10s towards publication, and Miss Wood also asked the British Caribbean Welfare Service and the three local “coloured people’s clubs” for assistance. The BCWS provided extensive comments and helped to design the pamphlet. They also encouraged Miss Wood to call herself the “Welfare Officer for Coloured People in Nottingham” to encourage the newcomers to bring their problems to her. Mr. Lawrence of the Colonial Social and Sports Club contributed a paragraph on social activities for newcomers, and Mr. Powe suggested the “Living in England” section should include information on “English Views of Marriage”, “Reasons for Saving”, and “The English Way of Queuing”. 1000 copies of the pamphlet were produced to be distributed to West Indians in Nottingham also to potential migrants to Nottingham by the British Caribbean Welfare Service. A newspaper article celebrated the publication of the handbook, specifically referencing the advice on “employment and in lighter vein, English peculiarities, such as queueing, that understandably may puzzle a newcomer.”

The production of the handbook in Nottingham required a variety of actors to consider conditions in Britain and the reasons for migration. As the trades union section opened, “the

---

Chapter 2: Community Development

vast majority of you come to this country for the very good reason that working conditions are much better here than in your own country; indeed little else could attract you from your own sunny climes.”

Attracted by work, and seen safely to local welfare services by the BCWS, West Indians could now begin to make themselves at home in local communities in Britain.

The handbook in Nottingham produced a demand for further local guides for newcomers. Some in local services sought to understand their own culture to translate to migrants, however, unlike in Hackney and Birmingham, most local authority areas were unwilling to appoint an information officer for Commonwealth Citizens, let alone support the work of a consultative committee. The British Caribbean Welfare Service urged local authorities to be active in the promotion of integration:

it would be useful if local authorities accepted the responsibility to further subsidize these voluntary societies to enable them to employ an additional trained and experienced social worker to be primarily concerned with the problems brought by white or coloured citizens, problems arising out of any conflict between the two cultures.

This statement by a BCWS officer emphasized two distinct cultures, deepened by the lack of connection between them. If local authorities would not contribute to the integration of West Indians, then the BCWS would encourage West Indians to organize themselves.

In the years before 1958, the British Caribbean Welfare Service and local voluntary societies in Britain developed a pattern of liaison to assist individual West Indians in settling down in the local communities of Britain. This work was based in a sense of the gap between two communities. Their patterns of information and advice placed the burden of integration on individual West Indians. The officers of the BCWS believed that with the right information, West Indians would become ordinary British citizens. The events of the late summer of 1958 in Nottingham and Notting Hill increased the urgency of their work, and these officers turned from educating individual West Indians, to organizing them as a community.

II. Not in Nottingham

While the events of late summer, 1958 have condensed into a widely circulated story of sexual jealousy and the “atavistic dislike” of black men by white men, it is difficult to find evidence of what actually occurred in Nottingham on the night of Saturday, August 23. After mentioning that the first “riot” occurred in Nottingham, stories of “the riots” quickly move to Notting Hill and focus on discussion of the events there. This section considers the resonances

27 J. Charlesworth, Secretary, Nottingham and District Trades Council, “Trade Unions,” n. d., DD/CR/71, NoA.
30 For the most recent example of this narrative, David Kynaston, Modernity Britain: Opening the Box, 1957–59, 2013, 169–170.
Chapter 2: Community Development

of two sets of fights that broke out at two bars in the St. Ann’s Well Road Area of Nottingham, locally, nationally and internationally. The Deputy Chief Constable reported to the Nottingham Consultative Committee for Coloured People that approximately 12 people had been involved in the fights, but crowds and rumors swirled around the incident, exaggerating its scale.  

Attacks against coloured residents of Nottingham followed, and as the fights gained national attention, and further violence occurred in Notting Hill, London, Nottingham acquired a reputation as the scene of a race riot. Many commentators have tried to explain how two sets of bar fights in Nottingham acquired larger resonances due to anxiety over affluent youth and post-imperial national identity. Tony Jefferson and Dick Hebdige contextualized the anxieties surrounding white teddy boys in the context of competition for work, housing and girls.  

This section steps back from narratives of anxiety to show how the Consultative Committee responded to the riots. I begin with national narratives that portrayed the disturbances in imperial contexts, then move to discussion of what happened in Nottingham. The events in Nottingham shocked those involved in community relations throughout Britain. Social workers viewed Nottingham as an example of how to organize a community response to the problems of migrants. However, rather than abandon the nascent formation of community relations as having failed to prevent disorder, politicians and practitioners invested the work of voluntary councils with new urgency.

On Monday, August 25, the Telegraph published an editorial relaying the “shock to the tranquil, tolerant British public” induced by cries of “lynch the blacks” in Nottingham. As Kennetta Hammond Perry has shown, the riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill drew international attention and spurred the government to manage Britain’s reputation in the face of this scrutiny. Nottingham understood the world was watching. The Nottingham newspapers reported Southern African interest in the incidents, relaying a story from the Bulawayo Chronicle (Rhodesia), which portrayed conflict as inherent to situations where “races with vastly different background lived together.” The story also quoted Die Burger of Cape Town, which hoped that the formerly insulated Briton would now refrain from offering “stupid and unendurable” “advice on questions of multi-racialism.” Two Nottingham members of parliament agreed that the numbers of Commonwealth Citizens competing for housing and jobs inevitably led to “something serious” happening. Both Labour MP, James Harrison and

---

Chapter 2: Community Development

Conservative MP J. K. Cordeaux capitalized on the incidents to press the “urgency” of action to restrict migration.36 Comparison of Britain to the Jim Crow American South coupled with the idea of South Africa shouting “I told you so” provoked the mobilization of British tolerance. A Telegraph editorial claimed, “We are, after all, the people who produced WILBERFORCE, LUGARD, and BUXTON.”37 Calling on the legacy of British anti-slavery movements and imperial administration framed these acts of racialized violence as aberrant in a longer history of British imperial paternalism. The reports from Southern Africa as well as the cries for immigration restriction drew letters to the Times calling on Britons to rise to the test of tolerance demanded by the riots and their reaction. In two letters to the Times, Trevor Huddleston, a minister in the East End of London who came to prominence as a crusader against the apartheid regime in South Africa, first called on Christians to lead in a “radical searching of the conscience on the part of ordinary citizens and to a determination that the evil of colour-discrimination be totally eradicated from our national life.”38 In response to his letter, two Conservative politicians, Norman Pannell and Lord Salisbury denigrated his “idealism” and lack of knowledge of the social and economic consequences of unrestricted migration, and warned him against stirring up political troubles.39 Salisbury drew from his “connexion with the administration of Africa” to argue for the restriction of immigration of “men and women of the African race” for their own good. As Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations in 1952, Salisbury oversaw Seretse Khama’s ban from Bechuanaland in response to his marriage to a white English woman.40 In his various positions in Conservative Governments, Salisbury favored migration within the Commonwealth, as long as it was of the white stock who contributed to “the interchange of blood...to strengthen the whole and to multiply the links that hold it together.”41 While neither letter mentioned miscegenation, both referenced the “serious problems, social and economic” raised by unrestricted immigration.

These letters provoked further replies, which challenged the imperial views of Salisbury and Pannell. J. Tudor-Hart, a doctor in North Kensington, claimed that the years of imperial “enslavement and plunder” had allowed Britain to create a “higher standard of material life.” Denying the small numbers Commonwealth Citizens a share of that would be to destroy “the

37 “Colour Blindness.”
Chapter 2: Community Development

moral unit” of the Commonwealth.42 Huddleston responded to his critics with three Christian arguments against the restriction of immigrants:

First, that Christian justice demands of us, who for centuries have indulged in white colonization in Africa to our own great advantage, that we do something to redress the balance. Secondly, that Christian truth demands of us that when we express our faith in the ideal of Commonwealth citizenship we mean what we say. Thirdly, that Christian love demands of us that we, who enjoy so high a standard of living ourselves, do not forget our neighbor or shut the door in his face because he is not white nor wealthy.43

Rather than seeing migrants from the former empire carrying disorder with them to Britain, Tudor-Hart and Huddleston attempted to reckon with the inequalities of the imperial past by enacting in Britain the ideals of the multi-racial association of the Commonwealth.

Many commentators at the time and to this day have associated the violence of 1958 with anxieties surrounding miscegenation, and the issue was on the minds of national commentators. The *Telegraph* editorial presented a liberal, male point of view: "In view of our high moral sentiments about colour equality, it [racial violence] shocks and horrifies us - particularly those of us whose sisters and daughters are unlikely to be involved. Nottingham may present us with a third moral dilemma--capital punishment and the Wolfenden Report are the other two--to which there is no easy answer."44 The authors of this editorial brought miscegenation into conversation with two public discussions of the role of the state in upholding particular moral values. While murder was punishable by death, and homosexuality was punishable by imprisonment, miscegenation was not illegal.

Although reports of the fighting in both London and Nottingham at the time and to this day have centered on relationships between white women and black men, the figures at the center of the fights present more complicated stories of race and gender. In London, the activities of nine white “youths” on a “nigger hunting” mission on August 24 have been broadly discussed in terms of anxieties over affluent, young, working class men. The nine men pled guilty, and Justice Salmon’s comments at their sentencing were widely reported at the time:

You are a minute and insignificant section of the population who have brought shame upon the district in which you lived, and have filled the whole nation with horror, indignation, and disgust. Everyone, irrespective of the colour of their skin, is entitled to

Chapter 2: Community Development

walk through our streets in peace, with their heads erect and free from fear. That is a
right which these courts will always unfailingly uphold.\textsuperscript{45}

As Kenneth Leech, an Anglican minister and prominent anti-racist activist in the East End of
London, has argued, Salmon’s comments minimized racism as practiced by only a small
portion of an otherwise tolerant nation.\textsuperscript{46}

While in Notting Hill, the state prosecuted nine white youths for violence, in Nottingham
two coloured men faced charges of wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. The
first was Neville Brown, a young Jamaican who moved to Nottingham from Manchester only
the Wednesday before the disturbance. On the night of August 23, he claimed to have gone out
to the Chase Tavern, consumed two barley wines, and returned home to read a book. Roused
by shouts that his friend David McDonald had been hurt, he ran back to the Chase, and found
David slumped against a wall, bleeding. David was placed in a police car, and on Brown’s return
home, he was attacked by men shouting, “that’s one of the black bastards,” and kicked,
punched and hit with a beer bottle. Brown escaped and encountered David’s white girlfriend
and some coloured friends who encouraged him to join the fight, but he claimed he wanted
peace and went home. The prosecutor’s version of events differed widely from Brown’s. The
prosecutor claimed that Brown was the ringleader of a gang, “egged on by a woman who
wanted revenge.” He told the court that Brown and his friends attacked Felix and Florence
Smith, Thomas Gordon Richardson, and John McQueenie without provocation. Felix Smith
received a knife wound in the back, and Richardson required 21 stitches for a seven-inch wound
from his right temple to the top of his head.\textsuperscript{47} Smith claimed that he and his wife and neighbors
had been walking home from the bar when they were attacked, by a large crowd of coloured
men. Brown’s lawyer attempted to portray the Smiths as prejudiced but neither would admit to
racial feeling. Felix Smith stated he had no color prejudice. Florence Smith, who when asked by
Brown’s lawyer how she felt about interracial relationships, replied that it had nothing to do
with her.\textsuperscript{48}

In both of the cases in Nottingham, a woman played a key role, not as a participant in a
romantic relationship, but as part of the fighting itself and in the prosecution of the charges
against the coloured men. Florence Smith led police to Brown. When she saw Brown on
Monday, August 25, she followed him to his home and reported him to the police as the man
who attacked her husband. On visiting Brown’s flat, the police officer arrested him on
discovering a yellow shirt, which played a large role in the Smiths’ identification of their
assailant. Like Florence Smith, the lead witness in the other prosecution, Mary Lowndes was a
key participant in the fight. Lowndes has become a central figure in various stories of the event

\textit{Web.}
\textsuperscript{47} Dr. M. P. Chaturvedi, casualty registrar of Nottingham General, account of his testimony in “Accused Jamaican
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
as the catalyst for the wider disturbances. In her testimony, she claimed that on Saturday, she and her husband had been at the St. Ann’s Inn. On her way downstairs from the singing room, her friend, Margaret Coyne, saw “a half-caste thump Mrs. Lowndes in the back.” In the street, Lowndes went up to her assailant to ask him why he had hit her, and on receiving no reply turned away and saw her husband engaged in a fight with a coloured man. Charles Coyne went to Lowndes’ assistance and was stabbed four times in the back.

The man accused of kicking Charles Coyne while others were knifeing him was not a West Indian, but a young Pakistani man named Bostan Din. Unlike in the case of Neville Brown, the Nottingham papers did not report his version of the incidents, perhaps because of a language barrier. Participants in and witnesses to the fight variously called him “half-caste,” “black” or “coloured”, but only the newspaper identified him as Pakistani. The first story in Nottingham to cover the “race battle” extensively repeated Mary Lowndes’ testimony of Saturday night’s events. She claimed that a “black man” had hit her “for no reason” in the street as she was making her way home to her two children. The newspaper reported that she had blonde hair, and made much of her status as a young wife and mother. She told the Guardian Journal, “I think it is disgusting for innocent people like us to be attacked in this way. The coloured men should be banned from the pubs. They drink spirits until they don’t know what they are doing.” The prosecution did not necessarily think that she and her husband were so innocent. The prosecutor called Peter Lowndes a “hostile witness” and reported to the court that he had changed his version of events between his initial report to the police and the trial. Lowndes’ statement to the police declared, “I saw nothing. I did not fight. Can I go home?” Unlike Florence Smith who pursued Neville Brown, Peter Lowndes seemingly wanted little to do with the prosecution of Bostan Din.

The two women at the center of the fights in Nottingham were young, married and white. It was not the threat of miscegenation that appeared in initial reports of the incidents, but the unchivalrous manner of the two Commonwealth Citizens towards young wives and mothers. All involved were in their early 20s and out at a bar, but journalists portrayed the white participants as respectable and acting defensively in the early reports, while portraying the two suspects as irrational. When newspaper reports started portraying the larger conflicts in the area, these stories did not reference any of the participants of the original fights. Newspapers did not mention David McDonald and his girlfriend who shouted, “go and get stuck into the white bastards” in later stories of the trial or the incidents.

The Assize Judge found both Neville Brown and Bostan Din not guilty of all charges against them. The prosecution cited only a “fleeting identification” of Din “among a lot of coloured men at night,” and offered no evidence in the case. The Justice agreed and ordered the jury to find Din not guilty of the charges. The two men had spent over two months in jail

51 Peter Lowndes, quoted in, “Pakistani for Trial after Race Riot.”
waiting for their trial in the Autumn Assizes, with Brown’s lawyer asking for his client’s trial to be moved to London in order to secure a less hostile atmosphere in court and in Leicester Prison. On hearing his son’s verdict, the Times claimed Din’s father shouted, “This is what I call justice.” As in the successful prosecution of the nine assailants in the Notting Hill case, newspapers believed the acquittal of Brown and Din represented evidence of the fair working of British justice.

In the aftermath of the attacks, when racial feeling on the part of white Nottingham residents grew, the police began contextualizing the attacks of August 23 in the ongoing harassment of coloured men by the local white population. The Chase Tavern followed Mary Lowndes’ suggestion to ban coloured men from pubs. One of the few bars open to coloured residents in the area, the publican of the Chase placed a sign on the bar that read, “owing to the recent disturbances, no coloured person will be served here.” The publican, Fred Alsopp, claimed, “I was never a colour bar person until I took over this house ten weeks ago. But Oh! boy, what a lot of trouble these coloured men cause.” In addition to businesses refusing them service, the coloured residents of Nottingham faced violence in the streets. Reports circulated in the papers of “youths armed with daggers” telling West Indians to walk alone or face attack. The assistant constable warned the public that “any interference with the personal liberty of anyone will be severely dealt with by the police.” On Saturday, September 6, crowds of white residents booed and shouted at a group of five West Indians returning home from a wedding reception. A police escort brought them safely through St. Ann’s Well Road, but on leaving them, a crowd attacked them, stabbing one of the West Indians. This incident followed two weeks of beatings, incidences of bottle throwing and other attacks.

The violence shocked the Consultative Committee, which received visits from the Chief Minister of the West Indies Federation, Norman Manley, as well as from officers of the British Caribbean Welfare Service. Manley held a meeting with West Indians resident in the city at the Colonial Social and Sports Club. He told the Nottingham Evening News, "let me assure you that the eyes of the world are focused on these things. Racial relationship is one of the major world issues. You must not fail to solve it in England. It would be disastrous." In London, at a large meeting in North Kensington, Manley had said, “I cannot speak too strongly in condemnation of those who have forgotten that it is not enough to say when you come into a strange land ‘But I see the people of this country do it.’ That is not an excuse.” Manley sought to educate his audience in their duties and responsibilities, and that in Britain, the actions of one West Indian would reflect on all of them.

54 “Accused Jamaican Wants London Trial.”
While in London, reports of criminality and living on “immoral earnings” fueled white resentment towards West Indians, in Nottingham, their participation on the Consultative Committee led to a broader perception of the respectability of West Indians. Trevor Philpott, a West Indian resident of Nottingham and member of the Consultative Committee wrote an article for the *Times* stressing the responsibility of Nottingham West Indians. He described the work of the employment panel of the Consultative Committee as helping to "explain the mistakes the coloured man makes" in industry. In cases of firing, the employment panel discouraged West Indians from claiming racism as a reason for their dismissal and encouraged them to take the blame for being occasionally late to work. Philpott both acknowledged racism and encouraged West Indians to understand it. “Sometimes the coloured worker don’t realise he is unique. The white man can go out two or three times for a smoke, no one will notice. But it just takes one quick look and a foreman can tell that the 'good for nothing' coloured boy is away." Philpott’s rhetorical strategy was to equate West Indian understanding of English attitudes with white English understanding of West Indian behaviors. He explained dirty windows and drawn curtains, but mostly, he urged Britons to see West Indians as ordinary. When asked by white people how to talk to a West Indian, he wrote "I tell them to remember that every man is born a mister. All we ask is respect for respect. We don't want pity; that's for an afflicted man.”

In demanding ordinariness for West Indians, Philpott’s comments echoed Eric Irons’ comments at a Nottingham conference for community associations a year earlier. At the conference, Irons and Granville Lawrence encouraged community associations not to invite Commonwealth Citizens to their events as “prize guests” but to treat them as “one among a group of people” with “an active part to play in the community.” Lawrence praised the Council of Social Service as "one of the finest in the country. They have helped us and invited us to help. We have collected for charities and we liked that. We want the opportunity to take an interest in the community." Irons and Lawrence attended the conference as officers of the Colonial Social and Sports Club, an organization which was thought to “combat colour prejudice” by the *Nottingham Evening Post*. The *Evening Post* claimed, “the sun is not the only thing lacking warmth in the British Isles” and praised the club for providing advisory and leisure services for West Indians. In educating West Indians in the “pitfalls that lie between their way of life and ours," the club helped newcomers adjust to the “English way of life.”

The Consultative Committee agreed in the importance of the club to facilitate integration. A meeting called with clergy and youth club leaders to strengthen integration focused on encouraging the participation of “coloured residents” in the associational life of the community. The Consultative Committee encouraged youth leaders to make early and regular

---

61 Here, Philpott references regular comments by white residents that their coloured neighbors never cleaned their windows and never opened their curtains. Dorothy Wood attempted to investigate: Dorothy M. Wood to Mrs. Alexander, August 20, 1959, DD/CR/6/1, NoA; Trevor Philpott, “Sometimes White People Say to Me...” *Sunday Times*, September 14, 1958.

62 Eric Irons and Granville Lawrence, quoted in “Coloured Folk Complain of City’s hospitality--Want to Be Treated as One of a Group,” *Guardian Journal*, February 4, 1957.

contact with students in schools. The Consultative Committee agreed to give churches a more prominent place in the Nottingham Handbook for Newcomer as well as more publicity generally. Importantly, the group agreed that the Colonial Social and Sports Club should be strengthened through the appointment of a professional officer to organize their activities. Specifically, they hoped the officer would organize activities with other clubs and organizations, such as table tennis tournaments, singing concerts, Workers Educational Association courses, and an interchange of speakers.\(^{64}\) Those at the meeting believed strengthening the associational life of West Indians hastened their entrée into the associational life and thus the local community of Nottingham.

In addition to forging bonds of association, the group stated the importance of information to aiding the work of integration. They planned to form a study group to “detail the differences in culture and customs of coloured and English people." The importance of circulating information on the culture and customs of Commonwealth Citizens is the focus of the next chapter. In addition to this information on the culture of Commonwealth Citizens, Miss Wood from the Nottingham Consultative Committee participated in the National Council of Social Service’s consultations on local instances of racial disturbances. At a meeting in London in mid-September, 1958, representatives of committees in London, the West Midlands, Sheffield, Birmingham, and Nottingham discussed local conditions as well as how the National Council of Social Services could facilitate community relations at the government level. A. Bullock of the North Kensington Community Centre relayed to the group that the root of the problem in Notting Hill was a lack of youth services in the borough. To counter this, a committee of coloured people formed, met the mayor, and planned meetings with head teachers of schools and principals of evening institutes.\(^{65}\) Speaking for Nottingham, Miss Wood highlighted training courses for West Indians in employment, but also spoke to the lack of confidence on the part of coloured people in the police, as well as the unsuccessful efforts to convince the local authority to appoint a welfare officer. T. Geoffrey Ayre of the West Midlands reported tensions between trade unions and the local authorities and the passing of blame between the two bodies over what should be done and by whom. Overall, the social workers reflected trust in existing relationships between local government, trade unions and voluntary organizations to educate public opinion.

Educating public opinion became an important aspect of the work of the British Caribbean Welfare Service in the four years between the “riots” of 1958 and West Indian independence in 1962. In educating public opinion on the structural conditions of the late empire, the British Caribbean Welfare Service circulated narratives of West Indians as economic actors to counter rising anti-immigration rhetoric.

\(^{64}\) Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, “Meetings of the Clergy, Ministers and Youth Club Leaders in the St. Ann’s Well District Held in St. Catherine’s Church Hall on 22nd. September, 1958,” n. d., DD/CR/1/1, NoA.

Chapter 2: Community Development

III. In Praise of the Economic Migrant

In February, 1954, when the Nottingham papers reported one of the first meetings of the Council of Social Services’ Executive Committee to discuss migration to Nottingham, they received a letter from Gwladys Cox, formerly of Kingston, and now resident in West Hampstead, London. Concerned by the “big problem” posed by the newcomers, in terms of the increase of a “half-caste” population, Mrs. Cox wanted to educate Britons in the availability of work in the West Indies for these “unsuitable visitors.” West Indian hotelkeepers demanded a growing amount of meat and produce for the tourism trade, and she reported there was “actually a labour shortage on many country estates, and landowners complain bitterly of the difficulties of obtaining good workers.” Repeating the *West Indian Review*, she closed, “we feel that a much stronger effort should be made to discourage the flow of human material into a land which cannot support more than a fraction of them, except on free doles, and the results of crime, which are demoralising to the people who profit by them, and destructive to the community which harbours them.”66 The *West India Review* and Mrs. Cox knew the proper work for West Indians, which was supporting the island’s agricultural economy and the rising tourist trade. Cox portrayed the migrants who left the islands for work in Britain as individually irresponsible and failing to contribute to the West Indian economy.

After the riots, the officers of the British Caribbean Welfare Service transferred from the Colonial Office to a department of the newly created Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras. The new department, Migrant Services Division, countered this planter paternalism through the circulation of information regarding the economic circumstances of the Caribbean and the contributions West Indians in Britain were making not only to Britain but to the West Indies. They began circulating leaflets and information sheets after the riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill in 1958, when calls for the restriction of migration increased.

As Sheila Patterson wrote in *Dark Strangers*, migration was a form of active protest against current conditions.67 Those who publicized the economic facts of migration showed the ways that migrants contributed both to their old and new homes. In reaction to perception of West Indians as poor workers and welfare scrappers, Migrant Services Division presented counter-information to the general British public, stressing the long association between the West Indies and Britain and the economic facts of migration. In their accounts, they began the relationship between Britain and the West Indies with the Somerset Case of 1773, which abolished slavery in England. Migrant Services then described the emergence of coloured communities in the port towns of Britain and the rise in migration during and after World War II.68 By establishing the long relationship between Britain and the West Indies, and the economic relations between the two regions, they sought to rationalize migration.

---

Chapter 2: Community Development

West Indian papers in Britain also emphasized the economic relationships between the two regions and in the empire more generally. The *Anglo-Caribbean News* made the promotion of trade between the West Indies and Britain a main feature of its editorial content.°  Articles emphasized the importance of trade to the availability of income for the Federation Government to spend on social amenities, and advertisements alerted British companies of the potential market for their goods in the West Indies.  The *West Indian Gazette* regularly reported news concerning Colonial Development and Welfare Grants not only to the West Indies, but elsewhere in the Empire. They ran alongside accounts of the Congo’s post-independence tribulations and profiles of West Indian beauty queens. These economic stories sought to educate West Indians in the material interrelations of empire.

“Facts” and the right information played an important role in the accounts of Migrant Services. They relayed figures, contextualizing the numbers of West Indians entering Britain in the larger number of immigrants generally:

![Table 1: Immigration into the U.K. - 1956](image)

In this table, and in other accounts, Migrant Services Division emphasized the political association of empire and the Commonwealth in contrast to those non-British areas of the world. In other reports, Migrant Services claimed West Indians were only one-fifth of a larger pool of migrants. They emphasized the skills the migrants possessed, and the lower grade of positions discrimination forced them into in Britain. They also portrayed the changing demographics of migration, as women and children accounted for a larger number of migrants from the West Indies after 1957. This, they claimed was a sign of the establishment of the early male migrants who felt secure enough to send for their families. These economic stories

---

surrounding migration were circulated to counter the portrayals of vice and disorder in the British press.

In speaking for the West Indians, Migrant Services Division stressed that migrants wanted to return to the West Indies but would not do so without a guarantee of a better standard of living. This served as a critique of the difficulties West Indians faced in Britain and the common sense narrative accepted by many Britons that Britain was inherently a superior place. To Migrant Services Division the most difficult aspects of adjusting to life in Britain was the loneliness and isolation West Indians faced in a cold country. In Britain, the “light-hearted cheerful” West Indian suffered the agonies of no talking on the job. “When 'sent to Coventry' only because he is West Indian it cannot be said that his standard of living is better.” He could not speak at work, but the coolness of his neighbors furthered his isolation at home. In addition to these differences of custom, “however much he has adjusted to his new conditions of life, however much he conforms to the normal pattern of behaviour of the community, he remains a coloured man, a man of another race, a stranger." However much the West Indian tried, it was only the English who could truly create the conditions in which the West Indian thrived: “this final hurdle to the full enjoyment of living in England, he can only surmount if the English are able to display, by extending to the migrant the hand of friendship, that high degree of civilisation from which alone tolerance stems." Migrant Services Division emphasized the role Britons would have to play in the work of integration.

In their narrative, England was worse socially, but the economic condition of the West Indies would keep migrants coming to Britain. The idea of “less eligibility”, that the undesirable conditions of the West Indies spurred migration, found its way into many narratives of poverty in the West Indies. In 1959, Dorothy Wood and her colleague at the Nottingham Council of Social Service Mary Robertson traveled to Jamaica. Robertson’s report dammingly portrayed the poverty of the West Indies, particularly the condition of housing in rural areas and the slums of Kingston. She also criticized the organization of the island’s economy, particularly the investment in tourism and the growing construction of hotels designed for wealthy Americans and built with tax concessions. She called tourism a “risky business; not only are the fashions of tourism notoriously fickle but the very high charges are clearly intended to exclude the local inhabitants who complain too that the tourists push prices up.” Robertson characterized Jamaicans as rational economic actors, aware of the changing circumstances of their island. Her admiration for the Jamaican prisons she visited prompted her to write, “less eligibility has real meaning in Jamaica.” With poor employment opportunities and bad living conditions, Robertson suggested even prison was more desirable than the slum conditions of Kingston.

In some ways, an idea of less eligibility served as a critique of the minimal investment in the West Indian economy on the part of the imperial state. Migrant Services not only reported on the economic conditions that encouraged migration, they also relayed the demographic patterns of the West Indies. They cited its high birth rate of 2.8% and “fertility and patterns of mating” as important push factors in out migration from the region. In addition, they claimed

73 Mary F. Robertson, “A Month in Jamaica,” May 1959, DD/CR/53, NoA.
“the legacy of slavery and the effects of indentured immigration, both associated with plantation economies, have left their imprint on both the structure of the labour force and attitudes towards work.” It was the most valuable workers who chose to leave, and in 1956 alone, migrants sent home £3 million. An information sheet published in 1961 again stressed the numbers: in 1957 alone, Jamaican migrants sent home £4.5 million in remittances, in contrast to total Colonial Development and Welfare Grants of £6.5 million for the entire decade of the 1950s. Migrant Services stressed the economic importance of these remittances as the fourth largest source of income for the island after sugar, tourism and bananas. If the imperial state did more for the West Indies, then fewer West Indians would travel to Britain.

The language and information in the Migrant Services pamphlets made their way into talks given by social workers like Dorothy Wood of Nottingham to wider audiences. They also provided the basis for articles in the West Indian press in Britain. Migrant Services’ negative comparison of Colonial Development and Welfare Grants to the value of remittances to Jamaica in 1957 was reprinted in the Times. David Pitt, a doctor, presumptive Labour politician and prominent West Indian, publicized these figures in his column for the West Indian Gazette, fudging the numbers a bit, but imparting all the same the part played by migrants in “bridging the gap between the poverty of the West Indies and the Comparative wealth of Britain.” In response to the escalating rhetoric calling for legislation to “stop the black flood engulfing England,” particularly by Conservative MP Cyril Osborne, The West Indian Gazette published “Osborne; Here are the Facts!,” an article that reproduced the information in Migrant Services’ 1961 pamphlet.

While many of their pamphlets relayed a rational and measured, tone, another Migrant Services leaflet, “The West Indian: British Citizen-Second Class!!” was more polemic in its claims. This document emphasized the political connections of empire, the long association between the West Indies and Britain, and the rights of Commonwealth Citizenship. Written in anticipation of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962, the leaflet called the act a “historical tragedy,” which ended a 300 year history of migrations that benefitted Britain:

Thus a system which had taken the wealth of colonial territories away from their shores did little to promote the welfare and prosperity of subject peoples and as recently as 1938 the findings of a British Commission under a former Conservative Minister, Lord Moyne, were strong in their condemnation of social and economic policy practised by the British Government.

---


75 One writer claimed that migration to Britain was a cheaper and more efficient form of aid than the grants. Peggy Antrobus, “Letter to the Editor,” Times, December 4, 1961.


77 “Osborne; Here Are the Facts!,” West Indian Gazette, September 1960.

78 Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “The West Indian: British Citizen-Second Class!!,” n.d., DD/CR/53, NoA.
The leaflet tacitly compared the earlier migration of slavery to the present conditions in which West Indians found themselves. Migrant Services highlighted the Moyne Commission Report as a moment of awakened consciousness on the part of West Indians that only by their own efforts could their future be raised. The remainder of the Migrant Services document stressed the important contributions to the UK economy made by West Indians, and the fact that West Indians did not bring venereal disease to the country, but “THE VAST MAJORITY WERE INFECTED BY WHITE WOMEN IN THIS COUNTRY.”

Facts and their distortions could be countered by different facts and narratives.

The intractability of British intolerance shaped these efforts to explain the circumstances of West Indians. Highlighting the economic relationships of the late empire and reasons for migrations impressed upon the British public that the West Indian was a rational economic actor. The West Indian press in Britain reproduced these arguments and critiqued the forms of their representation. That West Indians were and were not at the center of these narratives was not lost on many West Indians. A story in the West Indian Gazette pointed out that in many narratives concerning prejudice, Britons equated the rise of fascist activity with the presence of West Indians. Stop immigration, these stories suggested, remove West Indians from Britain, and there would be no racism. The author of this article wrote, “So the scapegoats are to be made doubly responsible. We are both cause and effect!”

While these efforts to explain migration could not stop the passage of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, they contributed to a sense both within a newly mobilized West Indian community and to their allies of the discrete identity of West Indians.

The work of Migrant Services Division to make visible the structural conditions of empire played an important role in creating a sense of a West Indian community in Britain, mobilized in response to calls to curb immigration. However, the most important role played by Migrant Services Division in creating West Indian community occurred through its program of community development in Britain. After the riots, the West Indian Government moved to strengthen the community relations section of Migrants Services Division through the secondment of West Indian community development officers to Britain. These officers would identify and train voluntary “leaders” to encourage West Indians to show “community spirit” by playing a more active role through voluntary service and participation in the social and cultural life of the community. In promoting a vision of community development, Migrant Services Division turned to the West Indians to help themselves. Doing so would reproduce late colonial patterns of political and social development in Britain.

IV. Community as Solution

The circuits of community development show the ways metropolitan and colonial policy were shaped together in the late empire. In the 1930s, the idea of social welfare gained traction with Colonial Office policy makers, focused around instruction in hygiene and nutrition and

79 CAPS original. Dr. William Fowler, quoted in Ibid.
through a program of “mass education.” In the years after World War II, the Colonial Welfare and Development Grants made possible the implementation of policy. During what Joanna Lewis calls the “second colonial occupation,” the expansion of welfare work in the British Empire served the dual mission of asserting the moral work of empire and also preparing colonies for eventual self-government. Lewis argues that after 1945, the Labour Party, particularly through the efforts of the Secretary of State for the Colonies Arthur Creech Jones, turned away from social welfare, preferring instead a community development approach that recapitulated their sense of their party’s roots fostering active citizenship, democratic practice and self-help.  

This turn to community development found favor as a way to settle Africans in rural villages, countering what some in the Colonial Office saw as the individualism of economic migration to cities. Colonial officials believed migration destabilized indigenous cultures and their ability to resiliently face these rapid economic and social transformations.  

As in the metropole, the late colonial investment in building community through civic participation was a nostalgic practice to remake social relations frayed by economic transformation and migration.

Unlike in Indian and African village projects, which provided an important example, the participation of West Indians in the articulation and practice of these projects shaped community development in the West Indies. In the West Indies, community development first found favor through Jamaica Welfare Ltd, a voluntary organization, funded by banana shippers and organized throughout the island by Norman Manley. On receipt of a Colonial Development and Welfare Grant in 1945, it expanded its activities organizing rural communities throughout Jamaica and the West Indies. Like programs in India and Africa, community development in Jamaica centered on improvement at the village-level through inculcating an ethic of self-help and participation, and importantly, through the identification and training of leaders. Community development was recognized in Jamaica as an international ideal, a general model that could be implemented in local circumstances. This colonial model of community development importantly was state-centered through funding and expertise, but sought to create local autonomy in the interests of the liberatory project of national independence. Through organizing themselves, a "community came to regard itself as a unit for better social organisation and action." Jamaica then, was composed of constituent local communities working independently, but towards the goal of national realization.  

As Edmund N. Burke, the General Manager of Jamaica Welfare explained: "the motivation of contributing to national development by associating with one's neighbours in various projects in the local community

---


Chapter 2: Community Development

has been spread from village to village, leaders have been trained, the work has been coordinated and organisers have worked together in planning and in creating harmony and pleasant relationship." \(^84\)

If in the West Indies, community development provided lessons in self-government, then in Britain, there was less a nation to be mobilized into being as individuals to be integrated into an existing nation. The West Indies Commission played a crucial role in the filtration of ideas of community development back to the metropole. In November, 1958, a contingent of senators and ministers in the West Indian Government visited Britain to survey welfare work for migrants. In Nottingham, they addressed a special meeting of the Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People. Senator Allen Byfield came to Britain, he said, “to open the eyes of the English people to the difficulties” faced by West Indians. He placed the blame for the disturbances on the “ignorance” of Britons and encouraged discussion of the West Indian way of life, the interchange of teachers between Britain and the West Indies, and discussion of the discrimination faced by West Indians in employment. \(^85\) Byfield negatively compared Britain to the West Indies, which in his mind, showed an example of different people living “together in unity,” the motto of West Indian Federation. The work of organizations like the Consultative Committee, which worked collaboratively to make known the “deep-seated racial prejudice in Britain,” encouraged Byfield. \(^86\) In a letter to Miss Wood, he wrote: “I am satisfied that there is in Britain, a large measure of goodwill for West Indians among English people, and I wish you and your Committee continued success in the part that you are playing in fostering it.” \(^87\)

Importantly, the trip of Byfield and the other West Indian Ministers resulted in the creation of Migrant Services as a Division of the West Indian Commission and an expansion of its work. \(^88\) After the disorder of racial clashes in Notting Hill and Nottingham in 1958, they took a more active hand in directing local social work. The number of community development officers employed by the Bureau increased and they embarked on an explicit program of community development for Britain. \(^89\) In turning attention to the welfare needs of migrants, they sought to further integration by developing a sense of community amongst West Indians. In doing so, they particularly developed relationships with local and national committees of the Councils of Social Service, recognizing the work these councils already performed on behalf of Commonwealth Citizens. The help needed by Commonwealth Citizens, Migrant Services argued,

---


\(^{85}\) Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, “Minutes of a Special Meeting Held at 45 Castle Gate Held to Meet Senator Alan G. Byfield (Leader of the Upper House of the West Indian Federation Government and Minister Without Portfolio) on Saturday November 15th, 1958 at 3 p.m.,” n. d., DD/CR/13, NoA.


\(^{87}\) Senator A. G. Byfield, to Dorothy M. Wood, November 22, 1958, DD/CR/13, NoA.

\(^{88}\) “The History and Functions of the Migrant Services Division of the Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras.”

Chapter 2: Community Development

was “beyond the responsibility of any local authority officer.”

They partnered with voluntary social welfare agencies to organize the West Indian community.

Migrant Services Division held meetings of social workers employed by Councils of Social Services to teach them about community development. They emphasized its international (rather than imperial) dimensions, reporting on the proceedings of an inaugural conference in Malaysia, and informing them of the United Nations definition of community development: “The process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.” These officers recognized the difficulties of translating a rural model to urban Britain; they believed the most difficult challenge would be the lack of existing structures of community in modern urban life.

Migrant Services turned to developing Leaders within the West Indian community, and they also encouraged the employment of liaison officers by local authorities and the growth of local consultative committees. While local authorities in Bradford, Nottingham, Paddington, and the West Midlands hired officers to serve in specific local authority departments, it was only in Hackney that an officer was hired to perform the information services recommended by Migrant Services. In Hackney, the local authority appointed Gerald Augustus Evans in 1959. The Hackney Council for the Welfare of Coloured Citizens was unusual among consultative


93 In Bradford, the Health Department hired two Pakistanis to help with translation work and carrying out surveys; in Nottingham, the Education Department hired a West Indian, Mr. Irons, to coordinate adult education programs for Commonwealth Citizens in the city; in Paddington, the Health Department employed an officer whose particular responsibility was for Commonwealth Citizens; and in the West Midlands, six local authorities jointly hired one officer to assist the integration of Commonwealth Citizens there. “Responses from: Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol, Derby, High Wycombe, Huddersfield, Kensington, Leeds, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Newcastle Upon Tyne, Paddington, Sheffield, Slough, Smethwick, Walsall, Wolverhampton. J. C. Swaffield, Secretary, Association of Municipal Corporations to Henry Patten, Town Clerk, Birmingham,” November 23, 1962, BBDD1/7/79677, West Yorkshire Archive Service - Bradford. Nottingham Consultative Committee for Commonwealth Citizens, “LOCAL AUTHORITY Grants or Appointments for Work with COMMONWEALTH CITIZENS,” n. d., DD/CR/2, NoA. See also CO 1031/4219 for the role the Colonial Office played in encouraging the support of local authorities for the consultative committees.
Chapter 2: Community Development

committees for the organizing role played by the local authority. It was formed in December, 1958, and among its aims were to consider:

- the need to ensure that immigrants are aware of existing facilities (welfare workers, health visitors and other social workers, etc) and are encouraged to make full use of them;
- ...whether the existing local voluntary organisations are furnished with essential basic information about the racial customs and conventions of immigrants and are aware of their particular needs.
- the need for these organisations to receive from time to time authoritative information regarding the arrangements made by the Caribbean Government and others for the benefits of their migrant families.\(^{94}\)

Here, Hackney Town Hall revealed the local authority perspective on the relationship between statutory agencies, voluntary agencies, and the migrant. The Hackney council did not believe that statutory welfare services needed to serve migrants better. Rather voluntary agencies and migrants themselves needed to inform migrants about welfare. The Hackney Council for the Welfare of Coloured Citizens elected a Council Member as a chairman, and the Town Clerk served as the Honorary Secretary. In Hackney, the local authority would keep a close eye on the organization of community.

The Hackney council actively sought the advice of Migrant Services Division, and one of its officers was elected to the Hackney council’s Executive Committee.\(^{95}\) Being in London encouraged close collaboration with Migrant Services Division. While the Hackney council appreciated the work of Migrant Services Division to educate migrants regarding the general conditions in Britain, they also desired better resources concerning the particular problems of the borough. The Town Hall believed the particular conditions of Hackney necessitated the employment of an Information officer specifically for Commonwealth Citizens in the borough. In his first year of work, Mr. Evans handled 400 cases, mostly referring them to other departments of the local authority. However, in some cases he participated in home visits and served as a case worker.\(^{96}\) Evans’ work was celebrated in the *West Indian Gazette* with a profile that emphasized his own history as a migrant worker. Evans migrated to Britain in the summer of 1952 and, despite his experiences as the deputy manager of a large sugar plantation, accepted work as a manual laborer. The winner of a government scholarship and a graduate of the Jamaica School of Agriculture, in Britain, Evans eventually passed exams to gain positions as a clerk in borough authorities in London, eventually winning the position in Hackney from a


\(^{95}\) Hackney Council for the Welfare of Coloured Citizens, “Minutes of Meeting 13 May 1959,” n. d., H/2/7/2, HA.

\(^{96}\) G. A. Evans, “Report of Information Officer,” April 4, 1963, H/2/7/2, HA.
pool of 66 applicants. *The Gazette* saluted Evans for his love for his job and the assistance he provided for coloured residents of Hackney.  

Outside of London, Migrants’ Services Division depended upon voluntary organizations to assist in the recognition and education of leaders for the West Indian community. The expansion of Migrants’ Services Division saw the importation of West Indian social workers and their ideals of community development. Edmund Burke and the Jamaican model of community development traveled to Britain in 1959. As the Migrant Services Division’s Community Relations Officer, Burke’s official position required he “assist in assimilating the coloured settled minority.” He did this through forging contacts with local voluntary associations, but mainly by helping “migrants to help themselves” through encouraging the formation of social clubs, ones not only interested in socializing, but those with “dignified and progressive interests.” To do this, attempts focused on the charismatic and bureaucratic qualities of leaders. In Nottingham, the site of the first official leadership training courses, West Indians possessed a vibrant associational life. The move to explicitly foster community leaders among West Indians was a break from the work of the Nottingham Consultative Committee, which while still believing in the identification of representatives among West Indians, believed in the bringing of people together through the committee.

The leader implied a relationship to a community, and rather than transmitting order in a top down way, would work as “leaven” through the community.

Previously mass education techniques had been used to stimulate the community but in Community Development man was regarded as the centre of things. In group work, the emphasis must be on co-operation and sharing of knowledge with others. The community could only function if its members stuck together, hence cohesion. Collaboration was vital between individuals and co-ordination between agencies.

In producing cohesion, the leader would advise newcomers on using social services, and serve as a point of contact between organizations and for the flow of information. More importantly,

---

98 Ivo S. De Souza, “Social Engineering: Appointment of Community Relations Officer.”
99 Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “Proposals for a Pilot Project Among Coloured People in Area,” n. d., ca 1959, DD/CR/19, NoA.
100 Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, “Minutes of Meeting of Local Liaison Officers, Hon. Officers of Women’s Groups and Hon. Officers of Racial Groups - August 26, 1959,” n. d., DD/CR/19, NoA. “Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. “Matt. 13:33 (King James Version).”
101 Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “Report of the Conference of Welfare Workers and Others Concerned with the Affairs of West Indians in Britain, Held at 26 Grosvenor Gardens on Tuesday, 10 November, 1959.”
102 Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “Proposals for a Pilot Project Among Coloured People in Area.”
leaders will by their example lead a fuller life - by participating in the clubs or organisations of his choice - and thereby inspire other West Indians by their deeds as well as by their words. Leaders should endeavour to promote or take part in worthwhile community projects for the benefit of the whole community thereby winning favourable host opinions and in fact discharging the responsibilities of full citizenship.103

The leader as an exemplar of citizenship, encouraged his fellow West Indians to follow his respectable lead. Doing so would win the entire group recognition as members of the larger community.

Migrant Services circulated their ideal of the qualities and training of voluntary leaders in use in Jamaica to the Nottingham Consultative Committee in June of 1959. Mr. Burke comprehended a great deal in his ideal voluntary leader. He believed the leader created a dynamic relationship between himself and his group, earning their trust and inspiring their confidence. The leader informed himself in world affairs and local government. The leader was also a teacher, believing in the ability of others, sharing skills, grasping and relaying new ideas to the group. The leader was energetic and determined, but also demonstrated tact and maintained harmony. The leader was not of an unpopular type: “the lady bountiful, the dictator, the know-all or encyclopedia, the energy-plus who likes to do everything himself, the possessive, the braggart.” Kind and thoughtful, the leader showed through his example what was possible through cooperative effort.104 He was, of course, unpaid, but would receive in return for his endeavors, “ample compensation in terms of prestige within and beyond the group.”105 The development of leadership was not only meant to give the leaders a sense of “standing” within their groups, but to give West Indians the security with which they could then participate in broader community life.106

In Nottingham, Miss Woods translated the Migrant Services’ directives to the imperative to “try to find more 'Eric Irons' as voluntary liaison officers”107 In 1959, the Nottingham Corporation hired Mr. Irons as an Adult Educational Organiser in response to demands that the local authority take more initiative in promoting integration.108 The educational program of the leadership course in Nottingham was developed by Mr. Irons with Edmund Burke of the Migrant Services Division and the Workers Education Association in Nottingham. Burke adapted the model from the existing community development model in the West Indies. In Jamaica,

---

103 D. M. Muirhead to Dorothy M. Wood, June 3, 1959, DD/CR/19, NoA.
105 Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “Proposals for a Pilot Project Among Coloured People in Area.”
Chapter 2: Community Development

Community development focused on promoting civic life in villages. A representative of the Jamaica Welfare Service travelled to a village for five months during the dry season. Local residents, including those traveling up to twelve miles in some cases, met for classes in administrative responsibilities, programming, and leadership. The focus of the classes was in the development of the charismatic potential of individuals to take a hand in the organization of the local community. As in other parts of the decolonizing empire, community development in Jamaica was considered practical experience in local government, the best way to develop citizenship in colonial subjects.

In translating community development to Britain, the course covered similar themes, but focused on cultivating leadership and the bureaucratic responsibilities of group organization. The leadership model sought to create a cadre of well-informed West Indians who would be further intermediaries between West Indians in Nottingham and social services. The courses focused on “techniques of leadership”; “community and the new citizen’s responsibilities”; “discussion and discussion group technique”; and “the technique of liaison.” The local liaison officers, as the leaders would be called, would form their own committees “within the social framework of the community, as necessary contact men, maintaining active centres of cohesion and interest, especially in connection with local clubs and associations.”

That Migrant Services Division considered this type of training appropriate for men was made clear by the proposed separate course for women. The course would train women in English, math, hygiene, household management, budgeting, dietetics, child care, nursing, and care of children and the elderly. In addition to this theoretical component, the students would receive practical instruction as well. The course also proposed that the training of West Indian women for domestic service be coordinated through a central bureau that would also manage their job placements to ensure a professional scale of wages. They also recommended uniforms. The gendered division of labor for the proposed course shows the ways that only West Indian men were considered able to lead West Indians in a given area and represent their interests to the broader public. Women participated in the community through their roles as domestic workers of high standard, whether in the home, or in service.

In practice, the course for leaders in Nottingham focused on the work of organizing community and on education in the welfare services of Nottingham. The Course dovetailed with the ideas of the Colonial Social and Sports Club, now calling itself the Commonwealth Citizens’ Association, which had desired to start a good citizenship course for members. For 10 weeks beginning in April, 1959, 16 West Indians, 15 men and one woman, discussed techniques of leadership and received information on the various services. After the training course, they assigned themselves geographic areas of Nottingham and made themselves

---

109 Edmund N. Burke, Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “Selection and Training of the Voluntary Leader.”
110 Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “Proposals for a Pilot Project Among Coloured People in Area.”
111 Dorothy M. Wood to Frank Pilgrim, December 9, 1958, DD/CR/13, NoA.
available for advice to the West Indians resident there. The villages of Jamaica were mapped onto the neighborhoods of Nottingham.

Imagined as a liaison officer of Migrants’ Services Division in miniature, each leader received a street map of Nottingham, and “Living in Nottingham”, the booklet discussed in the first section of this chapter, which set out the role of the leader and information regarding services in Nottingham. In their circular to the West Indian population of Nottingham at large, they asked for West Indians to serve on the Consultative Committee’s Employment Panel to advise West Indian job seekers on the conditions of work in Britain. They also encouraged participation in activities in the larger community, which many perceived to be one of the best ways of aiding integration, by making visible their commitment to Nottingham. Their project for autumn of 1959 was the British Legion’s poppy campaign and they encouraged West Indians to take part. 112 They debated what the work of their shared committee would be. One proposed plan was to educate West Indian women through the women’s organizations in nutritional information. Some male members objected to women alone being the source of information on good nutrition and believed that the liaison officers should also be educated in nutrition “to ensure that commonwealth citizens eat appropriate food whilst living in this country.” 113 This moment of consideration of who could speak on nutrition represents a continuity in the Jamaican ideal of community development as based in welfare, education, and leadership. For these leaders, they had a clear sense of what raising their community entailed, perhaps through involvement in the West Indies with community development.

The relationships between this set of newly coined leaders and the Consultative Committee was cordial but fraught. Miss Wood perceived the leaders to be representative of their areas, and asked the leaders to deal with complaints she received of noisy house parties and complaints between neighbors. A large part of discussions focused on the precise nature of coordination between the Consultative Committee and the Leaders. With an eye to other local situations, the Leaders perceived Nottingham to be in a worse position than other areas of Britain. While one faction believed that work should be done through the Consultative Committee, many critiqued the NCCWCP for failing to “challenge certain matters which have not been attempted by the Consultative Committee, e. g. to overcome prejudice in industry regarding the employment of coloured people.” 114 Leaders also critiqued the NCCWCP for failing to address the prejudice on the part of churches in refusing to hire out their halls to coloured people’s groups. Mr. Irons pointed out the practical difficulties of a separate organization, in terms of the number of meetings that would have to be attended and the costs incurred. “He felt that there was no better place where matters should be raised than at the

113 Mr. Powe, quoted in Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured People, “Minutes of Meeting of Local Liaison Officers, Hon. Officers of Women’s Groups and Hon. Officers of Racial Groups - August 26, 1959.”
Consultative Committee meetings because these issues should be raised in the presence of English people." One leader did not believe that the NCCWCP had been a failure, “but even if it had, the blame would have lain on the existing representatives of the coloured people who should have prevented the failure." They ceased discussion at this meeting as to the precise nature of coordination. As things involved, they promised to reassess the relationship.

By March of 1960, little had been achieved in terms of organizations, and Edmund Burke placed the blame on the leaders themselves: “they are so jealous of their position that they do not give any time to other problems, whereas, while their position is secure, that should be the time when problems should be faced.” Developing leaders identified and invested in them the authority for their communities. This did not necessarily translate to improvement of the community. It did, however, establish West Indians as a discrete community able to be potentially led in the project of community relations.

Miss Wood and the Migrant Services Division compared the work in Nottingham to what was being done elsewhere in Britain by migrant leaders. She corresponded with colleagues in Liverpool and Sheffield and attended national meetings for social workers involved with Commonwealth Citizens. News of West Indian committees in London relayed their investment in social events, and encouraging West Indians to vote in the 1959 Election. In London, Migrant Services Division actively met with 45 affiliated groups that became the West Indian Standing Conference (WISC). The focus of discussions was the nature of welfare work and training so that members knew how to conduct meetings and discussions within their organizations. To ensure the organizations that participated served “dignified and progressive interests,” only those groups with officers, formally ratified constitutions and £2 in the bank were eligible to join.

In addition to meetings with existing groups, Migrant Services Division encouraged the “art of citizenship” amongst West Indians in London. In 1962, an officer of Migrant Services proposed that the Hackney Council for Coloured Citizens sponsor a conference for West Indians in Hackney so that those who attended would act as “missionaries” among the larger population of West Indians. The council agreed to provide the Assembly Hall free of charge, and officers of the Town Hall agreed to participate. The chairman of the council, who was also the Mayor of Hackney, made clear his position that only Migrant Services Division could convene such a conference. Initiation by the Council for Coloured Citizens or the Borough Council might

---

115 Ibid.
117 Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “Report of a Meeting of West Indian Representatives of Groups and Others at a Conference on Community Development Work, 4 October 1959,” n. d., DD/CR/19, NoA.
120 Migrant Services Division, Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras, “Report of a Meeting of West Indian Representatives of Groups and Others at a Conference on Community Development Work, 4 October 1959.”
cause resentment amongst the West Indians. This conference did not occur, but the discussions in Hackney show the importance placed on citizenship and civic participation by Migrant Services. In contrast to the work of the Nottingham Consultative Committee, the Hackney Council for Coloured Citizens did not believe they could effectively intervene in the participation of West Indians in the Borough.

Migrant Services Division was short-lived, but the impact of its projects shaped the terms of participation of Commonwealth Citizens in the communities of Britain. In 1960, finances and the recall of staff to Jamaica limited the ability of Migrants Services to deal with the rising numbers of migrants entering Britain and the increased workload associated with rising demands by West Indians in Britain to send for their children and relatives. The financial problems highlighted the struggles between the “unit territories”, namely Jamaica, and the Federation Government. The Colonial Office, which began liaising with Migrants Services after 1959, advocated to the Governor-General and Ministers of the Federation for increased funding for the “valiant efforts” of Migrant Services in their “important and urgent” work. They argued for the importance of the Division as a resource for voluntary societies, who were beginning to feel resentment that the Officers were not able to play as active a role as they had in the past. The Colonial Office believed that the work of Migrant Services Division was helping immigrants settle down “quietly” and preventing the rise of “racial feeling.” In their calculation, the United Kingdom now “maintained” one-twentieith of the population of the West Indies. In exchange, the West Indian Government should, they believed, be responsible for managing this situation. However, with a lack of finances forthcoming, and problems in the Caribbean growing, the Colonial Office began to make representations to the Home Office for financial support to "solve what is essentially a Home Office problem." In the years to come, as the Home Office began to fund community relations, they looked to the example of Migrant Services Division as the template for their work.

Migrant Services Division fostered the conditions through which respectable West Indians found a role in creating community in Britain. Their efforts not only shaped the terms by which West Indians understood themselves as a community, but influenced social work attitudes towards West Indians as a clearly identified group. No longer coloured Britons, West Indians received increased attention to their group status, influencing their participation in local consultative committees and the forms of welfare deemed particular to their needs. Community development sought to make West Indians more active and engaged citizens, but community belonging now mediated their citizenship.

---

122 Eddie Burke replaced by R. B. Davison, V. L. Arnett, Minister of Finance, Jamaica to J. M. Ross, Home Office Nationality Division, July 14, 1961, CO 1031/4219, TNA.
123 A. M. MacKintosh to A. R. Thomas, August 5, 1960, CO 1031/4219, TNA.
124 M. Z. Terry to A. M. MacKintosh, August 4, 1960, CO 1031/4219, TNA.
125 Note by G. P. Lloyd, February 13, 1961, CO 1031/4219, TNA.
126 Note by A. M. MacKintosh, December 30, 1960, CO 1031/4219, TNA.
Chapter 2: Community Development

V. Conclusion

In 1949, Arthur Creech Jones, Labour Secretary of State for the Colonies, argued for the new responsibilities of West Indians now that they were to share in representative government:

Of course, it can be argued that there has been a great deal of neglect in the past; but while greatly conscious of the responsibilities of Britain in helping in the development of the West Indies, I do at the same time want to stress, now that the people of Jamaica can enjoy a real degree of responsibility, that a great deal depends on their own initiative and enterprise in building up the social life of the people of that country in order that a good life shall be possible for all. Too frequently we neglect the other side of the picture when we are stressing our own responsibilities and obligations to these people.\(^{128}\)

Community development was a project of education in citizenship, fitting of a nation on its path to independence. It found favor with Migrant Services Division, respectable West Indians, and voluntary social agencies as an appropriate strategy to aid West Indians in integration in Britain. However, its translation to Britain would produce West Indians as a discrete community, rather than as ordinary members of the local communities of Britain.

The two impulses of social democratic community and community development were always in tension, leaving West Indians as both members of local communities in Britain and also members of discrete communities organized internally. In Britain, the West Indies Commission in many ways advocated on behalf of West Indians in Britain. They did so often through intermediaries such as the Consultative Committee in Nottingham. The Consultative Committee acted as the Colonial Office’s agency in Nottingham—seeking advice on the local conditions of West Indians and advising on matters of policy. This partnership shaped the ambivalent accommodation of Commonwealth Citizens in local communities. Nottingham, as the site of racialized violence in 1958, became the laboratory for the development of community feeling and active citizenship amongst West Indians. In fact, the national press reported the “Nottingham Experiment” as a solution to the increasing national awareness of an immigrant problem.\(^{129}\)

Although the scheme to elevate West Indian leaders failed to create a cohesive group of community organizers, the plans for community development in Nottingham created a sense of West Indian community as a discrete entity that could be led. No longer coloured people, West Indians identified themselves as Commonwealth Citizens, reflected not only in the change in title of the Colonial Social and Sports Club to the Commonwealth Citizens’ Association, but also in the change of title from the Nottingham Consultative Committee for the Welfare of Coloured


Chapter 2: Community Development

People to the Nottingham Consultative Committee for Commonwealth Citizens. Recognition of West Indians as Commonwealth Citizens also led to an increased desire on the part of social workers to understand those other Commonwealth Citizens, Pakistanis. Increasingly, community relations turned to cultural understandings of these discrete communities of Commonwealth Citizens.

Not only the structure of Migrant Services Division, but its program of community development would shape the formation of community relations in Britain when it began to be organized through the Home Office. The next chapter looks at the ways a national infrastructure to share advice and information about these communities took shape. Building on the efforts pioneered by the voluntary sector and Migrants Services Division, the domestic British state began organizing community.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture
The Ideological and Institutional investment in Community, 1957–1968

Indian children come from rural areas and love animals and eagerly recognize goats, cows, horses and tigers; only very gradually can new species and so on be brought into the teaching as they would merely confuse the children. They do not, for instance, have much experience of mechanical aids, and therefore the introduction of, say, an electric kettle, which would be readily understood by an English child, causes puzzlement. The mention of food especially has to be related to what they can and do eat. For this reason, the use of many English infant’s textbooks is impracticable.¹

The quote that opens this chapter shows how, by the mid-1960s, social workers relied on a set of markers to understand the migrant children now in their area schools. Social workers portrayed Pakistani children, migrating from poor, rural backgrounds, as generally bewildered by urban modernity. Social workers believed that knowing the experiences of these children was crucial to effectively teaching them English and integrating into British social life. These efforts to understand culture to provide services, which grew in the mid-1960s, represent a shift in thinking about the place of Commonwealth Citizens in British society, and the type of efforts required to secure their social rights. In the previous two chapters, I showed the ways Commonwealth Citizens appeared to social workers as imperial Britons, marked by their color and colonial status. With the independence of several countries in the West Indies and the rise in consciousness of the presence of migrants from Pakistan and India, social workers increasingly perceived Commonwealth Citizens to belong to discrete cultural communities.

In the wake of criticisms of the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, the domestic British state began analyzing the impact of immigration from the Commonwealth on the local communities of Britain. In doing so, the state discovered the work of the voluntary local agencies that provided information and services to the Commonwealth Citizens. The state invested in community relations as a technocratic exercise that could be enacted through an institutional framework. Making good community relations depended both on a set of knowledges to be implemented as well as a bureaucratic framework. This chapter first examines how understanding the culture of Commonwealth Citizens became necessary to providing them welfare. I then turn to the contestations that produced community as the framework through which immigrants would be integrated into local social services. The patterns of knowledge mobilized through the framework of community relations drew from the forms of voluntary social work discussed in the past two chapters. This chapter examines how the state consolidated the local practice of community relations.

The culture of Commonwealth Citizens become necessary to providing them welfare as part of a global shift from race to culture in social science understanding. This chapter first shows how the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

an important driver of the global transition from race to culture to understand human diversity. UNESCO sponsored a series of initiatives that disproved a biological basis for racial difference, explained the coherence of cultural forms, and emphasized the importance of appreciating cultural diversity in the face of the homogenizing mass culture of industrial societies. In addition to this respect for human cultures, Kenneth Little published a pamphlet on the spectrum of race relations in the world, showing Britain’s particular middle way between apartheid South Africa and heterogeneous Brazil. British community relations drew from both these ways of thinking to appreciate the cultures of commonwealth citizens, and to consider multicultural Britain in global contexts.

These academic discussions filtered through social worker conferences, which consolidated ways of thinking about managing diversity into the form of community relations. Rather than coloured colonial subjects, marked by their racial difference, Commonwealth Citizens became defined by their belonging to cultural communities. The coloured community of the 1950s fractured into multiple cultural communities of Commonwealth Citizens. Social workers “discovered” Pakistanis, and learning about their cultural background led to comparisons with West Indians, which both deepened cultural difference and amplified the sense that understanding the cultures of the different communities of Commonwealth Citizens was crucial to meeting their welfare needs. With a new emphasis placed on culture within social work professional development, community relations taught teachers and social workers the conditions from which Commonwealth Citizens migrated and their national cultures in order to better provide them with services.

The financial investment by the state in community relations further amplified and entrenched these social work practices. For many commentators, 1965 was the crucial point of transition, when the “laissez-faire fifties” gave way to government intervention through funding and a central infrastructure for sharing information and resources between voluntary community relations councils.2 As shown in the previous chapters, there was a degree of national coordination in the 1950s, mainly through the efforts of the West Indies Commission and the National Council of Social Service. It cannot be taken for granted that a statutory body came to be the most significant facilitator of community relations. The last section looks at the formation of a British way of community relations, managed through a central government agency. In the transition from voluntary organization to government sponsorship, a variety of actors compared Britain’s experience of cultural diversity to those of other nations. While many social workers looked to Europe to understand continental experiments with managing diversity, a more agonistic approach found favor with some Commonwealth Citizens and their allies who looked to the American model of civil rights.

As an ideological and institutional formation, community relations advocated for the social rights of Commonwealth Citizens. Increasingly however, their citizenship was mediated by their belonging to cultural communities.

---

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

I. Rethinking Race, Culture and Community in the Postwar era

In The Souls of Black Folk, W. E. B. Du Bois declared “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line.” By the middle of the century, there was less a clear line between “darker” and “lighter” races, then an emerging palette of distinct cultures. A changing understanding of race, culture and community, articulated through a growing international infrastructure of social science research, shaped the work of community relations in Britain. The horrors of the holocaust revealed the dangers of racial thinking, and the apartheid regime in South Africa and segregation in the southern United States demonstrated that racial division would continue to haunt international cooperation after the resolution of World War II. While some internationalist projects idealized a universalism rooted in the European enlightenment, increasingly, recognition and respect for distinct, national cultures came to be the preferred mode of understanding human diversity.

In the Commonwealth and in wider international circles, human diversity was understood in numerous ways, but many observers considered the displacement of a hierarchical sense of race relations as one of the most pressing problems of postwar international politics. The Constitution of the United Nations, Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) began:

That ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war;
That the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races;

UNESCO’s contribution to lasting peace demanded the provision of information to mitigate ignorance and a campaign against “race prejudice” particularly by dispelling the “long-standing confusion between race and culture.”

UNESCO not only worked towards the preservation of heritage sites and cultural forms, but also sponsored a variety of conferences and publications to educate against ignorance.

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

Establishing a scholarly consensus on race, however, proved fraught with disciplinary and political tensions. The political climate of the immediate postwar years demanded a refutation of hereditary and genetic science and precipitated the disciplinary shift from biology to the social sciences. One of UNESCO’s first programs produced a collection of pamphlets publicizing current scientific attitudes towards race. As Michelle Brattain shows, the publication of UNESCO’s 1950 pamphlet “The Race Question,” revealed the lack of scholarly consensus on the existence of racial difference and showed the limits of postwar liberal internationalism. Theories of human variety were never easily interchanged, one for another, and more often than not the egos and disciplinary interests of individuals shaped global discussion of the science of race.

In addition to debates between biologists, particularly geneticists, and social scientists, the production of the UNESCO pamphlet showed the ways international politics shaped scientific theories. The USSR sponsored scientists who provided environmental reasons for human difference to distance themselves not only from the Nazi regime, but also Western research into heredity and genetics, which they claimed forwarded “fascist ideas of racial superiority.” The UNESCO committee purposely chose social scientists and not geneticists for the first pamphlet, to distance themselves from accusations of scientific racism. The “Second Statement on Race” not only included a reprint of the first statement, but also a lengthy introduction that detailed the debate and an additional supporting statement from the scientists’ committee justifying their method. This not only allowed for the publication of minority opinions within the committee but also allowed UNESCO to urge the general public to exercise caution in discussion of race. The publication “introduces us to a scientific laboratory and, if confusion seems to be rife, we must not forget that it is precisely such differences of opinion and, indeed, such bitter attacks which give birth to what we call truth.” UNESCO would not provide the definitive statement on race, and urged the public to think flexibly as well. Rather than the eclipse of biological theories of racial difference by cultural or environmental explanations, theories held by one group of experts could be dismissed by others, and disregarded by wider publics.

Despite the resistance of some natural scientists and physical anthropologists, UNESCO continued to publish pamphlets arguing against biological definitions of race. These pamphlets provided an intellectual spine to the program’s broader project to create recognition and respect for distinct cultures. These books formed a series titled “The Race Question in Modern Science,” and found their way to the libraries of community relations practitioners in Britain.

---

12 Ibid., 10.
13 Brattain, “Race, Racism, and Antiracism.”
14 City of Nottingham Public Library, “General Books on Race Relations in Stock in the Reference Library, Sherwood Street, Nottingham,” n. d., ca 1962, DD/CR/1/1, Nottinghamshire Archives (hereafter NoA); City of Nottingham
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

The structuralist anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss contributed a pamphlet titled *Race and History*, which argued for the unique formations of particular cultures and the importance of cultural diversity in the face of the dominance of western, industrial civilization. Every culture possessed a coherence and logic, Lévi-Strauss claimed, and yet, the differences between cultures were nevertheless part of an underlying universal structure. For instance, in *Elementary Structures of Kinship*, Lévi-Strauss argued that while every culture possessed a distinct kinship form, all shared an incest taboo that demanded men mate outside of their families. In looking beyond cultural difference to seek what was shared, Lévi-Strauss’s theories provided a justification for the equality of cultural values, a relativism that found increasing favor in the postwar years. Rather than a hierarchy of cultures with European modernity at the apex, Lévi-Strauss favored a more horizontal equality, which both reified cultural boundaries, and also lamented the ways industrial modernity was decimating cultures not based in market relations. Cultural diversity was a good to be fostered, and Lévi-Strauss, UNESCO, and others who favored cultural relativism sought to preserve cultures to maintain that diversity.

While Lévi-Strauss’s approach was cultural and symbolic, Kenneth Little’s contribution to the series, *Race and Society*, presented four case studies to emphasize the ways modern capitalist relations produced the particular national experience of race. Many mid-century social scientists may have abandoned a hierarchy of national cultures, but Little’s book presented a spectrum of race relations. With apartheid South Africa at one end, and “extremely” heterogenous Brazil and Hawaii on the other, Little placed Britain in the middle, with no laws explicitly governing race relations, but at the same time extensive social stigma attached to racial mixing, social and genetic. Little’s volume shows the ways British social scientists understood the British experience of race relations as a middle ground between the explicit segregation of South Africa and the American South, and pluralist societies such as Brazil, Hawaii and Jamaica, which were presented as a model from which Britain could learn. While in the example of Hawaii, Little noted the recognition of the various ethnicities that constituted Hawaiian society, in Britain, Little emphasized the fact that despite the diverse origins of migrants, they were collectively understood as “coloured”. He discussed the way white Britons displayed both apathy and toleration at once, rationalizing the gap between inclusive ideology and discriminatory practice with ideas of migrants’ culture. In Britain, both of Little’s insights would find their way into community relations practice.

UNESCO’s research provided the North Atlantic world with information to increase their respect for different cultures and to accept that decolonization was creating a “multi-racial world.” Political anti-racism and international circumstances influenced changing academic conceptions of race. The shift from biological explanations of human diversity also emerged concomitantly with a desire to reckon with the changes wrought by industrialization. As

---

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

International institutions were now becoming multi-racial, so too were European societies, and both perceived social science as the appropriate discipline explain these changes.

Social scientists participated in disciplinary debates at the international level with biological scientists. However, in Britain, they needed to establish their expertise in contrast to a longer tradition of social investigation. Little published the first academic study of a “coloured community” in Britain, *Negroes in Britain*. Little consciously presented his study as one based in scientifically derived conclusions, an important counter to less rigorous social investigation conducted by those rooted in social work.17 His study provides an example of the shift from problem-based social investigation to theoretical sociology.18 Little described *Negroes in Britain* as a community study, a genre of social investigation that identified discrete communities through their geographic boundaries and common culture. This form increasingly gained footing in Britain both in social anthropology and in sociology, but eventually declined in the late 1950s as social change became the prominent mode for understanding the sociology of Britain.19 For the emerging study of race relations in Britain, British society was in a state of flux, changes furthered and made obvious by migration. For community relations, however, migrants brought their cultural backgrounds with them to Britain, and these cultural backgrounds needed to be understood and widely disseminated to aide their integration.

Cultural relativism and the study of social change both attempted to understand human diversity in the interests of creating a more equitable society. Lévi-Strauss elevated individual cultures by showing the ways they were internally coherent. Little showed the various ways national societies managed heterogeneity. Community relations drew from both approaches—explaining cultures deemed internally coherent as well as making heterogeneity normal by imbuing Britain’s heterogeneity with historical and comparative context.

The tensions between these forms of understanding human diversity manifested themselves in community relations work. Following the patterns established in these international academic circles, social workers mobilized this knowledge not to racialize welfare, but to imbue it with culture.

II. Talkin’ Community Relations

Diversity was not the term by which community relations practitioners understood the increased presence of migrants. Rather, they often used the phrase, “the immigrant problem” parroting sensationalistic headlines that conceived of immigration as creating disorder. Social workers involved in community relations rarely considered the immigrant as a problem. Rather immigration made material conditions visible, and social workers deplored the inadequacy of social provision. Understanding immigration as exacerbating existing social problems fueled the

investment in organizing conferences to disseminate current information. Social workers did not simply relay the findings of social scientists, but in forming an audience and demanding information, they created a “common context” for research. They organized conferences, study groups, and lectures to create channels of communications between experts, social workers, and the broader public. By sharing experiences of local conditions and participating in the circulation of knowledge about community relations, social workers contributed to forming a national picture of British efforts at integration.

As social workers sought explanations to understand the ways Commonwealth Citizens did and did not access welfare, they turned to cultural explanations for Commonwealth Citizens’ difference from the normative Britain. When social workers “discovered” Pakistanis in the early 1960s, they mobilized the patterns of information and communication they pioneered with regards to West Indians to understand this group and its problems. In doing so, the Government of Pakistan became an important source of expertise to understand Pakistanis. Thinking comparatively between West Indians and Pakistanis contributed to defining differences between the two groups and contributed to the dissolution of the “coloured community” into distinct cultural communities.

II.i National Conferences

As discussed in the last chapter, Migrant Services Division of the West Indian Commission formed connections nationally through their contact with social workers working with West Indians settled in their local communities. Within British social welfare institutions, the first efforts to coordinate the work of local organizations working towards integration happened through contact established by the Family Welfare Association and formalized by the National Council for Social Service. Three social workers located in the provinces participated on the steering committee of the Family Welfare Association on their three-year effort “The Project for the Welfare of Coloured People in London”: Dorothy Wood of Nottingham, Jessie Hood, Secretary of the Committee for Colonial Workers in Bristol and K. Aldous of the Liverpool Personal Service Society. Their conversations through the Family Welfare Association prompted them to seek the formation of a committee of the National Council of Social Service to foster discussion on the work being done by local councils. The committee met semi-annually beginning in July, 1957, when 11 social workers, two from the National Council of Social Services, two from London, and seven from the provinces met in London to discuss their need for information. The secretary of the group, Elizabeth Littlejohn, had little experience working with migrants, and so asked the local social workers to provide their advice on people to be

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

brought into the group. They shared information on the local situation of Commonwealth Citizens in their areas, and also the types of work their committees had taken on to assist them. The secretary of the committee collected information from the seven committees already in formation, and encouraged the creation of more committees. This early formation emphasized the importance of local circumstances, which were collected and redistributed by the central organization, but prioritized the expertise of local practitioners.

The NCSS committee served as a conduit for research and the circulation of information. They sent surveys to local committees, collected the reports and sent summaries back to the local committees. They represented the work of the committee to the British Government and also sought the advice of the high commissions of the countries from which Commonwealth Citizens migrated. Their local members sent local surveys for the National Council to pass on to Government. In representing the localities to the national government, they acted as a “governing institution” as Pat Thane and Helen McCarthy sketched.

While the National Council of Social Service coordinated the exchange of information between social workers, the London Council of Social Service’s West Indian Advisory Committee (WIAC) took the lead to educate social workers in up to date social scientific literature. The WIAC shared the basic structure and general principles of the Nottingham Consultative Committee for Commonwealth Citizens. It was not, however, a local consultative committee that brought together sections of the whole community to aid in the integration of Commonwealth Citizens into local welfare. Formed in 1957, the WIAC was a committee of committees for London, bringing together those who organized local borough committees, as well as officers of voluntary welfare agencies working in London as a whole. The mission of the LCSS sought to coordinate “the work of existing organizations concerned with the subject and to keep track of developments.” Keeping track of developments would include the two-way circulation of local developments and informing local social workers of national research.

The WIAC organized a conference in 1956, “The West Indian in London” that 140 social workers, social administrators and social scientists attended. The name of the conference itself shows the ways social workers began thinking of the West Indian as a knowable type. The planning committee for their 1958 conference “The integration of West Indians in London,” included Ivo S. DeSouza of Migrant Services Division, A. W. Davey, the Housing Manager of the

25 Barbara Creighton, Acting Secretary, London County Council, West Indian Advisory Committee to Kenneth Little, June 17, 1958, ACC/1888/110, LMA.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

Borough of St. Pancras and a founding member of the WIAC, as well as Nadine Peppard, the secretary of the WIAC. Whereas Dorothy Wood in Nottingham involved herself in the everyday details of the Commonwealth Citizens whom she served, Nadine Peppard invested instead in forms of information gathering and exchange. She became an important facilitator of the development of a community relations infrastructure.

These committee members from the Federation Government of the West Indies, local statutory social services, and a voluntary agency show the joint project of disseminating information in the work of welfare. Initial discussion of speakers for their program included Miss Dorothy Wood of Nottingham to speak on social activities, Dr. Sidney Collins to speak on “behaviour patterns in the West Indies,” and Madeleine Campbell to speak on “colour and class.” Academic research came together with social work in a collaborative way in the early years of community relations. Audiences of social workers considered both experts.

The WIAC kept informed of recent research in the field of race relations, and wrote to Kenneth Little to ask for a speaker from his department. He suggested Sheila Patterson, whose Dark Strangers published in 1964 would become the exemplar of British race relations research. Patterson researched and published on South African race relations and Afrikaaner national identity, and in Canada she studied Polish immigration. Her work at the Institute of Race Relations, as a researcher, and eventual editor of the Institute’s newsletter would place her at the center of the interchange of information between academics and a wider audience. For the conference, she proposed the talk, “The New West Indian Migration in South London--Some Problems of Adaptation and Acceptance" and asked the conference organizer if it wasn’t “too pompous and longwinded?” Patterson sought assurance that the tone and scope of her talk suited her audience of social workers. Social work conferences promised research opportunities and a chance to hear new speakers, not only for social workers, but also for academics. Hearing of the conference, Harold Pollins introduced himself and his research to the conference organizer and sought permission to attend.

The conference was not only a chance to hear the latest research from academics, but to share news of current conditions in localities throughout Britain. The other speaker at the conference was Charles H. Charlesworth, a solicitor in Leeds and the chairman of that city’s Aggrey Housing Society, an association that specifically housed “newcomers.” The mixture of academic expertise and voluntary social service experience extended from the choice of speakers to the audience. A significant portion of the conference’s agenda included study

---

29 Harold Pollins to Barbara Creighton, September 9, 1958, ACC/1888/110, LMA.
groups and discussion. A standard practice within Council of Social Service conferences, these study groups involved social workers themselves in relaying their experiences in the interest of developing best practice. In preparation for the conference, the organizing committee circulated the conference program to social workers. The committee invited them to propose topics to be raised in the discussion section of the conference. These discussion sections were as important an event at the conference as the lectures, allowing social workers to set an agenda for discussion, to share their experiences, and to collectively produce methods of social work.

The growth of conferences themselves, however, would change the early spirit of collaboration. One of the conferences to which Patterson spoke was a weekend residential conference at Oxford organized by Nadine Peppard of the London Council of Social Service. In addition to the background of immigrants and the social conditions of London, the main speakers of the conference were Marie Jahoda and Judith Henderson, both speaking on the “Roots of Discrimination.” Jahoda explained prejudice as rooted in “the soul of the accuser”, and was thus not related to the behavior of those around them or larger social conditions. However, Jahoda cited studies of the United States where those who lived in close contact with those of other races were less likely to be prejudiced.\(^\text{30}\) The conference report stated, “the lesson to be learned from these experiments, Dr. Jahoda concluded, was that the creation of a social climate where differences of colour and race were accepted as a matter of course was the most promising way to combat discrimination.” Jahoda’s message that prejudice could be driven away by the experience of contact with those considered different became popular amongst community relations organizers, who sought Jahoda to speak at further conferences.

While in 1958, Patterson displayed concern to establish the proper tone for her largely social work audience, she became a highly regarded speaker amongst social workers, to the point where in 1964, a social worker tired of “her usual talk.”\(^\text{31}\) Conference organizers sought to contract well-known speakers to attract attendees, but audiences also demanded novelty and up-to-date perspectives on community relations. In London, community relations work investigated West Indians, and social workers there turned to study British prejudice. Further north, the discovery of Pakistanis was turning the field as a whole to the cultural patterns of migrants. Pakistanis became a new hot topic for community relations conferences.

In 1957, Miss Wood of Nottingham described Pakistanis and Indians as appearing “to solve their own problems without approaching the usual sources of help; at any rate very few have been in touch with the Consultative Committee.”\(^\text{32}\) Pakistanis became visible nationally through an outbreak of smallpox in Bradford that garnered press attention and contributed to


\(^{31}\) Dorothy M. Wood to Nadine S. Peppard, Secretary, London Council of Social Service, West Indian Advisory Committee, March 9, 1964, DD/CR/81, NoA.

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

the debate on the Commonwealth Immigrants Bill.33 Despite this spectacular incident, Pakistanis mainly came to the attention of local welfare agencies through their lack of English language skills and the attendant difficulties of employment. The director of the Clifton Institute in Birmingham, J. J. Hegen, shared his experiences providing evening classes for Pakistanis and Indians:

These people need our educational service much more than the West Indians - they are sociologically, culturally and industrially a problem community until we are able to break through their reserve and help them to live like their neighbours. [They need to be taught] to discard customs and habits objectionable to us and to adopt those of the white community in which they are living. Unless this sort of positive teaching is given, we cannot hope that they will be accepted - or even tolerated - by our white workers and they certainly will not be integrated.34

Hegen’s quote illustrates several tensions in community relations work. His quote reveals the distance perceived by middle class social workers between their tolerant attitude and the white working class, considered a problem for the discrimination they practiced. Hegen also shows the relationship between culture and welfare, taking the position that the attitude of Pakistanis themselves was a barrier to their successful integration. While Hegen’s position was perhaps extreme on the spectrum of social work attitudes towards Commonwealth cultures, the integration of Pakistanis into normal community life would require them not only to learn English, but for social workers to understand their culture to translate British norms to them.

The discovery of Pakistanis and their difference from West Indians caused the National Council of Social Service’s Group on the Welfare of Coloured Workers to gather information. In this, their first step was to survey local social workers to consolidate knowledge of the local circumstances of Pakistanis in Britain. Social workers relayed their concern that Pakistanis used welfare services less than their West Indian and English neighbors. While the most common reports of Pakistanis concerned the difficulties produced by their lack of English, several social workers also mentioned the problems of overcrowded housing. The preponderance of male workers in the population of migrants from Pakistan resulted in high rates of tuberculosis and venereal disease, so the social workers believed.35 While nearly all of the social workers commented on English language difficulties, only two explicitly mentioned standoffishness


91
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

towards English people and English culture. These two mentions counted enough for the report to generalize that Pakistanis: “tend to keep themselves to themselves and maintain their own culture without attempting to learn English or understand English ways.” The act of consolidating the local situation into a general picture, contributed to the portrayal of a common culture amongst Pakistanis, one that was defensive towards English culture. Social workers believed understanding this culture gap was crucial to encouraging Pakistanis to use welfare services.

The NCSS not only asked social workers to relay their local circumstances, but also turned to the Pakistan High Commission to take a lead in community relations work with Pakistanis. Councils of Social Service sought to replicate their collaboration with Migrant Services Division of the Commission in the United Kingdom for the West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras. But whereas that body represented a not quite independent government, responsible not to nationals, but to colonial subjects, the Pakistani Government seemed at a loss as to its responsibilities towards its nationals in Britain. The Pakistan Government employed two regional officers in Birkenhead and Glasgow, but as Pakistani migration grew, they appointed regional officers in London, Birmingham and Bradford in 1960. Their Labour attaché, S. B. Sufi relayed to members of the NCSS group on Coloured Workers as well as other organizations in Britain the work being done by the Pakistan Government on behalf of their citizens. He hoped Pakistani migrants could relay to Britain the “difficulties” of that new country, and that migrants returning to Pakistan could strengthen the bonds of the Commonwealth by speaking of their experiences in Britain. Sufi portrayed migrants as conduits in the formation of real and lasting relationships within the Commonwealth. To encourage integration, he urged local consultative committees to contact retired Indian Civil Service officers, recently returned home after service in empire. He suggested these retired could play an important role in explaining the migrants to the broader community and vice versa. This suggestion seems to have found favor with the National Council of Social Service, one of their officers repeated the role retired Indian Civil Servants could play in local community relations when a representative of the Indian government spoke to the group.


In cooperation with the National Council of Social Service, the High Commission of Pakistan organized a conference in Manchester titled, “Pakistanis at Home and in Britain” in June of 1961. Many local authority officers and councilors, but also representatives of industry and voluntary services attended the conference. The experts the Pakistan Government chose to speak at the conference included past and present civil servants and show the continuities of personnel from the late empire through the era of decolonization. L. F. Rushbrook Williams served as an officer in the Government of India’s public information department in the 1920s, worked for various princely states in the 1930s, and after his return to Britain, worked for the Ministry of Information, the BBC and The Times. His keynote address at the conference presented “Economic, Social and Family Life in Pakistan.” In addition to this former servant of the British Government of India, two officers of the present state of Pakistan gave talks on “Islam and Religious Customs - their Influence on daily life” and “Problems of Pakistanis in Britain.” The presence of these government officers as experts at the conference shows the ways the Government of Pakistan carefully managed the kinds of information presented about Pakistanis.

The work of the Government of Pakistan to manage the reputation of Pakistanis in Britain showed not only those speakers they chose for conferences, but also by those speakers whom social workers felt were potentially problematic. In 1964, Dorothy Wood planned a residential conference in Nottingham titled, “East Meets West: Pakistanis at Home and in Britain.” Miss Wood hoped the conference would discuss migrants from both India and Pakistan. However, while the Education Officer of the High Commission of India believed that one day was enough to discuss the problems of Indians in Nottingham, Mr. Sufi of Pakistan considered this an insufficient amount of time to discuss the position of Pakistanis. The Nottingham committee decided it was best to only “cover one of the races this year.” The financial and administrative support of Mr. Sufi and the Pakistan High Commission made the conference possible, and Mr. Sufi also provided speakers on "Social and Family life in Pakistan,” “Education and Religion in Pakistan,” and “Economic life in Pakistan.” The Pakistan High Commission’s support shaped the content of Miss Wood’s conference.

Before this offer, Miss Wood solicited suggestions for speakers and received repeated recommendations for Hamza Alavi, a sociologist who had written an article for the Institute of Race Relations’ newsletter and participated in study groups organized by the London Council of Social Service. He was a socialist who had become politicized in 1958 by the seizure of power in Pakistan by General Ayub Khan. Sheila Patterson recommended Alavi as an able speaker, but warned Miss Wood because she believed him to be “a political opponent of the Pakistan Government.” Patterson recommended Miss Wood check with Mr. Sufi to ensure her choice

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

met the Pakistan High Commission’s approval. Nadine Peppard recommended Alavi on the basis of his work with the Pakistan Welfare Association, as well as his contributions to the LCSS’s study group. However, she warned Miss Wood that he was “non-High Commission and probably anti.” Community relations councils actively solicited Government cooperation and meeting their approval shaped the way conferences chose speakers. In the end, the High Commissioner of Pakistan, Agha Hilaly, and his wife addressed the conference on the cultural background of Pakistanis.

Alavi was a critic of the Pakistani Government, not only for their domestic actions, but in their lack of attention towards Pakistani migrants in Britain. He negatively compared the Pakistan High Commission in Britain with the active role played by Migrant Services Division of the West Indian Commission. Alavi argued that the engagement shown by Migrant Services Division created more awareness of West Indian culture and experiences amongst social workers, and Alavi claimed that this “greater familiarity with the West Indian case [caused] a tendency to generalize their experience to all coloured immigrants.” His report on Pakistanis for the British Overseas Socialist Fellowship focused on the problems of crowded conditions and the gender imbalance of migration. He also emphasized the tensions of class between working class Pakistanis residing in Britain and the middle class students temporarily in Britain for degrees. Importantly, he described men from East and West Pakistan living in Britain as “detrubalized” and taking part in British customs such as going for a pint. He emphasized their habits as a break from the customs of Pakistan. Whereas Alavi emphasized the ways Pakistani men resident in Britain broke with their culture, the High Commission in Pakistan in concert with voluntary associations sought to emphasize cultural continuities through migration.

Miss Wood and the Nottingham Consultative Committee decided to host the conference on “Indian and Pakistani problems” to remedy the greater familiarity with “West Indian problems.” The initial aims of the conference emphasized conditions in Nottingham, and the conference organizers wished “to educate English people about the social, religious and economic background” of Pakistanis. As its organization, grew, however, the conference developed national rather than local pretentions. In London, Nadine Peppard claimed they were “still far too West Indian-oriented,” and Sheila Patterson looked forward to the

---

41 Sheila Patterson to Dorothy M. Wood, April 3, 1964, DD/CR/81, NoA.
42 “Pakistanis in Britain: Extract from a Report Prepared for the British Overseas Fellowship by Mr. Hamza A. Alavi,” n.d., 4462/P/01/013, LMA.
43 Nadine S. Peppard to Dorothy M. Wood, March 10, 1964, DD/CR/81, NoA.
44 “Pakistanis in Britain: Extract from a Report Prepared for the British Overseas Fellowship by Mr. Hamza A. Alavi.”
45 Ibid.
46 This also produced a little conflict when a member of the committee accused Mr. Irons of refusing West Indians from “schemes of assistance.” Miss Wood assured the member that it had been largely her decision to focus on Indians and Pakistanis since they had already had three conferences on West Indian problems. “Minutes of Consultative Committee for Commonwealth Citizens Meeting, November 5, 1962,” n.d., DD/CR/1/1, NoA.
Conference report as an important resource "as little is known in Britain about this group and such material would be valuable for other organisations and areas." The different composition of Commonwealth Citizens in different areas contributed to the enthusiasm for particular topics.

While in London, Peppard and Patterson looked forward to learning more about Pakistanis, Miss Wood wanted to bring “up-to-date” speakers on community relations to Nottingham. She not only wanted speakers on the backgrounds of Pakistanis, but she also desired a speaker on British prejudice to educate her intended audience of local welfare officers and social workers. For her, Nadine Peppard’s Oxford conference was a model, and she wanted to bring Marie Jahoda to speak in Nottingham. Unfortunately, Jahoda could not attend, and Miss Wood struggled to find a speaker on British race relations for her conference. Her top three choices were Jahoda, Kenneth Little, and Kenneth Kirkwood, the Rhodes Professor of Race Relations at Oxford. Kirkwood and Little declined her invitation due to commitments at different universities in Africa. She eventually wrote to 14 speakers before confirming Michael Argyle to speak on the “Psychology of Prejudice”. Others expressed their regrets due to the growing demand for speaking engagements. These global commitments prevented their participation in a conference to educate local attitudes.

Miss Wood desired a speaker on English prejudice because the audience would mostly be those involved in the provision of services. She hoped after a day of “practical” discussion, the closing talk on the psychology of prejudice would be “of considerable value, especially to our English delegates, and would provide an excellent finale to the discussions of practical problems and a stimulus for future action by those present.” Organizers designed these conferences to be useful and informative to practitioners, and the social workers who organized them chose their speakers, when they could, towards this end. They formed definite opinions on those who did and did not fit the bill and those that should be brought into the orbit of community relations. Nadine Peppard described Donald Wood of the Institute of Race Relations as having much of academic merit to say, but that his talks were not “very forward-looking.” She wrote of J. L. Henderson, a lecturer in history at the Institute of Education, "I do not think he is in very close touch with our kind of community race relations work...He is a very good speaker and may well be a person we should be drawing into our field." Peppard described the BBC psychologist David Stafford-Clark as “most inspiring and cares terribly about it all, but of course he is a very busy man and much in demand, and I do not know whether you would be able to get him.” It was not only being up to date on current research that mattered, but the tone and the politics of the speaker. Participation in the expanding field of community relations shaped the reputation of experts.

49 Sheila Patterson to Dorothy M. Wood.
50 Including one to a UNESCO meeting and two to the International Congress of Applied Psychology in Yugoslavia. Her order of preference for speakers was Kirkwood, Little, Jahoda, Stafford-Clark, Patterson, Richmond, Wright, Tajfel, Mason, Oppenheim, Veness, Banton, Lee, Argyle.
51 Dorothy M. Wood to Michael Argyle, July 2, 1964, DD/CR/81, NoA.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

Many participants considered Wood’s conference a great success, and she received congratulations and gratitude from the Pakistan High Commissioner, Nadine Peppard, and the Nottingham Senior Medical Officer for having “widened the interest and deepened the understanding of those of us with whom they come in contact.” 53 180 participants attended the conference and Miss Wood calculated that one-third of them were local Pakistanis. 54 Pakistani organizations in Nottingham contributed time and energy to the conference. The Pakistan Friends League donated money as well: £25 in addition to their 13 members who paid the fees to attend the conference. Their members also contributed personal items as representative Pakistani objects in a small exhibition of handicrafts at the exhibition. These Pakistani residents in Nottingham seemed to take pride and interest in the conference occurring in their new home. In the case of the conference but also in other activities in Nottingham, Commonwealth Citizens, particularly Pakistanis, proved their community spirit by sponsoring through their time and money, the work of organizing community. 55

Despite the high attendance, the conference netted only five shillings profit. Conferences depended upon the production of a report to circulate the proceedings to a wider audience. The Pakistan High Commission offered to undertake the production of a report. Unfortunately, they could not see through this commitment, and problems with recording technology and a lack of extra income from the conference meant that the Nottingham Consultative Committee could not produce a report. 56 The lack of a report limited the afterlife and impact of such conferences, despite the acclaim from attendees. The reports circulated in social work libraries as important resources for practitioners. Ambitious community relations practitioners like Dorothy Wood could establish themselves as pioneers in the field, by bringing new subjects to national attention, and also by bringing academic research to local audiences. It was not only academics who participated as experts in these conferences. The Government of Pakistan became interested in educating social workers and became an important source for information on migrant backgrounds.

Conferences were important in mediating between the local, national and global dimensions of community relations. Increasingly, the circulation of information splintered between conferences that distinguished between their speakers of national reputation, and their audiences of local social workers. The growth of study groups also contributed to this divergence.

53 L. Wildon, Senior Medical Officer, City of Nottingham Health Service to Dorothy M. Wood, July 27, 1964, DD/CR/81, NoA.
55 See the case of the Christmas party…Notts/DD/CR/58/1.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

II.ii Study Groups

Social workers drew on changing shifts in elite scientific conversations, but they also undertook research in collaboration with academics, and shared common cause with them in the work of community relations. In 1962, the London Council of Social Service convened a study group under the direction of Sheila Patterson to look into "Communities with substantial numbers of immigrants." The study group presented their report at the British National Conference on Social Welfare for 1964, whose theme was “Communities and Social Change.” Explicating London’s experience of migration and welfare would create London as the prototypical British model of integration.

The National Council of Social Service organized the British National Conference on Social Welfare to foster social workers to investigate types of social problems, bring together this information, and prepare general reports. Social workers initiated 150 study groups in advance of the 1964 conference, and 160 social workers met twice yearly at one-day seminars in preparation. This two-year project of research and discussion culminated in the actual conference in early 1964, attended by 670 people from statutory and voluntary agencies. The conference report highlighted “the impact of science on community life,” and the force of social change as important themes of the conference. A closer look at the study group on “Communities with Substantial Number of Immigrants” shows how these social workers interacted, and the types of work they accomplished.

The study group brought together social workers employed by borough voluntary social work committees such as those in Willesden, Brixton, Paddington and Notting Hill. The study group included representatives of agencies drawn on broader lines, such as the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child and the London Council of Social Service, represented by Nadine Peppard. The study group also included Hamza Alavi, mentioned earlier, David Pitt, a West Indian and member of the London County Council, and Pansy Jeffrey. Jeffrey migrated to Britain from British Guiana and worked in the North Kensington Citizens’ Advice Bureau “to give advice on cultural background and to work with groups in the area who are working for better relationships.” Jeffrey, Pitt and Alavi lent authority to the committee through their presence and expertise. Those assembled in the study group brought both local knowledge of their areas, as well as knowledge of immigrant groups, as social workers, social researchers, and politicians.

For these participants, their understanding of immigrant culture was in service of providing them welfare. They consciously chose to focus on Commonwealth Citizens from the West Indies, Pakistan and India, and to exclude Cypriots, Poles and the Irish from a significant role in their report. They chose Commonwealth Citizens of color because of the role racial

---

58 Study Group for British National Council of Social Welfare, “Communities with Substantial Numbers of Immigrants, Meeting Friday October 5, 1962,” n. d., 4462/P/01/013, LMA.
discrimination played in their acceptance in local communities. The study group members brought their knowledge of social anthropology to understand West Indian family patterns: “the basic rural West Indian kinship pattern of the woman as the head of the family and often the breadwinner is not, on the whole, repeated in Willesden.”60 In terms of behavior, they generalized to national groups. They compared West Indian women favorably to other immigrants, noting that they often came to Britain to seek work, and might happen to be pregnant, unlike their “Irish, Canadian and Australian sisters who deliberately enter Great Britain for the purpose of arranging confinement and adoption.”61 While the report emphasized the shared culture of West Indians and Britons, the authors claimed there were “great differences in the cultural traditions of immigrants and hosts, and within the Pakistani group there are separate traditions with regard to food, language, ethnic origins and political attitudes in East and West Pakistan.”62 Delineating types was central to their conception of welfare, and bringing together their knowledge created them as experts sharing their experiences with the larger body of British social welfare workers.

The study group did not only focus on the culture of the immigrants; they agreed that the nature of the receiving society impacted their integration. Their report declared: “All immigrant groups have certain problems in common but the incidence of the problems depends on such factors as the structure and culture of the group, and the situation in particular areas of Britain to which they move.”63 For instance, they compared Willesden, which they called an “urban community” to Notting Hill and Paddington, in which the whole population was unsettled.64 In an existing community, the newcomers could integrate themselves into existing structures, but in an increasing number of areas in urban Britain, migration itself was the norm.

A press release announced the study group’s recommendations, which were also included in the larger program of the British National Conference of Social Welfare. Their recommendations included greater advisory services to promote understanding, and a more active role by government and local authorities to contribute to liaison, produce information and promote conferences to spread “standards, values and attitudes of immigrants and hosts in the interests of mutual understanding.”65 In her report to the conference, Nadine Peppard stated, “the ultimate aim must be integration, in the sense of complete acceptance of everybody as an individual with his part to play in the community.”66

60 Mr. O. U. Murray, Study Group for British National Council of Social Welfare, “Communities with Substantial Numbers of Immigrants, Meeting Friday October 5, 1962.”
61 Mrs. Pauline Crabbe, “Immigrant unmarried mothers”, Ibid.
62 Study Group for British National Council of Social Welfare, “Communities with Substantial Numbers of Immigrants,” January 1964, 4462/P/01/013, LMA.
64 Study Group for British National Council of Social Welfare, “Communities with Substantial Numbers of Immigrants, Meeting Friday October 5, 1962.”
65 Ibid.
organizer of a national body charged by the state to coordinate community relations, she would have the opportunity to put into practice these conclusions. The part Commonwealth Citizens would play, however, would be defined by their belonging to cultural communities.

These forms of organization created through the alliance between voluntary agencies and high commissions of Commonwealth governments consolidated and disseminated information on English prejudice, the cultural backgrounds of migrants, and understanding of Britain’s diversity. The growth of conferences on topics of community relations contributed to the shift from “bottom-up” social research shared horizontally amongst peers to a “top-down” deployment of expertise. As those in community relations listened to experts, they themselves participated as experts in broader social work conferences, educating officers of local authorities and voluntary social service agencies in the backgrounds of migrants and work of community relations. This infrastructure and the experts it identified shaped the domestic British state’s project to organize community.

III. The State Takes a Hand

The previous section showed the ways the voluntary sector consolidated the forms of knowledge that were considered crucial to the work of community relations. This section shows how the government arrived at community relations as the solution to the problem of managing Britain’s increasing cultural diversity. In line with Council of Social Service principles, they first surveyed existing arrangements to understand how best to proceed with positive efforts to organize communities. They built from the voluntary infrastructure that formed in contact with the Governments of the West Indies, Pakistan and India. Forging the national project of community relations required both the investigation of local conditions and comparison of the British experience of migration and welfare with other nations. The government took responsibility for funding the organization of community, but this would not be done without challenges from both voluntary social welfare agencies as well as organizations demanding a more agonistic strategy of civil rights. These battles for the form of community relations, ultimately settled on culture as the basis for understanding Britain’s diverse communities.

III.i Building a National Picture

The formation of a government infrastructure for community relations dovetailed with legislation that progressively restricted the numbers of Commonwealth Citizens allowed to enter the country. As Kathleen Paul has argued, the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 racialized British citizenship by limiting migration from the Commonwealth to those in possession of work vouchers. Subsequently, the government imposed quotas on the number of migrants allowed from each Commonwealth nation in 1965; defined only those Commonwealth Citizens who were “patrials” as having an automatic right to abode in Britain in 1968; and in 1971, demanded immigrants from the Commonwealth register with local police

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

officers and re-register every year for five years to stay within the country. Alongside this legal framework for migration, the British Government passed a series of Race Relations Acts, which made it illegal to discriminate against persons in a larger number of areas of social life. The Race Relations Acts also created statutory enforcement machinery, which at the time and to this day have been criticized for placing an undue burden on the complainant and not creating the conditions for equal opportunity.68

Discussion leading up to the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act brought national attention to the fact that Commonwealth Citizens lived permanently in Britain. While scholars have paid attention to the government’s action to limit migration, make deportation ordinary, and make discrimination illegal through a project of race relations, 69 the government also promoted the work of community relations. The government sponsored a successive series of bodies to organize and encourage the formation of the voluntary local committees promoting “good community relations.”

In response to accusations that the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act harmed the work of integration in Britain, the Conservative Government created an official body to investigate the strain that Commonwealth Citizens placed on local authority welfare services. For many in parliament, the “immigrant problem” was the “social problem” raised by immigration. However, for other members of parliament, the treatment of Commonwealth Citizens presented an indictment of the capacities of Britons to treat their fellow citizens with respect. James MacColl, the Labour member from Widnes, and also the chairman of the London Council of Social Service’s West Indian Advisory Committee argued, “the problem is essentially and primarily a psychological one of getting people to realise the importance of living together. What is required far more than restrictions and regulations is the Government’s identifying themselves more positively with the job of integrating communities.”70 He objected to any proposal to create a separate service for Britons of colour, arguing, “We have to recognize that in this country we do not work on a basis of colour, but on the free rights of citizens to use services.” MacColl argued that ensuring Commonwealth Citizens access to services was a problem of “community living.” He encouraged the formation of an advisory committee, as the appropriate step towards pooling of information and resources, and encouraged the central government to support the local responsibility for “these problems.”71 In doing so, the government would assist the “multi-racial” society that was coming into being through positive efforts to support communities.

The terms of reference of the Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Committee (CIAC) explicitly characterized Commonwealth Citizens as a welfare problem. The Conservative Home Secretary, R. A. Butler agreed with the proposals for the advisory committee, one that would

---

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

not interfere in the authority of government ministries to form policy, which required “the exercise of political judgment.” Instead, the advisory committee would impartially and independently advise on “welfare,” conceived as outside of politics. In addition to not commenting on policy, the CIAC could not address individual cases. Butler insisted, “we must be sure that the main work is devolved, because personal attention to the needs of immigrants will be assured only if this work is devolved and done humanely by the bodies which understand it.” These tensions between the government and local authority would continue to haunt the integration of Commonwealth Citizens.

The Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Council was thus brought into being

(i) to examine the arrangements made by local authorities in whose areas substantial numbers of Commonwealth immigrants have settled to assist immigrants to adapt themselves to British habits and customs, and to report on the adequacy of the efforts made;

(ii) to examine whether the powers of local authorities to deal with matters affecting the welfare of immigrants are sufficient, and whether any further action can usefully be taken by the Government to stimulate action by local authorities; and

(iii) to examine the relationship between action by local offices of Government Departments and local authorities on the one hand, and the efforts of voluntary bodies on the other, in furthering the welfare of immigrants.

As their objects demonstrate, community relations emerged to ensure the social rights of commonwealth citizenship through coordinating the efforts of local authority welfare departments, local offices of government agencies, and voluntary organizations. The government desired immigrants adapt to British customs, and welfare agencies to assist them in this process

The CIAC existed from early 1963 to 1965 and investigated the state of community relations in local authority areas in Britain. The Home Office brought together those with expertise in the empire and in domestic welfare. Stella Charnaud Isaacs chaired the council. As the former secretary and then wife of the former Viceroy of India, Rufus Isaacs, Isaacs spent many years in India. After returning to Britain on her husband’s death, Isaacs attained prominence as the chairwoman of the Women’s Voluntary Service in Britain during World War II. The other members of the council similarly brought together experience in colonial administration with knowledge of social service in Britain, either through voluntary services or through local authorities.

While the CIAC assumed a position of national leadership on surveying local arrangements, the National Council of Social Service also presented themselves as an

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

appropriate body to coordinate community relations. The National Council of Social Service first officially made its claims in 1961, suggesting to the government that the existing Group on the Welfare of Coloured Workers could be strengthened, or perhaps another body should be constituted through the NCSS.\(^ {75}\) The Group on the Welfare of Coloured Workers relayed criticisms of the legislation from their local committees, but an official from the National Council of Social Service downplayed dissent by stressing the need for cooperation with the Home Office. He suggested this was necessary since the group was “a potential coordinating committee for the Government.”\(^ {76}\) Instead of publically criticizing the government, the NCSS encouraged local committees to write to their local MPs to emphasize the work they performed in the interests of good community relations. In anticipation of government action, the NCSS wanted the government to be aware of and in support of their work.\(^ {77}\) One local council, the London Council of Social Services also attempted to gain government attention through a memorandum sent to the Home Office during the draft stages of the Commonwealth Immigrants Bill. The London Council of Social Service criticized the bill based on their “practical experience with immigrants,” asserting their expertise working with this population.\(^ {78}\) Instead of investing the National Council with responsibility for surveying the welfare conditions of immigrants, however, the government would instead co-opt its members into its official bodies.

Despite these representations to government, the investigations of the Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Council did not at first register the work of voluntary councils and focused instead on the impact of Commonwealth Citizens on local authority welfare services. In the reports of the local authorities to the CIAC, Commonwealth Citizens were mostly regarded as the same as other Britons encountering difficulties in finding employment and adequate housing, but facing the additional burden of discrimination. The CIAC brought to government attention these tensions in understanding the place of Commonwealth Citizens in local authority services. Commonwealth Citizens themselves appeared in the initial investigations only through the perspective of local authorities and social workers employed by voluntary agencies.\(^ {79}\) While the CIAC recommended improvements to statutory services, importantly, the

\(^ {75}\) Copy of Letter from Sir John Wrigley, Chairman, Standing Conference of Councils of Social Service to P. Allen, Deputy Under-Secretary of State, Home Office, December 2, 1961, DD/CR/34, NoA.


\(^ {77}\) Elisabeth Littlejohn, the Secretary of the Group, also wrote to Deedes when he presented the motion for the CIAC. Copy of Letter from Elisabeth R. Littlejohn to W. Deedes, MP, February 9, 1962, DD/CR/34, NoA.

\(^ {78}\) Copy of Letter from Nadine S. Peppard to Home Secretary, R. A. Butler, December 4, 1961, DD/CR/34, NoA.

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

Council recommended the government apportion £6000 p. a. for an advisory officer to oversee the sharing of information between localities dealing with the special problems raised by immigrant settlement. They emphasized that the officer should be independent and report to a voluntary committee, not to the Home Office. Through its recommendations, the CIAC suggested that local authorities most needed the government to provide them with information.

The Home Office followed through with the suggestion and in April, 1964 appointed the nine member National Advisory Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NACCI). With three members nominated by the CIAC, three members nominated by the National Council for Social Service, and three nominated by the Institute for Race Relations, the committee brought together expertise from the fields of local and national government, social services and race research. Philip Mason of the Institute of Race Relations, and a former officer in the Indian Civil Service, chaired the committee. After its initial constitution, the NACCI expanded to include three co-opted members meant to represent immigrant communities in Britain: Dr. David Pitt for the West Indians, Begum Rashid for the Pakistanis, and the wife of the Indian High Commissioner in Britain, Hansa Mehta. While Pitt was rooted in London through his activities in the Labour party, his columns for the West Indian Gazette and other newspapers, the inclusion of Begum Rashid and Hansa Mehta on the committee showed an ambivalence on the part of the government towards accepting responsibility for Commonwealth immigrants in Britain. As in the National Council of Social Service’s Group on the Welfare of Coloured Workers, the government looked to representatives of the independent Governments of India and Pakistan more than searching for representatives based in Britain. The initial constitution of the NACCI presaged the difficulties at the national level to identify appropriate representatives of the communities of West Indians, Indians and Pakistanis.

The National Advisory Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NACCI) was not only a voluntary body of advisors, but would also be run by a trained professional secretary. The committee quickly appointed Nadine Peppard, the secretary of the West Indian Advisory Committee of the London Council of Social Service, as advisory officer to the NACCI. In anticipation of her appointment, she wrote to her old friend, Dorothy Wood, of her trepidations on taking the position:

As you can imagine, when I was approached some time ago, I had great heart-burnings about this - not wanting to be controlled by "them" etc, but as it has now worked out this is to be entirely a voluntary committee (with Philip Mason as chairman, and among

---

81 Mason, Haynes and Peile nominated by CIAC; Vickers, MacColl, Rose nominated by IRR; Littlejohn nominated by NCSS.
82 Peppard was in her early 40s, had been a teacher and worked in publishing. When she joined the London Council of Social Service in 1957, she became responsible for work with West Indian migrants. Valerie Knox, “A Question of Integration: Nadine Peppard”, Times, February 9, 1968, sec. The Woman’s Page.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

others, my own chairman, Mr. MacColl, on it) which will be responsible for policy. I am thrilled at the thought of being able to do immigrants work full-time, and to go all over the country, and you can well imagine that it will not be long before a trip to Nottingham is arranged.83

Maintaining the voluntary nature of the local community relations councils would be central to her work. She used the Council of Social Service’s consultative committee model as she created a national infrastructure for work with immigrants.

In the next twenty years, Nadine Peppard would become the pre-eminent expert on community relations in Britain. She was not a social scientist, although she kept abreast of social science research. She was not a social worker, she had little direct contact with the delivery of services. She was something new, a manager who brought social science research and social work practice together to facilitate a new kind of professional practice—community relations. The articles she authored in her first few years as secretary to the NACCI show us something of her attitude to this emerging field. She believed in the “fair-play tendencies” of Britons and the “quiet and useful work” accomplished since the war to help Commonwealth Immigrants settle down in Britain. She saw this work “handicapped by lack of finance, lack of authoritative advice and general lack of support or understanding throughout society, to say nothing of a hidden but unmistakable undercurrent of prejudice responsible for a considerable amount of discrimination in all fields of national life.”84 Her efforts to shape national policy on integration urged the creation of community relations committees, which brought the whole of the local community together, with local authorities, funded by central government, guided by a professional community relations officer.

After Peppard’s appointment as Advisory Officer to the National Advisory Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants in April 1964, she surveyed efforts to integrate immigrants into local communities. Whereas the CIAC had focused on the work of local authorities, Peppard encouraged the formation of voluntary consultative committees.85 Peppard contacted the voluntary local committees that formed since 1950. She traveled almost continuously in the first eight months of her appointment, visiting 23 of the 33 towns identified by the Survey of Race Relations as having a population of more than 2000 immigrants.86 She drew from her relationships with members of the National Council of Social Service’s Group on the Welfare of Coloured Workers to meet with her former fellow voluntary social workers to ascertain local conditions. In addition to those areas that supported a local voluntary committee, Peppard also visited towns where citizens expressed interest to form a committee but did not yet have

85 Hill and Issacharoff suggest because there was no government investment to do otherwise. Michael J Hill and Ruth M Issacharoff, Community Action and Race Relations: a Study of Community Relations Committees in Britain (London: Oxford University Press for the Institute of Race Relations, 1971).
formal momentum to do so. It was the local authority who could, in her mind, perform the important work of hiring a professional officer to organize local effort, give moral and financial support to the consultative committee, and to set the tone for the local community. In reproducing the Council of Social Service model of community relations, she sought to impose a structure that did not necessarily already exist in these local areas.

Peppard also initiated contact with local authorities who were reluctant to sponsor a committee or even to admit that the immigrants in their area constituted a particular problem to social services. In some local authorities, she found the opinion that public discussion of immigrants would only make racism worse. These officials believed that to acknowledge the existence of conflict would intensify conflict. Sometimes these anxieties centered on the appearance of giving immigrants special help. Local authorities projected that local white residents would feel that the immigrants were “jumping the queue” particularly as regarded housing waiting lists. In addition to those local authorities who deflected discussion for the sake of keeping a low profile, there were those authorities who were belligerently secure that immigrants should be treated the same as everyone else, and therefore saw no reason to form special committees to act for their integration. In the case of Bristol, the position of the authority was shaped by the Bristol bus boycott of 1963. Paul Stephenson, a youth worker employed by Bristol City Council, led the boycott against the position of the local branch of the Transport and General Workers Union, which refused to allow the employment of a non-white bus conductor or driver. The boycott, inspired by the NAACP-led boycott of buses in Montgomery, Alabama, lasted 60 days, received national attention, garnered the support of Labour Party MPs (Tony Benn and Harold Wilson, most notably), and resulted in the employment of Raghbir Singh. In early 1965, as sentiment grew in Bristol to support a local committee, Peppard found the City Council reluctant if not antagonistic towards the idea of such a committee.

Peppard recognized the unevenness of local arrangements for the integration of immigrants. In her reports to the NACCI, she stated, "By far the most important observation to be made is that there is a marked difference between the social climate of towns where some positive and constructive action is being taken by the local authority and the leading voluntary organizations and that of towns where the situation is being left to develop of its own accord. In areas with long-standing committees, she perceived positive community feeling and

---

88 Ibid.
89 Madge Dresser, Black and White on the Buses: the 1963 Colour Bar Dispute in Bristol (Bristol: Bristol Broadsides, 1986).
coordinated action by local authority officers. In areas without a committee, uncertainty, if not open hostility.

In Smethwick, Peppard found a contestation over the nature of community. Smethwick attained national attention during the 1964 general election, which witnessed a vicious electoral campaign filled with race-baiting and fear-mongering. On election, the newly Conservative City Council considered a plan to buy houses on Marshall Street that came for sale and sell them to white residents to prevent the street from becoming overwhelmingly “coloured.” An ITN report on 11 December found that one-third of the street’s 300 residents were not white, and that a white family had not moved to the street for three and a half years. This situation prompted the white residents to bring a petition to City Council to save, as ITN called it, their “unpretentious and unlovely” street. The white residents tried to save the community of their street as it had been. The ITN Report presented interviews with three white women living in the street complaining of the unsanitary habits of the immigrants. Councillor E. Gould of the city’s housing committee argued it was to promote integration that the council considered buying the houses—keeping the street at least 50% white would insure that immigrants’ habits were raised to British standards, and not allow the street to become a “ghetto.” Peppard perceived the Smethwick Marshall Plan as a blow to claims that while there may be discrimination in the private sector, there was none in the public sector. It also showed the ways white residents claimed their communities for themselves and could not imagine bringing Commonwealth Citizens into the community.

On Peppard’s visit to Smethwick, she visited the Sikh temple and spoke with Rev. Donald Tytler who hoped to start a local voluntary committee. While she considered the atmosphere too “tense” and “hysterical” on her first visit to Smethwick to speak with the mayor, the mayor later invited her to discuss the formation of a consultative committee. She found the mayor and councilors:

clinging to a most unrealistic idea of 'co-existence' and [without] a good word to say for the Indians. The Mayor looked completely uncomprehending when I asked whether he had ever visited the Sikh Temple - although in fact, an Open Night there last December, attended by many leading individuals and organisations should have given him every opportunity to make this minimal gesture. I am sorry to say that both these gentlemen appeared to be suffering from what one can only describe as the Smethwick malaise.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

Socialist journalist Paul Foot, and others at the time, saw the Smethwick malaise as inherently a political problem, an outgrowth of right-wing “chauvinist nationalism.” Foot believed that some white Britons might justifiably object to the poor hygiene and habits of immigrants, but his concern was with how the two national political parties handled racism. While the 1964 Smethwick election did bring racism to party political attention, at its core were everyday issues concerning housing, employment and access to services, and a conflict over the nature of community. Social workers, activists and politicians actively promoted work with immigrants as inherently non-political to avoid claims that to be for immigrants or against them was necessarily the work of one party or another.

Peppard sought to bring together these uneven developments and to foster communication and the exchange of information between localities. While the communities with the longest standing immigrant population faced issues around school leavers and dealing with discrimination against British-born people of colour, the communities with newer voluntary committees faced basic organizational issues: who should belong to the committees, and what should they do. No matter the age of the committee or local interest, finance was always the main concern. The local consultative committees, voluntarily attended, were often organized by a social worker employed by a Council of Social Service, or occasionally the local authority. The more active committees, such as in Nottingham, organized conferences, such as the one mentioned in the previous section jointly sponsored with the High Commission of Pakistan, Nottingham Standing Conference of Commonwealth Citizens, and the Nottingham Branch of the Workers Education Association called “East Comes West: Understanding Pakistanis at Home and Britain”. The two-day weekend residential conference cost £2.10.0d to attend, and brought together Pakistanis, social workers, and concerned citizens to discuss Pakistan and the problems of Pakistanis living in Britain. While ambitious organizers like Dorothy Wood of Nottingham were interested and eager to host popular conferences for the emerging field of community relations, the conference fees could not cover all of the costs of hosting the conference. Additionally, many local voluntary committee members could not afford to attend these conferences without financial support.

With money hard to come by, Dorothy Wood and social workers like her wrote to foundations for large and small grants, to government departments, and constantly lobbied local authorities. The Nottingham Consultative Committee for Commonwealth Citizens sponsored a survey of West Indian Workers in Industry, organized voluntarily by two researchers at the University of Nottingham. To undertake a follow-up survey on Pakistanis and Indians in industry would require an additional £250. Money they could not raise. To replace Dorothy Wood on her retirement, the Council of Social Service could only afford to hire

95 Foot, Immigration and Race in British Politics, 27–30.
96 And this is how the sociologists frame the Community Relations story—atmosphere in relation to Conservative politicking and the rise of nationalism.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

a part-time social worker. Peppard in her travels heard concerns such as these frequently. These needs fed the demand for a national structure and funds from government to undertake research, to hire social workers, and to maintain the work of the consultative committees. Otherwise, the committees could not continue to organize community.

III.ii Placing Britain in International Contexts

The appointment of Maurice Foley, parliamentary under-secretary of state for economic affairs, as minister with special responsibility (in a personal capacity) for immigrants in early 1965 brought even greater government attention to the work of local committees. Foley supported the idea of the local, voluntary committees, and believed the NACCI to be the best body to coordinate their work. To further research the integration of immigrants, Foley traveled abroad to examine how other imperial nations handled migration from their former and current colonies. Peppard traveled with him on a Home Office-sponsored trip to the Netherlands to meet the Dutch Minister of Social Welfare, and learn how that country accommodated the inflow of Indonesians since the Second World War. They also traveled to New York to learn how the Migrant Services Division of the Puerto Rican Department of Labor dealt with issues of welfare and immigration. Both of these trips show the British Government attempting to think comparatively to formulate an appropriate response to post-colonial migration.

These were not the first instances of thinking of British community work practice in a global context. In Peppard’s first two years as Advisory Officer of the National Advisory Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, she traveled frequently to understand the way migration impacted other decolonizing nations. She traveled to Switzerland, Spain and Greece to attend European conferences of social work and present talks on the British experience of migration. She placed migration to Britain and other European countries in the context of post-World War II demands for labor, finding commonality in all immigration situations. She found reports of tension between hosts and newcomers, leading to scapegoating and discrimination. In Switzerland, which in 1965 claimed the highest percentage of residents born abroad at 12%, the Swiss derisively labeled Italians “macaronis.” In reporting on her experiences at the conference, Peppard sought to show others that Britain’s experience of

98 Nottingham Consultative Committee for Commonwealth Citizens, “Minutes of a Meeting of Finance Sub-Committee 5 March 1965,” n. d., DD/CR/1/2, NoA.

99 The NACCI changed its name to the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants in 1965, a few months before the White Paper of 1965 created a NCCI with a different governance structure and terms of reference. I use NACCI to refer to the organization in function until the White Paper, and NCCI to refer to the organization created after the white paper.

100 She also traveled to the US and Jamaica for three weeks in 1966.

migration was not aberrant, but a particular manifestation of a broader phenomenon. Unlike in Europe, Peppard argued that race played a much more important role in the British experience of immigration. The crux of the British immigration problem, she argued, was reconciling Commonwealth migrants’ citizenship status, common language and British values, with the fact of their epidermal and cultural difference. So even while the social services in Britain were universally accessible, the cadre of those involved in work with immigrants (teachers, social workers), needed to “break down racial barriers...handle alien cultures sympathetically, without allowing them to impede the processes of acculturation and integration so necessary for the second and third generations, whatever happens with the first.” Peppard’s comments show the ways managing culture would be crucial to a strategy of successfully integrating the children and grandchildren of migrants

A comparative understanding of immigration extended beyond the highest levels of government and reflected a broader attempt to understand Britain’s diversity in a global context. A *Times* editorial on Foley and Peppard’s trip to the Netherlands, stressed that Britain should give up its “lazy” and “proud” attitude to investigate the ways other nations handled immigration. They cited the Dutch example as one in which a government assumed an active role to assist immigrants adjust to life in the Netherlands. Citing welcome centers, aid in finding employment and learning Dutch, the *Times* castigated the British government for not taking responsibility for a situation that might “deteriorate farther.” While pressing for increased government action, they stressed also the conditions that made the Dutch situation more amiable—the Dutch temperament, prolonged labor shortages, shared religion, and “a strong feeling of moral responsibility for people of mixed blood.” Of course, the *Times* seemed to forget that the first troublesome post-war immigrant population were West Indians—Christians, many with some European forbears, and who had, of course, come to Britain to meet the need for labor in the immediate post-war years. Their attitude shows that by the mid-1960s, Pakistanis had come to public prominence as the typical immigrant, too inherently different to be easily incorporated into British norms. These international comparisons helped to consolidate a “British” attitude towards Commonwealth Citizens in distinction to other national approaches to migration. The *Times* presented the British attitude as one of disregard for social change, which only the government could adequately manage.

Alongside this article in the *Times*, the BBC aired a six-part television program on immigration, accompanied with an article in *The Listener*. Placing the problem of immigration in an international context, the author, Richard Hooper stressed that Germany and France each received more immigrants than the United Kingdom, and that since the war, more people emigrated from the United Kingdom than entered. In addition to these statistics, the article charted an ambivalent position between understanding the immigrants and their backgrounds and expecting them to live by British customs. In an effort to counter British tendencies to “lump” all immigrants together, Hooper nevertheless generalized about Pakistanis abstaining

---

Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

from alcohol, Indian architectural patterns that made them unfamiliar with curtains, and East Pakistanis pattern of village settlement. Britons should understand that “the shock a Pakistani gets, coming from a village of 200 families to a fast-moving, urbanized, industrialized Britain, might well be compared with the shock a Tudor Englishman would get arriving in the reign of Elizabeth II.”104 Like many other Britons, the migration of Asians to Britain caused them to consider how industrial modernity might appear to those traversing space (and time).

Hooper’s essay shows the ways knowledge of migrants’ culture circulated into popular writing. He wanted to share with his imagined audience the details that would help them more fully understand the immigrants in their midst. Hooper also attempted to show that prejudices against immigrants (such as neighbors complaining that Indians smelled and West Indians were noisy) were part of a much larger British attitude of reticence and reserve compounded with class prejudice. He argued a white, middle class Briton who rejected a West Indian as a neighbor would not want anyone working class living on their street; or a white Briton who would disapprove of a coloured person marrying into their family, would disapprove of anyone of a lower social position. Hooper explained both immigrant customs and British prejudice as natural and therefore intractable, with both sides needing to understand each other better to improve community relations in Britain. And yet, more than the efforts of individuals, Hooper believed the government played a crucial role in promoting good race relations. This role included more appropriate screening measures in place (like those of Canada and Australia) to catch the “right kind of immigrant,” better plans for reception and integration, and perhaps most importantly, anti-discrimination legislation. Hooper represents a middle opinion, which claimed for itself a judicious assessment of Britain’s increasing diversity, and balanced support for immigration controls with the need to understand and accept migrants’ culture.

These two examples of national media sources considering responsibility for managing diversity in an international framework, represent only one register through which the national press understood immigration. In early 1965, The Times produced an 11-part series called the “Dark Million” to bring attention to the condition of immigrant lives, and to also press for immediate Home Office action, for Britain to show moral leadership to the world, and economic justice to the Commonwealth Citizens already in Britain. The author described the migrants in Britain as economic refugees, "successors to the hunger-marchers have taken to the air from the distant, depressed areas of the world and flown in for the right to work, the right to a fair day's pay for a fair day's labours."105 Like the meanings of the hunger marchers of an earlier era, this rhetoric sought to imbue the immigrants with a sense of dignity in their struggles and to call on a government that ignored their troubles.106 It was to reclaim the moral leadership of the multi-racial Commonwealth that Britain should treat fairly the migrants settled there.

These calls for government action coupled with Maurice Foley’s investigation resulted in the publication of the Labour Government’s White Paper “Immigration from the Commonwealth,” which introduced quotas for migrants and also increased financial investment in the local voluntary committees. Following the recommendations of the White Paper, in July, 1965, the government dissolved the National Advisory Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants and replaced it with the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NCCI). The government invested this body with enhanced powers, namely the resources to provide professional development services and fund the local voluntary committees. The new NCCI took over the role of the Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Council, which resigned en masse on July 30, 1965 in order to allow the Home Secretary to facilitate the organization of a single body to both advise government as the CIAC had done and to oversee the work of effectively integrating immigrants into local communities.  

The White Paper, caught the CIAC and the NACCI by surprise, and although Philip Mason, the NACCI chairman, received word of its publication, the chairman of the CIAC, Stella Reading, found herself made obsolete. The Home Office organized the new committee without consulting the CIAC, choosing the Archbishop of Canterbury as the chairman and Sir James Robertson, long-serving colonial officer, as vice-chairman. This action set a precedent for a lack of consultation with these quasi-government agencies in the formulation of Home Office policy on immigration and integration. Philip Mason, the chairman of the NACCI commiserated with Lady Reading, the chairman of the CIAC, “I find it most unsatisfactory particularly, as to be frank, I do not think that either the Archbishop or Sir James has any idea of the magnitude of the problems and difficulties before them.” They were not the only ones caught unawares; the swiftness of the Labour Government’s actions dissolved two committees and created a third, without a clear idea of a source for finance or for the necessary bureaucratic machinery to support the new National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants. The government promised increased finances for the new committee’s work. The streamlining of the “advisory machinery” left the NCCI as the sole and authoritative voice on the integration of immigrants in Britain.

Maurice Foley’s recommendation to the government secured the NCCI’s position as the most important national organization working with immigrants, but the National Council of Social Service contested this arrangement. The director of the National Council of Social Service, George Haynes reluctantly served on the NACCI. Elisabeth Littlejohn, the secretary of the NCSS’s Group on the Welfare of Coloured Workers, an advisory group that met roughly twice a year seemingly resented Nadine Peppard’s rise to her position as the preeminent expert on the practice of community relations. The two groups were in conflict in mid-1965, with George Haynes and Philip Mason negotiating how to divide responsibilities for the work of integration.

---

107 Stella Reading to Henry Patten, August 2, 1965, BBD1/7/T9771, WYAS-B; Copy of Letter from Frank Soskice to Stella Reading, July 30, 1965, BBD1/7/T9771, WYAS-B.
108 Philip Mason to J. T. A. Howard-Drake, September 22, 1965, HO 231/24, TNA.
109 Philip Mason to Stella Reading, October 8, 1965, HO 231/24, TNA.
110 Nadine S. Peppard to Dorothy M. Wood, May 29, 1964, DD/CR/30, NoA.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

Dorothy Wood, the Nottingham Council of Social Service organizer for that town’s Consultative Committee felt that the NCSS, as a pioneering organization should congratulate itself on its work to gain attention for the problems of immigrants, and could now find a new field of social work to expand. Peppard believed the National Council of Social Service had never properly supported its social workers’ activities to coordinate services with immigrants. Peppard wanted to expand the reach of her new organization beyond the more narrow remit of the National Council of Social Service’s working group. The NCCI brought together those employed by local authorities, and workers for voluntary organizations who also had special responsibilities with immigrants. Peppard called the first NACCI meeting of local community relations practitioners for July 22, 1965. The NCSS canceled its meeting of July 15. The NCCI emerged as the foremost advisory body on community relations work, expanding the reach of community relations beyond those social workers employed by voluntary agencies to reach every social service agency of central and local government.

The local voluntary committees welcomed the 1965 White Paper for the funding it provided, but nonetheless criticized the government for the limits placed on immigration from the Commonwealth. Peppard saw legislation restricting the numbers of immigrants from the New Commonwealth as a racist policy that would not change the fundamentally social crisis of public services. She challenged the idea that immigration controls were necessary to allow for the integration of immigrants, the position the Wilson government favored to avoid a “social explosion.” She stated, “the social explosion is literally a social one and not a racial one and indicates not the need for restriction of numbers of one group but the need to prevent any one group from declining into second class citizenship through no fault of their own.” Peppard situated migrants problems in the context of broader social conditions. Peppard brought her experience from working within the framework of the Councils of Social Service to better coordinate agencies delivering welfare to migrants, now, not only for London, but nationally.

Peppard shared the opinion of many activists that immigration control alienated the immigrants who were already in Britain and hampered the work of promoting “good community relations.” At a meeting of liaison officers, representatives of liaison committees and high commission officers called by the NACCI to discuss the White Paper, David Pitt led a discussion arguing that that the limitation of immigration from the Commonwealth weakened the work of integration. Those present at the meeting gave unanimous consent for the chairman to express the strong feelings against the white paper, but nevertheless supporting

---

111 This was the NCSS’s mission – to work on the ‘frontiers’ of social service. See chapter 1 for a further discussion.
112 Nadine S. Peppard to Dorothy M. Wood, May 28, 1964, DD/CR/30, NoA.
113 Nadine S. Peppard to Dorothy M. Wood, June 15, 1964, DD/CR/30, NoA.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

the NCCI. A deputation consisting of Nadine Peppard, David Pitt, Dorothy Wood, Richard Titmuss and the Archbishop of Canterbury also visited the Prime Minister on December 1, 1965 to convey the criticisms of the local voluntary liaison committees. Miss Wood conveyed the difficulties in Nottingham as Commonwealth Citizens resigned from the Nottingham Consultative Committee for Commonwealth Citizens in protest of the ceiling placed on numbers of immigrants from the Commonwealth. Titmuss reported the abuse the members of the NCCI received from universities as to the racially-based discrimination of the White Paper. He told Prime Minister Harold Wilson that the government had a communications problem on its hand, and he suggested the government make its intentions clear regarding integration. Wilson expressed interest in their suggestions and listened to their concerns. The deputation found him “genuinely interested in their point of view.” In making a joint press statement however, Wilson did not back down from the controls, reaffirming their importance. His perception of the work of integration emphasized the need for better information to convey the government’s position, as well as increased scrutiny of immigrants who were evading control. The Wilson Government supported the NCCI as an organ to create support for its policies, but the NCCI saw itself as an organization supporting the integration of Commonwealth Citizens into the local communities of Britain.

In debates in the House of Commons regarding integration, MP Donald Chapman called Peppard’s organization “one man and a dog” and pressed for an expansion of government involvement in integration. In 1964, 15 consultative committees existed in Britain; by mid-1965, there were 31. In the post-White Paper settlement for community relations, the government provided funds, and the NCCI provided professional development and information. The main responsibility for integration, however, remained at the local level, with local voluntary organizations tasked with promoting good community relations and local authorities with the responsibility to equitably provide services. While the government would provide money, they would not accept responsibility for the problems of immigrants. Instead, they began managing diversity. With the NCCI as the conduit through which £200,000 p. a. of government money would be allotted, the NCCI oversaw an explosive expansion in central office staff and in the numbers of local voluntary liaison committees. Social workers such as Dorothy Wood who called for central government money and local government attention now received both, money to hire an officer on the condition support, provided they could secure the support of the local authority.

---

114 National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Minutes of Meeting of Liaison Officers, Representatives of Consultative Committees and High Commissions and Other Observers Held on Thursday 2nd September 1965,” n.d., HO 231/2, TNA.
115 National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Government White Paper Deputation to the Prime Minister,” December 1, 1965, HO 231/2, TNA.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

III.iii: The American Way

The challenge to the dominance of the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants did not only come from the National Council of Social Service who believed the voluntary sector played an important part in the integration of migrants. Since the lead up to the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962, Commonwealth Citizens criticized the government and the local consultative committees. After the 1965 White Paper initiated a cap on numbers of immigrants from the New Commonwealth, criticism grew, calling the new controls racist in their targeting of people from the New Commonwealth. Commonalty Citizens withdrew their support in mass numbers from the local voluntary liaison committees and began organizing in increased numbers around ethnic identities. Nevertheless, many Commonwealth Citizens continued their participation in the voluntary councils, hoping to affect a structure that was now the main conduit to garner government attention. This section examines critiques of the NCCI from local voluntary councils who favored a more agonistic approach to government on questions of immigration and integration, as well as the challenge to the NCCI engendered by the formation and activities of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD). The NCCI, while criticizing the government for the new immigration policy, favored a conciliatory approach and needed to convince the local community relations councils that they should do the same. The example of the United States, both negative and positive, shaped the British form of community relations.

In the aftermath of the 1965 White Paper “Immigration from the Commonwealth”, the Willesden and Brent Friendship Council published an article in their local magazine, “Contact” that condemned the White Paper and Philip Mason personally for “having expressed the general view that restriction coupled with strong measures for a good reception for those who are here ought to be combined.” Contact advocated that local community relations councils should refuse to co-operate with “a government which issued such a White Paper and should turn themselves into agitators for Civil Rights.” Mason was dismissive of the Willesden and Brent Friendship Council, stating “the fact that there are no 'Civil Rights' in the American sense - ie legal disabilities - to be agitated for does not carry any weight with this particular group.” In his letter to the new vice-chairman of the NCCI, Mason suggested “It would be better if this particular group did split away, than that it should operate as a Voluntary Liaison Committee within the meaning of the White Paper but interpret its function in a different way from the others: as representing not the whole community but merely a small militant section of the immigrants.” The language of the whole community shaped the marginalization of those prepared to provoke conflict rather than settle for conciliation.

---

118 National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Memorandum Approved by Finance and General Purposes Committee for Presentation to the Prime Minister - First Meeting 15 October 1965,” n. d., HO 231/2, TNA.
119 National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Government White Paper Deputation to the Prime Minister.”
120 Philip Mason to James Robertson, October 6, 1965, HO 231/24, TNA.
121 Ibid.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

However, many believed in the importance of arguing for both the rights of Commonwealth Citizens to settle in Britain as British subjects and to be working on behalf of the whole community. The NCCI in many of its newsletters and in the personal words of its general secretary did just that. During the parliamentary scrutiny leading up to the White Paper, Nadine Peppard found herself speaking to many people on the subject of Commonwealth Citizens, including a group of Conservative MPs studying under Selwyn Lloyd that included Peter Thorneycroft and Sir George Sinclair. Lloyd asked her, “but aren’t you afraid?” Miss Peppard was not afraid, as she wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury on the dehumanising tone of the debate on immigration and immigrants. Britain witnessed “inadequacies in our social services and our housing provision and the immigrant makes the ideal scape goat for this - he is so easily identifiable and there are xenophobic tendencies in people which are much encouraged by this.” She believed aiding immigrants was not a paternalistic or sympathetic gesture, but “a question of fundamental justice and of our own scale of values. What we do about any people in our society is relevant to our society as a whole.” In the changing climate of the 1960s, however, the social democratic vision of community found challenges from all political persuasions.

The Campaign Against Racial Discrimination proved the biggest challenge to the NCCI’s dominance in the field of community relations, not necessarily on ideological grounds, but in terms of their potential to be the legitimate representative of the interests of Commonwealth Citizens. At the inaugural public meeting of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination on February 20, 1965, the assembled passed three resolutions:

1. To make it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of race, colour, religion or national origin, in the following fields: housing, employment, advertising, insurance and credit facilities, public places and clubs offering largely public facilities, education, government departments and bodies receiving government aid;
2. To set up a statutory commission to enforce the law against discrimination and inform public opinion;
3. To make it a criminal offence, by speech or writing, to incite to racial violence, hatred or contempt.

While these resolutions focused on legislation and enforcement, the aims of CARD were broader and more contradictory.

---

123 Nadine S. Peppard to Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, Chairman, National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants.
124 Ibid.
126 Ibid.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

Founded after Martin Luther King, Jr.’s visit to Britain on his way to Stockholm to collect a Nobel Peace Prize, CARD perceived the struggles of Commonwealth Citizens in Britain as part of a larger global campaign for racial equality and justice. The organizing force behind CARD was Marion Glean, a West Indian and a Quaker involved with both the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the Committee of 100, representing her commitments as vaguely left-wing, but not part of the party political spectrum. She also was a member of several anti-colonial organizations, and in Dr. King saw a coalescence of these interests in his crusade for “civil rights.” She favored an approach that mirrored the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee to “mobilize the coloured community on its own behalf. We must not...take it for granted that unity will come, that it will be easy to achieve, or even that identity of interests breeds respect.”

Marion Glean was a member of the Friends Race Relations Committee, and became disillusioned by the discussion of immigrants by liberal white Britons. She felt that “immigrants could not depend on the members of the host community to represent their interests.” Through democratic, grass-roots organization, she believed that Commonwealth Citizens could be independent and work on their own behalf. Her favored approach echoed the community development approach of Migrant Services Division, but decoupled from cooperation with the whole community.

While many members of CARD shared this view, Benjamin Heineman shows the ways disagreement over the practical work of the organization limited its ability to be a broadly based advocate for Commonwealth Citizens. Glean’s emphasis on grass-roots mobilization, shared by a group of CARD members Heineman labeled “the dissidents,” was ultimately subordinate to the “working majority,” the executive committee chaired by David Pitt, and including Hamza Alavi and white Britons such as Nicholas Deakin, Anthony Lester, and Roy Shaw. The working majority focused on seeking support from white liberal opinion, working as a parliamentary “pressure group,” and indeed many of these men were members of the Labour Party. At the inaugural public meeting the emphasis was on broad coalition and reasonable action. Walter Birmingham, warden of Toynbee Hall said, “we are not a pressure group particularly for the immigrant community. We are concerned for social harmony and this concerns the whole community.”

Despite the ideological struggles of the executive committee, CARD continued to present an active and energetic front and worked to gain support from both Commonwealth Citizens and white Britons. The emerging structure of the organization created a central National Council, composed of delegates from local committees and affiliated organizations. Their ambition was to act as an NCCI, not for the whole community, but for Commonwealth Citizens—to publish newsletters, hold conferences, to disseminate information, to be the

---

128 Letter from Marion Glean to Heineman, 2 June 1967, quoted in ibid., 53, n. 4.
129 quoted in “Campaign’s Proposals to Combat Racial Discrimination,” p. 225
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

central, coordinating body for Commonwealth Citizens.\textsuperscript{130} The NCCI asked Hamza Alavi and David Pitt, both members of the NACCI, to join the re-formed national committee and they did so without consulting the executive committee of CARD. The decision prompted the Standing Conference of West Indian Organizations to withdraw support from CARD, damaging the credibility of CARD as representative of all Commonwealth Citizens. Pitt, Alavi and other members of CARD served not only on the formal NCCI, but also on its working panels, a move many CARD members criticized as dissipating the voluntary energy of CARD members. They also believed this participation would present the NCCI with ideas that should properly be CARD initiatives.\textsuperscript{131}

Heinemann's analysis of CARD shows the ambiguities of their ambitions, and also the individual members’ willingness to compromise. Members such as David Pitt believed it was more important to “whisper into” the ear of government than to effectively build ground-up support from Commonwealth Citizens.\textsuperscript{132} Wider British opinion perceived them to be a “militant” group working in the interests of immediate equality. In \textit{Liaison}, the newsletter of the NCCI, Peppard outlined the merits of direct action versus “traditional intergroup practice,” calling on all involved to pay attention to differences of strategy, but to not let the tensions between the two create misunderstanding, “unhealthy divisiveness [or] dissipated energies.” While direct action proponents demanded equal opportunity immediately, mobilizing large numbers towards challenging all discrimination and segregation, traditional Intergroup relations agencies also worked “rapidly and steadily toward the same goal, but [were] more reconciled to temporary compromises, ‘cooling off’ periods, delays of strategy. They have worked long and often most successfully with indirect, even ‘back door’ approaches.” Peppard stressed the importance of the two approaches working together and towards the same goal.\textsuperscript{133}

While Peppard stressed the similarities between CARD and NCCI in the interests of joint action, the two organizations were different in one significant respect—NCCI received £200,000 p. a. and coordinated a network of local voluntary committees. CARD struggled to raise funds, even asking the NCCI if it was possible for one of their grants to cover a professional staff person for CARD.\textsuperscript{134} At the local level, community relations councils actively discussed the relationship of the local voluntary committee and the local CARD branch. Nadine Peppard believed affiliation to CARD was inappropriate for the community relations councils—they could support CARD ideologically and practically without formal affiliation.\textsuperscript{135} She worried the local authority would perceive the local community relations council as an organization solely for immigrants, rather than the present strength of the council’s claims to represent the whole community. A meeting of liaison officers and council chairmen decided to allow local councils to

\textsuperscript{130} Heineman, \textit{The Politics of the Powerless}, 49.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 148.
\textsuperscript{132} David Pitt, interview with Heineman 29 May 1967, quoted in Ibid., 52.
\textsuperscript{133} Nadine S. Peppard, “Direct Action Versus Traditional Intergroup Practice,” \textit{Liaison} 2 (September 1965).
\textsuperscript{134} Their annual budget in 1967 was £3,500. Heineman, \textit{The Politics of the Powerless}, 159, n. 86.
\textsuperscript{135} National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “NCCI Minutes, 11 March 1965,” n. d., HO 230/2, TNA.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

deceive individually on the question of affiliation. Willesden affiliated with CARD, and the Oxford Committee considered it. Both Nadine Peppard and David Pitt, the CARD chairman, agreed that it was best for local CARD branches to send representatives to the local voluntary community relations committee.\textsuperscript{136} CARD affiliated with the NCCI, subordinating its claims to best represent the interests of Commonwealth Citizens to an organization working on behalf of the whole community.

The ideological differences within CARD, as well as the organizational challenges of bringing together the interests of diverse peoples, hampered the effectiveness of CARD to both mobilize Commonwealth Citizens as a bloc and also to produce anti-discrimination legislation—a stasis Heineman attributes to the organization’s “powerlessness.”\textsuperscript{137} Although they never mounted a significant challenge to the NCCI, their criticisms and attempt to mobilize Commonwealth Citizens in a unified campaign produced considerable conversation within community relations. CARD’s criticisms of the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants proved prescient:

It is neither a good ‘paternalist’ welfare body (for which a good case could be made out), nor is it an intelligently radical ‘respectable’ body, which is what we need. Its characteristic style is paralysis and non-statement, covered by a frenzied involvement in social work and ‘leadership training’...It has, moreover, built up a complicated national structure which could easily become an immovable obstacle to any other agency in the field.\textsuperscript{138}

The financial support of the government allowed the NCCI to coordinate the efforts of over 70 local voluntary committees, a base of support that allowed them to best the NCSS as well as CARD to become the most prominent body dealing in the field of community relations. Their ability to provide a channel for dissent to reach the highest levels of government meant the subordination of more radical or militant forms of activism. Rather than advocating for the individual rights of Commonwealth Citizens as in the civil rights movement in the United States, community relations would work in the interests of the whole community. Doing so would mean that the main work of the NCCI, in addition to providing finances for the local community relations councils, would be to educate educators and social workers on the cultural backgrounds of Commonwealth Citizens. They furthered the conference structure initiated by the Councils of Social Service through the work of their specialist panels. They created an institutional structure through which they became the authoritative voice on the cultures of Commonwealth communities in Britain.

\textsuperscript{136} National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Minutes of a Meeting of Liaison Officers, Representatives of Consultative Committees and High Commissions and Other Observers Held on Thursday 1st April 1965 at Caxton Hall,” n. d., HO 231/2, TNA.
\textsuperscript{137} Heineman, \textit{The Politics of the Powerless}, 212.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

Conclusion

The efforts to create a national structure for community relations emerged first in the voluntary sector through the work of voluntary agencies to share information and advice. These efforts contributed to a broader perception of the different welfare needs of Commonwealth Citizens and their access to social services. As the government took action, they turned to the local voluntary councils to organize in support of good community relations. The work of the body they sponsored replicated the work of the voluntary agencies in focusing in the provision of information and advice to welfare workers and voluntary councils. Married to the organizational structure sponsored by the government, these efforts deepened the sense of discrete cultural communities of Commonwealth Citizens.

The White Paper had ended with the words:

The good name of Britain, our relations with other members of the Commonwealth, and, above all, justice and common humanity, demand that Commonwealth immigrants in this country should be absorbed into our community without friction and with mutual understanding and tolerance. The Government believe that the good sense of the British people will prevail and that this will be achieved.  

Those Britons who joined local community relations councils felt a responsibility towards immigrants and saw the degree of integration into their communities as an index of Britishness—a particular sense of liberalism based on “fair play” that had been brought into question by the violence of decolonization and was now being tested in the local communities of Britain. The emerging structure of the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, downplayed their work as specifically on behalf of commonwealth citizens, but worked to emphasize that their work was on behalf of the entire community, of which commonwealth citizens were merely a problematic segment.  

The Finance and General Purposes Committee is of the opinion that as a principle of policy the whole work of the NC should develop on a broadly community basis. Indeed, the Secretary is already recommending in appropriate cases that voluntary liaison committees should be called the Committee for Community Relations or something of this kind. In certain areas this is already happening and the liaison officers are being called Community Relations Officers. This is the desirable trend, but unfortunately in many areas local people feel very strongly that in this transition stage the nature of the job has to be spelled out. The reason for this is that if a community slant is put on it in areas where feelings are very difficult indeed, those you have a prejudice and discriminatory approach can rather readily hide behind the community label and use it...

139 “Immigration from the Commonwealth” (Cmd. 2739, August 1965), 18.
140 Philip Mason, quoted in, National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Chairman’s Remarks, Minutes of a Meeting of Liaison Officers, Representatives of Consultative Committees and High Commissions and Other Observers Held on Thursday 22 July 1965,” n. d., HO 231/2, TNA.
Chapter 3: The Turn to Culture

as an excuse for not accepting that coloured Commonwealth immigrants may have special problems. This is a complex matter and it is hoped that the Committee can evolve a policy which will guide community activity in the right direction.”

In the next iteration, the national organizing body assumed the name the Community Relations Commission, emphasizing that their work supported the whole community, not only Commonwealth Citizens. A national investment in the welfare of Commonwealth Citizens was politically problematic.

Local authorities and the local community relations councils recognized the special problem faced by commonwealth citizens, but the public’s protests at immigrants receiving special treatment constrained the ambitions of their efforts. It was to avoid discussion around being an organization explicitly for immigrants that the NCCI recommended local voluntary organizations call themselves community relations councils. This way, they could represent their work as undertaken on behalf of the whole community, of which immigrants were only one part. The organization of conferences, study groups, and lectures by community relations practitioners shows the extent to which the right information could impact community relations. Conference organizers brought together academic experts to present their latest findings, as well as community relations practitioners to share their local experiences. Social workers organized themselves to share knowledge of local conditions and to create a general picture of community relations for those who were not active in organizing communities with immigrants. These forms of sharing information filtered to the wider public of local areas as social workers presented talks on Immigration, the backgrounds of migrants, and on the work of community relations with local publics.

The next chapter looks at the ways the work of community relations was imposed in various local areas. Through the efforts of the newly professional community relations officer, there grew increasing distance between the technocratic exercise of community relations, the voluntary local committees, and Commonwealth Citizens.

---

141 National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Additional Proposals for an Expansion of Grant-aid, Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting, 11 November 1965,” n. d., HO 231/2, TNA.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs in the World
Professionalization and the Community Relations Officer

Sir Learie Constantine, Knight Bachelor
Black Prince from the British Empire...
Cricket was his life, and through the game
This grandson of a slave won great fame...
Sportsman, Politician and Diplomat
On the Race Relations Board he calls “How’s that?”
Cy Grant, The Constantine Calypso, 1966

Cy Grant’s calypso celebrates the varied career of the cricketer Learie Constantine. Constantine won great acclaim on the cricket field, but he also emerged as a crusader against the colour bar in his 1943 lawsuit against the Imperial Hotel. Constantine’s career carried him back and forth across the Atlantic, representing a late empire life in transit. His career included work as a professional cricketer in Lancashire, BBC broadcaster in London, a politician in Eric Williams’ People’s National Movement Party in Trinidad, and the first high commissioner of Trinidad and Tobago in London. Grant’s calypso commemorated Constantine’s appointment to the Race Relations Board as one of its three inaugural members. Tellingly, Grant’s lyrics portray Constantine not as an umpire on the cricket field, but as a player on a side, making an appeal to a regulating authority. The lyrics represent both optimism in the new government institutions created to combat discrimination as well as a tension in the status of Commonwealth Citizens who participated in these institutions. Did Constantine serve on the Race Relations Board as captain of the Commonwealth Citizens, or could he play the role of umpire for all of Britain?

This chapter explores these tensions through the figure of the community relations officer, the professional social worker charged with organizing local, voluntary community relations councils. The creation of the Community Relations Commission as a statutory body in 1968 increased funding for the employment and training of community relations officers. The older model of voluntary liaison, emphasized the officer as embedded in local communities. This participation within the local community enabled the officer to mobilize the community to secure the individual citizen’s social rights. The new community relations, articulated by a research-driven group of community relations officers, outlined a general theory of community relations that could be implemented uniformly throughout Britain. In line with wider debates in social work, they presented themselves as participating in a shared practice and deploying common expertise in the technocratic exercise of organizing community. This shift in tone over the role of the community relations officer accompanied a shift in policy. The new community

---

relations officer facilitated self-help along the lines pioneered by Migrant Services Division in the late 1950s and early 1960s. They would help communities to organize themselves in service of their welfare needs. Rather than working as “leaven” through the community, the community relations officer conceived his position as separate but facilitating the organization of internally coherent communities. Doing so, contributed to the distance between community relations councils, which worked on behalf of the whole community, and the discrete communities of Commonwealth Citizens.

Tensions concerning the role of the coordinating officer emerged at all levels of community relations, but particularly resonated in the local negotiations between the community relations officer, the voluntary council and the local community. In addition to questions concerning the local or national character of community relations, debate centered on the ethnic background of the community relations officer and his relationship to the ethnic communities of local areas. In describing the position of the community relations officer above, I use “his” advisedly. Conversations surrounding the role and duties of the community relations officer racialized the typical community relations officer as white and gendered him as male, despite local variations.

Community relations officers presented their work as professional and themselves as experts to attract the most suitable candidates to these positions and establish their standing in local communities. The professional officer implementing a general practice of community relations contributed to the perception that ethnic communities needed intervention to mobilize them to act in their own interests.

I. The Commission and the New Investment in Community Relations

The Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1968 further racialized British citizenship by introducing quotas on immigration from the Commonwealth. Whereas the government did not limit the entry of the Irish, aliens, or descendants of Britons, they limited the entry of Commonwealth Citizens to only 8500 per year and required the possession of a work voucher. Parliament hurried passage of the bill in three days because of fears that South Asians settled in Kenya, Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies, planned to emigrate to Britain following that nation’s Africanization policies. The passage of the act encountered fierce protest from the sixty community relations councils throughout Britain who criticized the bill as the first occasion racial classification was “formally embodied into the law of the United Kingdom.” This awareness of the racialization of citizenship motivated many of those working in community relations. Increasingly, however, opinions differed as to whether the state could, or even should, guarantee universal citizenship.

The Race Relations Act of 1968 partnered the Commonwealth Immigrants Act and empowered the Race Relations Board to investigate formal complaints not only in public places

---


5 National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Information, No. 21,” March 1968, 4462/P/01/001-1, London Metropolitan Archives (hereafter LMA).
but also in the fields of housing, employment and public services. The act also dissolved the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants and created the Community Relations Commission. While the Race Relations Board would enforce laws against discrimination, the Community Relations Commission played a complement to the Race Relations Board by promoting positive efforts towards integration. The Race Relations Board at the time and since has received more attention, however, the Community Relations Commission received more funding than the Race Relations Board, primarily for the local work of community relations and the employment of community relations officers.

Historians have argued that the Race Relations Board was introduced as a palliative for immigration controls, and have largely seen the Race Relations Board as a failure for the lack of successful cases brought against white Britons.\textsuperscript{6} With this interest in the lack of enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation, the work of the Community Relations Commission, its twin, has been neglected. The Community Relations Commission, a separate statutory body until its formal merger with the Race Relations Board in 1976 to form the Commission for Racial Equality, performed the quieter work of encouraging integration.

\textsuperscript{6} Famously, the first person prosecuted under the new Race Relations Act was a black Briton, Michael X. Fryer, \textit{Staying Power}, 383.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

The National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants asked the local community relations councils to submit names for recommendation to the Home Office for membership of the new commission. They received 29 nominations from 17 councils. Except for the Oxford Committee, which submitted nationally known figures Wilfred Wood, V. D. Sharma, and Trevor Huddleston, the majority of councils submitted the names of their chairmen and most active members, men and women who were involved in the everyday work of community relations. The National Committee selected nine of these nominees to pass on to David Ennals for consideration. Their selection balanced figures from the South of England, the Midlands and the North, and were a mix of West Indians, Pakistanis, and members of the “host community.” The list included five members of the National Committee and/or its advisory panels: Dorothy Wood and Eric Irons of Nottingham, Dr. Dhani Prem of Birmingham, Dr. A. F. A. Sayeed of Leicester and Miss Jocelyn Barrow of London. The local community relations councils on which they served nominated these individuals to participate. The Home Office accepted the nominations of Jocelyn Barrow and Dr. A. F. A. Sayeed, however it looked beyond those already participating in community relations for the remaining members of the commission.

The Home Office not only received nominations from the NCCI, but from other bodies, including the Trades Union Congress. The new commission was composed of 14 members with experiences in the empire, in social services, education, industry and in the church. It is informative to examine the list of members as it was presented in the first annual report of the commission:

---

7 National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Nominations Received from VLCs for Membership of Commission”, September 18, 1968, HO 231/5, The National Archives, Kew (hereafter TNA).
8 Ibid.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

APPENDIX II

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

The Community Relations Commission, appointed by the Home Secretary, came into being on 26th November, 1968. The membership is as follows:—

Chairman
The Rt. Hon. Frank Cousins ... General Secretary, Transport & General Workers’ Union.

Joint Deputy Chairman
Lord Campbell of Eskin ... Chairman, Milton Keynes Development Corporation; Honorary President of Booker Bros., McConnell & Co.

Joint Deputy Chairman
Dr. David Pitt, J.P., G.L.C. ... General Practitioner; Member of the Greater London Council; Chairman of CARD.

Members
Miss Jocelyn Barrow ... Lecturer, Furzedown College of Education; Vice-Chairman of the U.K. Committee for World Human Rights Year; Secretary of CARD.
Mrs. Anna Chataway ... Housewife and part-time lecturer.
Sir Ronald Gould ... General Secretary, National Union of Teachers.
The Very Reverend Alfred Jowett ... Dean of Manchester.
Mrs. Usha Kinnon ... Psychiatric social worker.
Mr. Charles Longbottom ... Company Director; Conservative Member of Parliament for York, 1959-66.
Lord Ritchie-Calder, C.B.E. ... Author and journalist.
Dr. A. F. A. Sayeed ... General Practitioner, Leicester.
Professor R. M. Titmuss, C.B.E. ... Professor of Social Administration, London School of Economics.

The membership of the commission leaned towards Labour, including not only two leaders of Trade Unions; but David Pitt, Labour member of the Greater London Council; Peter Ritchie Calder, a Socialist, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament Campaigner and an advocate for ethical humanism; and Professor R. M. Titmuss, professor of Social Administration who theorized the “gift relationships” which animated the public provision of welfare.10 The commission also included two Conservatives, Charles Longbottom, former MP, and Anna Chataway, a force in the Abortion Law Reform Association and the wife of Conservative Alderman for London and eventual MP, Christopher Chataway. The composition of the commission, a public body, drew scrutiny for its political commitments, forcing the resignation of Frank Cousins in 1970. He and the commission received not only criticism from politicians concerned with the political affiliation of members, but also criticisms from younger community relations officers committed to more swiftly moving action. These criticisms reflected a growing impatience with

older forms of associational politics, not only within trade unions, but through voluntary agencies such as the Councils of Social Service. Cousins’ replacement, Mark Bonham Carter was, in Roy Jenkins’ words on his appointment as Chairman of the Race Relations Board: “a classic example of the virtue of appointing friends—provided they are good enough.”

Bonham Carter, the grandson of H. H. Asquith, briefly served as a Liberal M.P. He presented a neutral middle way for the commission, which as an official government body, could not avoid parliamentary scrutiny.

Although the chairman and the commission members advised on policy, a professional staff managed the operations. The Community Relations Commission retained the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants’ staff, including its head, General Secretary Nadine Peppard. Despite the bureaucratic continuities from the NCCI to the Community Relations Commission, the new organization employed a more reticent approach to the work of organizing community.

The passage of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1968 was a blow to the NCCI as the government passed the bill without consultation. Their expertise ignored, the NCCI scrambled to let the network of voluntary community relations councils throughout England know that they in no way supported the bill. Despite their uncertainty as to their position under the new race relations regime, the NCCI criticized the new legislation as damaging to the work of promoting community relations.

The Bill appears to the Committee to involve this country in breaking its pledged word in so much as persons granted UK citizenship have through the Bill had this citizenship made nugatory. This causes distress and distrust of the government's word in the immigrant communities and among those who have devoted themselves to the promotion of integration, trust and goodwill.

They “urged opposition with all positive vigour on humanitarian grounds as betrayal of previous undertakings and as a denial of the basic rights of bona fide British Citizens.” While the NCCI as a non-governmental body could take a critical stand on government policy, the Community Relations Commission as an official government agency did not possess that privilege.

The principle of community relations was to ensure Commonwealth Citizens were able to participate to the full extent in their local communities. The problem was the prevalent attitude of racism and xenophobia enacted in law and in widespread public attitudes. The NCCI

---

11 Roy Jenkins wrote Bonham Carter’s ODNB entry, and had this to say about his qualifications for his positions: “He had all the high Liberal confidence necessary for that formative phase of the job, and he had in addition the paradoxical virtue that, as a loyal Asquithian not forgetting Lloyd George's lethal blow, he worked off any subconscious racialism in relatively harmless prejudice against the Welsh. Everyone else he regarded with an even and tolerant light.” Roy Jenkins, “Carter, Mark Raymond Bonham, Baron Bonham-Carter (1922–1994),” Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/54757.

12 National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Information, No. 21.”

13 Ibid.
contended with the heightened anti-immigrant feeling invoked by Enoch Powell’s April speech in Birmingham, popularly called the “Rivers of Blood Speech,” in which he emphasized the difficulties of white Britons accessing welfare. He said of native Britons:

They found their wives unable to obtain hospital beds in childbirth, their children unable to obtain school places, their homes and neighbourhoods changed beyond recognition, their plans and prospects for the future defeated; at work they found that employers hesitated to apply to the immigrant worker the standards of discipline and competence required of the native-born worker; they began to hear, as time went by, more and more voices which told them that they were now the unwanted.14

These individual interactions in the basic aspects of social life added up to the resentment that a native could be made to feel a stranger in his own country. For Powell and others, the very presence of difference inherently led to conflict and violence.

The speech to the Conservative Association in Birmingham, played on the anxieties of Powell’s “ordinary, decent fellow Englishmen” that their own government encouraged their disenfranchisement, and migrants bearing strange customs and disorder irrevocably changed the culture of their communities. As Amy Whipple argues, the letters Powell received in response to his speech and the controversy it generated show the ways race and class were constituted together in the face of national decline and a sense of political invisibility by the white working class.15 As Whipple writes, the attitudes of his supporters represented a sense that “a nation that could not stand up and say who belonged to its community and who did not belong lacked both resolve and dignity.”16 The indignation of Powellite mobilized a clear sense of a national community, one that did not include those belonging to different cultural communities.

The NCCI recounted the difficulties raised by the speech in its newsletter:

The NCCI has encountered in its daily contacts with a wide range of people the damaging effects of the propaganda of the last two or three months. Below-the-surface prejudice and discrimination are ugly and difficult to combat as it is. Now the social and psychological restraints no longer operate in the same way. The forces of ignorance and hostility feel able to come out into the open and organise more freely; and a new phase of this kind calls for new approaches. First of all, as the allegations become wilder and wilder, there must be greater dissemination of factual information.17

---

16 Ibid., 731.
17 National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Information, No. 24,” June 1968, 24, 4462/P/01/001-1, LMA.
Local community relations councils knew from experience how the tacit prejudice encountered by Commonwealth Citizens shaped their marginalization within their local communities. They feared what open hostility might produce. Richard Titmuss wrote to the *Times* that every one of Powell’s speeches necessitated more be spent on community relations.¹⁸ This new hostility shaped the work undertaken by the Community Relations Commission and impacted the audience for its work. The British public could not perceive the Community Relations Commission as an organization for Commonwealth Citizens. Instead, its efforts undertaken on behalf of the whole community received new urgency.

The Community Relations Commission continued the work of the NCCI, particularly through a shared commitment to the right information. From 1968 until it was superseded by the Commission for Racial Equality in 1976, the budget of the Community Relations Commission increased by 579% from £284,408 in 1970, its first full year of operations, to £1,931,894 in 1976:

---

The expansion of funding to local community relations councils to employ professional community relations officers produced the tremendous growth in spending by the commission. This not only encompassed a line item in the budget, but also included the growth of professional training and development programs, as well as an increase in Community Relations Commission staff responsible for training and liaising with community relations officers.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

While social workers employed by voluntary agencies began working with Commonwealth Citizens in the early 1950s, the 1960s saw the tremendous growth of both voluntary community relations councils and professional community relations officers. On the eve of its merger with the Race Relations Board in 1976, the Community Relations Commission employed 60 at their secretariat in London and spent an additional £563,023 a year to sponsor the employment of 87 community relations officers, 43 assistant community relations officers, and 106 specialist officers at a total of 85 community relations councils. These 236 officers employed by local community relations councils represented a growth of 2055% (adjusted for inflation) of government spending on the salaries of community relations officers since the beginning of the program in 1966. In addition to the salaries of these officers, the Community Relations Commission also employed regional development officers to oversee professional development of community relations officers and to advise on their relationships with their local councils. They also funded training and conferences for community relations officers, police officers, teachers, immigrant leaders, and social workers. This emphasis on training and professional development shows the importance placed on community relations officers as crucial to the improvement of the wider situation of community relations in Britain.

Despite the investment in training, the commission did not believe this government investment would substantially contribute to promoting good community relations. In 1970, John Reddaway, recently resigned senior administrative officer of the Community Relations Commission, called attention to the insufficient resources of the Community Relations Commission and castigated the government for not following through on its grand plan for community relations. He urged an increase in funds, the expansion of personnel, especially as concerned the development division, which oversaw the network of local community relations councils. It was in this function that he saw the Community Relations Commission most lacking, claiming they had abdicated leadership to the Institute of Race Relations, the Runnymede Trust and other institutions. Reddaway described community relations as a way to tackle “communal problems at the grass roots,” and in this phrase, he betrayed his early career in colonial administration in Cyprus. 19 Like the colonial officers profiled by Joseph Hodge, Reddaway had served in the UN Relief and Works Agency before joining the Community Relations Commission and brought this wider imperial and international experience to bear on the work of making community in Britain. 20 Rising numbers of migrants did not fuel Powell’s view of communal disorder, but the increasing traction of imperial ideas of community management.

The Community Relations Commission defined the work of building community relations as patient and unspectacular, and they countered criticism that they were not doing enough by

Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

saying such criticism represented a misunderstanding of the work.\(^{21}\) Reflecting conversations that occurred during the period of engagement with CARD, community relations emphasized its role as informational, not confrontation or advocacy work. The Community Relations Commission “[combatted] prejudice by persuasion and education, by positive measures to promote understanding and by explaining and interpreting the cultures and backgrounds of the different ethnic groups to the host community and vice versa.”\(^{22}\) The attempt to define their work as undertaken on behalf of the whole community distanced them from a reputation as a welfare organization for immigrants. This emphasis on the whole community recurred in the reports of the local community relations officers as they defined their work. The Community Relations Commission supported the creation of a professional cadre of community relations officers, working in particular locations, but based on a common and general body of knowledge. The tremendous investment in defining the role of the community relations officer worked at a remove from the day-to-day operations of local community relations councils as they took on an increasing amount of service provision for Commonwealth Citizens. These conversations attempted to create the new community relations officer in contrast to the older model of voluntary liaison.

II. Out with the Old

The first years of the Community Relations Commission were transitional, generationally and professionally as regards the community relations officer. The new community relations defined itself against an older model that valued the social worker as embedded in local communities and able to secure the welfare rights of individual Commonwealth Citizens by mobilizing the community on her behalf. The centralization of community relations demanded discussion of the various balance of local responsibilities and central accountability. With the Community Relations Commission, the local voluntary community relations council and local authorities all invested in his work, the community relations officer was responsible to many masters, and thus needed to define his work to make claims for the basis of his expertise—community.

In Nottingham, Dorothy Wood, exemplified the older model of the community relations officer. Before beginning work with Commonwealth Citizens in 1954, Wood’s purview as a secretary of the Nottingham Council of Social Service included work on behalf of the whole of the community. In practice, the Council of Social Service focused on individual casework with those persons considered on the margins of the social body. As discussed in earlier chapters, this first generation of community relations workers viewed Commonwealth Citizens as one type of problematic subject, but nonetheless deserving the same rights and access to services as all Britons. They formed voluntary organizations to advocate for individual Commonwealth Citizens as they faced discrimination and to sway public opinion to accept Commonwealth


Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

Citizens as members of the community. Additionally, they organized social events—cricket matches, concerts, tea parties and dances—to raise funds and in the belief that the chance to meet and get to know each other would bring white Britons and Commonwealth Citizens to closer accord. They argued both for the place of Commonwealth Citizens in British society and also for the ways their difference and unique status demanded appropriate services. In ensuring these services, these workers portrayed themselves and their work as embedded in local communities. Importantly, social workers like Dorothy Wood believed they worked at the service of their voluntary committees, which represented the corporate interests of the community.

Nadine Peppard defined this era as the “laisssez-faire fifties,” when the government took no notice of local circumstances, and the work fell to those in the voluntary sector. Looking back, she gently admonished the reasoning behind social events as an important part of building good community relations:

> It seemed so often to be felt that the mere act of coming together would somehow bring mutual understanding and acceptance...The same people who would grapple with the West Indians' family and housing problems and move heaven and earth to find jobs for them could be, at best, incredibly unimaginative and, at worst, paternalistic beyond belief when it came to deciding that their 'charges' ought to have some social life organised for them.²⁴

Peppard was perhaps being unfairly harsh—social events were not merely for Commonwealth Citizens, but for white Britons as well, to meet freely and simply make contact. And importantly, because these early councils were self-funded, social events were also a crucial source of revenue. In her previous work as organizer for the London Council of Social Service’s West Indian Advisory Committee in the late 1950s and 1960s, Peppard favored a social research agenda, developing best practices in order to facilitate the provision of services to migrants. The new community relations officer would be crafted along these lines and against the idea that community relations was simply “tea parties.” However, expertise would no longer be based on providing services to Commonwealth Citizens based on knowledge of the local community. Instead, the work of community relations would be based on facilitating community through application of general principles. The social worker no longer provided a social life for their constituents; instead they provided support for their charges to organize a social life for themselves.

By the 1970s, increased and secure central government funding and a generational shift transformed community relations into discrete streams of practice. In 1970, 61 local councils received an average of £2058 from the Community Relations Commission in addition to varying

²³ See discussion of Marie Jahoda and the importance of contact to diminish prejudice in Chapter 3.
degrees of local authority support. While most of this money funded the salary of a community relations officer, councils also saw an increase in government funds for providing services. Through local community relations councils, volunteers and part-time educators organized multi-racial playgroups, fair housing groups, English classes for mothers and for workers. These services were offered to combat the discrimination faced by Commonwealth Citizens, particularly working mothers. In the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants’ joint report with the Institute of Race Relations to the Seebohm Committee on the Reorganization of Local Authority and Allied Social Services, the authors argued that Britain was a multi-racial society, that immigrants and ethnic minority Britons needed the same services as all Britons, but immigrant families faced “extra poverty because some parents have to do work less skilled than they are capable of; [and] extra overcrowding because of the discrimination in housing.” Because the practice of this earlier generation of community relations workers was based in the holistic practice of voluntary social work, they understood the problems of Commonwealth Citizens as part of larger social conditions. The report went on to stress the importance of cultural education to the practice of social work, but this knowledge of culture was in the service of providing welfare. Thus, it was important for social workers to know that “domestic relationships within the West Indian community” produced families raised by single, working mothers, which "contrast[ed] sharply with the tightly knit Asian extended family." Social workers deployed this cultural knowledge to advocate for expanding the hours of child health clinics and day minders and for the creation of playgroups where Asian mothers could learn English as their children played. The growth of top down community relations disassociated these services from the welfare needs of migrant families and made multiracial playgroups, and multicultural community more broadly, an end in and of itself.

Nadine Peppard believed there was no uniform solution to the local problems of community relations. Accomplishing “the monumental task of persuading a society which has become multi-racial in fact that it must also become so in spirit,” required careful consideration of local circumstances and a willingness on the part of local committees to adjust their position to account for local variation:

Community relations committees have to learn by experience, by assessing the unity and team spirit of their members when to negotiate and when to protest; when to proceed carefully and when to take risks. No blueprint can be provided. This is a matter of judgment which has to be acquired, and which can only be based on a strong moral sense and a feeling for the right moment.

26 Simon Yudkin, quoted in, “Evidence to the Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Services Submitted by the Institute of Race Relations and the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants,” September 8, 1967, HLG/120/1114, TNA.
27 Ibid.
28 Nadine Peppard, “Into the Third Decade,” 98.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

As the man on the spot, the community relations officer needed to be prepared to meet the challenges of local circumstances, facilitating the community relations council as the collective representative of the community. The Community Relations Commission supported the training and professional development of the officer, but increasingly the community relations officer saw himself as burdened by working through the voluntary committee.

The Community Relations Commission discussed the role and training of the community relations officer and the relationship of the officer to the central commission. A working group on structure formed to discuss the relationship of the national Community Relations Commission to the local councils, but discussion soon centered on three possible structures for community relations: (1) the community relations officer would be employed by the Community Relations Commission and seconded to the local council; (2) the community relations officer would be an employee of the local authority; and (3) the present system, in which the community relations officer was employed by the local community relations council and paid by government funds.

Although the Community Relations Commission maintained the system already in existence, examining the different proposed structures illustrates the tensions surrounding the relationship between the community relations officer, the local committees and the Community Relations Commission. The arguments in favor of the community relations officer’s employment by the Community Relations Commission centered on job security, as central employment created a network of positions to which the community relations officer could transfer and a clearer structure of promotion than the decentralized system allowed. Jock Campbell, the joint deputy chairman of the Community Relations Commission, who had overseen his family’s sugar plantations in Guyana, compared this employment structure to that of the Colonial Office, the officers acting as “servants” of the local councils, but with their “career structure and professional discipline centrally guaranteed.”

Community relations officers recognized the benefits of this structure, precisely for the job security it would afford them. Similarly, the Community Relations Commission looked to the example of probation officers, trained by the Home Office and seconded to regional committees. However, the arguments against central employment emphasized the diminishment of voluntary local effort, with fears that local communities would perceive the community relations officer as an envoy of the center, and a representative of “The Establishment” at the expense of commitment to local communities.

Discussions surrounding the employment of the community relations officer illustrated the tension between local autonomous action and creating community


relations as a professional discipline, with standards that could be implemented in different locations.  

David Pitt, joint deputy chairman, particularly favored the second option, of folding the community relations officer into the social service provision of local authority areas. Pitt believed the long-term objectives of the Community Relations Commission should be to create community relations as a department within every local authority.  

He emphasized the professionalism of the ideal community relations officer, of equal stature with other local authority officials. The commission displayed broad agreement on the benefits of community relations becoming part of the work of the local authority social services, especially in view of the reorganization of local authority services following the Seebohm Report. However, at a meeting with local authority representatives, the majority of aldermen and councilors rejected such an arrangement. While these local authority representatives did not see community relations becoming part of local authority services, they stressed the importance of close links, even suggesting that the number of local authority representatives be fixed at either one quarter or one third of the local community relations council.  

It was not only the local authority representatives who rejected this arrangement, the Association of Community Relations Officers felt that employment by the local authority would proscribe the officer’s ability to act as an agent of change.  

Without a perfect solution, the community relations officer remained employed by the community relations council, but funding for his salary came from the central Community Relations Commission. In these discussions, the Community Relations Commission confirmed the importance of the voluntary nature of local councils; independent of, but in conversation with the local authority; and broadly representative of the whole community.

The Community Relations Commission viewed the problems of structure as indicative of growing pains rather than as particular to community relations. They believed, as with other areas of social service, community relations was recapitulating a “familiar history of voluntary effort expanding until a point is reached where the problems begin to outweigh the good work done and a review has to be undertaken.” However, they expressed concerns that the

---


34 Ibid.; Community Relations Commission, Working Group on Structure, “National Structures for Community Relations Work (2).”


Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

structural problems occasioned by the exponential growth of community relations would leave the important local work undone.

At the beginning of the third decade of community relations, Nadine Peppard surveyed the past of community relations to speculate on the future of the discipline. She weighed the balance of responsibility between broader public education and specific neighborhood-level projects, such as playgroups, meant to provide Commonwealth Citizens with services. She also worried that the emphasis on these projects would lessen anti-discrimination efforts. Peppard ended her essay with Roy Jenkins’s quote that integration was not assimilation but "equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance."38 The provision of services through the community relations councils were designed to foster equality of opportunity in a culturally diverse society, but it was the work of creating an atmosphere of mutual tolerance that continued to produce conflict over community relations. Turning to the ways community relations officers understood their work, they repeated Peppard’s concern to appropriately balance community development work with efforts to resist discrimination.

III. In with the New

With the expansion in the number of committees undertaking such work and rising demand for professional organizers, the emerging cohort of community relations officers came from a variety of backgrounds—former police officers, clergymen, colonial administrators, educators, and social workers employed in other disciplines. They benefited from a body of knowledge of the cultural background of Commonwealth Citizens and the historical reasons for their presence in Britain. They also sought to distance themselves from previous work with migrants by portraying themselves as professionals enacting a set of principles and ideas. This attitude was particularly favored by a set of community relations officers, who favored a community development approach. This attitude, much like the work of Migrant Services Division of the West Indies Commission, facilitated the work of residents in a local area to organize themselves in the interest of “self-help” and the provision of services. Whereas the work of Migrant Services promoted citizenship and civic participation amongst West Indians, the new community development made Commonwealth Citizens, particularly women, responsible for providing their own welfare. Professionalization of the community relations officer created them as managers of voluntary social work.

Conversations surrounding the rationalization of the social services and debates about the role of the professional social worker shaped understanding of the professional community relations officer. While there were tensions within the national structure of Community Relations that encouraged community relations officers to create a professional body, the publication of the Seebohm Report in 1968, and its recommendation to create a single local authority social service agency from the multitude of departments that together comprised the Social Services also prompted the new insistence on professionalization. In recommending an

38 Nadine Peppard, “Into the Third Decade,” 98; National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, “Minutes of a Meeting of Liaison Officers, Representatives of Consultative Committees and High Commissions and Other Observers Held on Friday 23 May 1966,” n. d., HO 231/8, TNA.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

“effective family service” the Seebohm Report acknowledged a shift in social work from addressing the needs of particular individuals to situating the needs of a family in the larger context of the community, which the Seebohm Report defined geographically within local authority boundaries. The language of the Seebohm Report stressed the interconnectedness of individuals within the community:

We recommend a new local authority department, providing a community-based and family-oriented service, which will be available to all. This new department will, we believe, reach far beyond the discovery and rescue of social casualties; it will enable the greatest possible number of individuals to act reciprocally, giving and receiving service for the well-being of the community.

The affective language of community ensured an insistence on the local and produced the social worker as embedded in functional and reciprocal relationships.

The implementation of the report enshrined what John Harris has called the “bureau-professional” regime of local authority social services, blending the professionalism of the social workers with the managerial organization of Local Authorities more generally. Social workers insisted on their professionalism to secure better status, argue for improved work conditions and influence policy. In 1970, eight social work professional associations merged to create the British Association of Social Workers (BASW). This body included approximately one-third of an estimated total social work population (employed by both statutory and voluntary agencies) of 30,000. Within this organization, conflicts emerged regarding the meaning of professionalism and the role of the organization as an advocate for employees’ rights. With the National and Local Government Officers Association (NALGO) arguing social workers did not share a body of knowledge, the status of social workers as professionals was always contested. A study by Robert Carew in 1979 supported the impression that social workers did not work from collectively-endorsed standards. His research, limited to a small group of social workers employed by statutory and voluntary agencies, showed the emphasis placed on “practice wisdom.” The social workers he interviewed claimed that they integrated into their

40 Great Britain and Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Social Services, Report of the Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Social Services, para. 2.
42 The constituent bodies were: the Association of Child Care Officers, Association of Family Caseworkers, the Association of Psychiatric Social Workers, the Association of Moral Welfare Workers, the Association of Social Workers, the Institute of Medical Social Workers, the Society of Mental Welfare Officers. National Association of Probation Officers decided not to join.
44 Ibid., 979.
practice appropriate theories learned during training and professional development activities. However, in Carew’s review of their interviews with clients, he found that social workers rarely considered theory in constructing a plan with their clients, although some, in retrospect, could justify how they conducted interviews with reference to theoretical models. Carew’s study did not condemn these practices. Instead, his analysis challenged sociologists to make their research relevant to practitioners. He concluded: “There is something questionable about the whole exercise of theory building in social work. It seems to be an exclusively academic exercise.” While sociologists conducted theory-driven research that claimed to be beneficial to practitioners, the practitioners rarely developed an interest in building a body of knowledge, despite their attendance of conferences and subscriptions to journals. Their insistence on the diversity of individual cases, their personal experience, and the advice of colleagues challenged both the claims of academic research and also the drive to professionalization around a shared body of work. The resistance of these social workers, in many ways, was a defense of the local and particular against the general. This stance also resisted characterizations of the professional social worker creating a passive citizenry through their dependence on the social workers’ expertise. Both of these dynamics in social work more generally resonated in conversations surrounding the role of the community relations officer.

These conversations within social service created the context for discussions of the community relations officer and his role, particularly in relation to the community he served. Whereas in the 1950s, Migrant Services saw community development as education in citizenship for West Indians to become members of their local communities, the new community development of the 1970s did not see wider participation as an end of community action. An example of several community projects in Tower Hamlets, perhaps illustrates this tension. Mrs. S. Ilyas, a middle-class Bangladeshi woman initiated several projects in the early 1970s through the Council of Citizens of Tower Hamlets, which received official sponsorship from the Community Relations Committee. Mrs. Ilyas and five other Bangladeshi ladies began a home English language tuition class, which by 1974, enrolled 82 students, with a further 163 on the waiting lists. In addition, Mrs. Ilyas grew tired of the “stereotyped thought by many indigenous Youth, Community and Social workers that young Asian girls are unclubbable; they would not participate, hence they should be left alone as their peculiar custom and way of life inhibit them from being involved in community action.” So, she initiated small knitting circles, which expanded into sari design and clothes making for the girls, inviting “English-speaking persons” to discuss community matters with them.” The new community relations maintained many of the old ideas of the importance of belonging to clubs to properly belong to communities.

J. A. Hunte, the community relations officer of Tower Hamlets took pride in these initiatives undertaken by members of the community he served. He wrote in the annual report, "teach a man to fish and his dependence upon those who profess to be the owners of the fish

---

shall vanish.\[^{47}\] In a variety of articles, the annual report of the Council of Citizens denounced the presence of outside initiators of community action. Hunte saw his role as facilitating, or “servicing” the organic initiatives of people within the borough. The mission of the council stated, “the people who live in this Borough should be given the opportunity to initiate their projects as members of the needs group, then the resource groups MUST give them the support as far as resources allow.” In publicizing the council’s activities, Hunte emphasized these examples of “true” community projects in contrast to the majority of the council’s work in service provision. Hunte spearheaded a variety of initiatives to advocate to the Borough Council for increased resources, provide services in employment and advice to youth, manage a playgroup, a legal advice centre, and a summer institute for members of the community to learn more about the borough and the cultural backgrounds of migrants.\[^{48}\] The project to service the independent efforts of Commonwealth Citizens and to provide services to Commonwealth Citizens were always in tension. However, the new community relations officer emphasized the former at the expense of the latter.

In a series of articles in the journal Race Today in 1969–1970, community relations officers throughout Britain shared their experiences working in local communities. The community relations officers found an ally in Race Today, a magazine produced by the Institute of Race Relations. Race Today not only provided the space to publish their views, but also supported the community relations officers editorially, if not against the Community Relations Commission, then at least as a bloc whose voice was not given appropriate heed within that organization. In his monthly publications feature, A. Sivanandan, the librarian and future director of the institute, regularly criticized the Community Relations Commission as exhibiting “no direction, no purpose, no philosophy.”\[^{49}\] The Community Relations Commission’s insistence on the independence and autonomy of the local councils was here criticized as a lack of leadership. Sivanandan asked to hear from the community relations officers, the “muzzled men”, whom, he claimed, the Community Relations Commission prevented from contributing to the discussion of the field. While editorially Race Today regularly critiqued the Community Relations Commission and the local community relations councils, they believed that the community relations officer shared their commitment to combatting discrimination and tackling the larger socio-economic problems of Britain.

Community relations officers served a variety of functions in local communities. They organized activities, facilitating the provision of voluntary services such as day care, youth groups, English language classes, and others. In addition to these activities, they advocated on behalf of Commonwealth Citizens to employers, the police, and the local authority. They provided information and public education to counter discrimination. Importantly, they served as a focal point for discussions around immigration and race relations, locally recognized

\[^{47}\] Ibid., 7.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

experts on community relations. A look at four of the articles written by community relations officers shows the way these community relations officers positioned themselves, in different but complementary ways, in their communities. These community relations officers diminished their work providing services for migrants, in favor of emphasizing their efforts to facilitate community development.

The four community relations officers who contributed to Race Today came to community relations from a variety of experiences in Britain, the Commonwealth and beyond. The community relations officer in Wolverhampton, Aaron Haynes, migrated to Britain from Barbados, and worked for many years in education and journalism before arriving in Wolverhampton. Employed as the head teacher of a school in Trinidad, he worked for the London County Council’s Education Department. Prior to his arrival in Britain, Haynes spent six years in the United States of America, including three years as a journalist in Nashville, Tennessee.\(^{50}\) Originally from Pakistan, the community relations officer in Sheffield, S. A. Rasul held a masters degree in international affairs, and obtained a certificate in community development in a course run by the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations. He furthered his education in Britain through post-graduate courses in adult education, community development and social administration in Manchester.\(^{51}\) The biographies of the community relations officers included in Race Today stressed their academic qualifications and professional experience to establish their expertise.

Several articles began with a description of their communities, stressing that ethnicity was only one factor among others that defined the area. Charles Boxer emphasized the diversity of Wandsworth in terms of wealth, occupation and ethnicity. In Camden, North London, where 25% of the population was born outside the borough, John Dearnley proudly described the history of the various neighborhoods of the new borough, drawing on the social reform past of Camden Town and Kentish Town, and portrayed Somers Town as a neighborhood that could have been included in Willmott and Young’s study of working class communities, Family and Kinship in East London.\(^{52}\) Rather than stress the ethnic make-up of Sheffield, Rasul emphasized the geography of deprivation, portraying three neighborhoods “identified with limited social provision, poor housing conditions, community facilities not very well organized.”\(^{53}\) For these community relations officers, their work with migrants was shaped by the history and social conditions of these areas.

An important aspect of the community relations officer’s work involved liaising with different segments of the community in order to keep the “climate favorable” to Commonwealth Citizens and good community relations. Haynes emphasized his role in Wolverhampton as a mediator between employers and workers, as providing training to police

\(^{50}\) Haynes would serve as the first secretary of the Association of community relations officers, and was committed to developing the larger role of the community relations officer in the national work of Community Relations.


cadets, and importantly liaising with the local authority. He aided in the training of police cadets, including placements in his office for three months. In addition to these activities, Haynes believed that the goals of the Wolverhampton community relations council and the local authority were the same, despite differences of opinion, and he stressed the importance of cooperation between the two bodies. The community relations officer cultivated an image of responsibility in order to influence policy, and this image of the community relations officer implied a position that could affect social change.

Haynes was the only community relations officer to discuss at length his relationship to the local authority and the police department. All of them, however, made much of the importance of community development projects. Charles Boxer saw his work as empowering local people to organize for themselves, embracing the ideology of self-help that would increasingly come to define community work, both within community relations and more broadly. Like Boxer, Rasul emphasized community development, discussing at length a neighborhood association in Sheffield. From beginnings at a family social evening, the association became independent of the community relations council, initiating playgroups, youth clubs, and women’s groups. The neighborhood association had been successful to the point of needing its own professional organizer. He expressed the views of many in community relations when he stated, “It is important that people in the community be involved fully and continually in the activities which are established in their community.” In the context of community relations, this meant that immigrants should not be on the receiving end of social provision, but that they participated equally with native Britons in improving their shared community. While Rasul initiated and incubated this neighborhood group in its early stages, he emphasized that the group was now self-directed, and this autonomy, he stated, was the work of the community relations officer.

Like Haynes, Dearnley did discuss cooperation with the Camden Borough Council. However, rather than seeing his role as supporting the policies of the council towards the community as a whole, Dearnley emphasized the support received for the employment of two neighborhood workers. One of these neighborhood workers, David King, originally from Barbados, was “resisting pressures” from the West Indian inhabitants of the borough “to become a black man’s multi-purpose social agency.” Here, Dearnley explicitly rejected the model of community relations as providing welfare services for Commonwealth Citizens, despite the demand from Commonwealth Citizens that they should do so. After cataloguing the various activities of the Camden Committee for Community Relations, Dearnley asserted that the primary role of the group was to "shift public opinion away from racial prejudice and, at the same time, make the community a better place to live in." It seems the first role required that their efforts to make the community a better place for Commonwealth Citizens prevented them from publicizing their welfare work. Dearnley argued communicating "with people who feel

---

Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

hostile to colour rather than those who are, in any case, on our sideIbid. was the primary purpose of the council, and doing so would prevent the scapegoating of immigrants for the larger social problems of Britain.

These community relations officers, while emphasizing different aspects of their work, presented a general picture of community relations work, and particularly of the role of the community relations officer. Their vision of community relations erased the voluntary local council in favor of a direct relationship between the community relations officer and the community of Commonwealth Citizens. Rather than a whole community within a local authority area to be mobilized, Rasul and Dearnley especially focused on the importance of neighborhood-level associations of all residents in projects of self-help. While Haynes believed the local authority and the community relations councils should act in concert in the interests of the whole community, the other three community relations officers diminished the role of the local authority other than as a funding organization. Their vision of community lay outside of the state, although their efforts to organize community were made possibly only through their employment with government funds.

The community relations officers who published in Race Today all worked in urban areas known for their racial diversity and could take for granted the support of the local authority. The community relations councils who employed them possessed budgets well above the median (£3048): in 1970/1, Wandsworth received £4290 from the Community Relations Commission and an additional £2000 from the local authority; Camden received the most funds of any community relations council—£2890 from the Community Relations Commission and £12,000 from the Borough Council.59 These resources allowed for increased staff and activities, and allowed the opportunity for these officers to think of the larger context of their work. This was not necessarily the case in Waltham Forest, outer London, infamous within community relations for its lack of financial support from the local authority,60 in Hounslow, west London, where the community relations officer resigned because of disagreements with the local community relations council; or in Walsall, where the local authority demanded a majority of seats in the committee that was to hire the community relations officer.61 The new community relations officers who defined the field worked with councils in areas committed to investing time and resources in community relations and their efforts to publicize their work created a norm of what community relations should be. However, their image of community relations did not represent relations generally between community relations councils and local authorities.

As raised by Rasul’s qualifications and experiences, these community relations officers were invested in seeing themselves as trained in a particular body of knowledge that motivated their work. Indeed, writing these articles allowed them to assert their expertise and contributed to their standing in the profession. Along with Race Today, New Community, inaugurated in

58 Ibid., 43.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

1971 and published by the Community Relations Commission, provided a forum to present “specialist coverage” in the “associated fields of community relations, ethnic and race relations and migration.” Edited by Sheila Patterson, the journal presented the work of academic researchers, policy statements and statistics from the Community Relations Commission, and also articles written by community relations officers. Many of these articles relayed the findings of these officers’ research conducted in pursuit of further degrees. Community relations councils received *New Community* free of charge, as the Community Relations Commission believed the journal would positively impact the councils’ work. While it aimed to present both practical and theoretical articles, the journal was remarkably academically oriented, with over 50% of its contributors in its first decade of publication affiliated with a university. The perceived importance of *New Community* within the field of community relations shows the impact of social research to a significant and vocal minority of officers, who invested in the creation of a general theory of community relations, and also sought avenues to increase their standing within the profession.

The general theory of community relations relayed in their articles defined an uneasy relationship between individual casework, community development, and educating the wider community. Beginning in 1968, the Urban Programme made £25 million available to voluntary agencies and local authorities over four years in “areas of special need.” With attention to urban areas considered both overcrowded and in poor physical condition, the Urban Programme especially urged the formation of playgroups and other services to children. Many community relations councils took advantage of these funds and began forming playgroups on a multi-racial basis. These activities both provided essential services and also hoped to create contact and accord in areas with significant numbers of Commonwealth Citizens. The rhetoric of community development provided an ideological and ethical base for these activities, as more than the service itself, the organization by volunteers of playgroups and language classes constituted community relations practice. Despite the continued provision of services, Peppard saw a reaction amongst the new community relations officers against a “welfare” concept of community relations as officers sought to achieve the Community Relations Commission’s aims of bringing together the whole of the community and changing the everyday prejudice of white Britons. She worried that this emphasis on broader issues resulted in “the solid everyday work of community relations...not being carried out.”

Community members might be organizing playgroups, but were the social conditions that produced the need for better and more flexible services being addressed?

Reconciling the multiple functions of the community relations officer raised considerable discussion among the community relations officers and also within the larger Community Relations Commission. One particularly vocal officer, Bill Taylor, exemplified the new community relations officer. On leaving his position as the Secretary of the Nottingham Commonwealth Citizens’ Consultative Committee in 1969 to become a community worker for the Greenwich Community Project in Greenwich, London, he wrote an essay for *Race Today*

---

Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

outlining the precarious position of the community relations officer and offering his perspective on training. Taylor wanted to move away from casework to implement community development principles of self-help and empowering citizens to act at the neighborhood level. Before his appointment in Nottingham, Taylor had worked for the NCCI and taken a leave of absence to study community development in newly independent Zambia.\textsuperscript{63} The work of community relations, he suggested, largely concerned the work of changing attitudes. He believed that the community relations officer was not simply a provider of services and a facilitator of contact and understanding, but an expert who conducted social research and provided analysis to improve local race relations.

Although Taylor doubted “the merits of voluntary effort (and they are sometimes questionable in delicate fields of work)”, he saw the relationship between the community relations officer and local voluntary council as one of "mutual confidence based on respect for expertise. Such freedom will also be of prime importance in evolving creative methods of work." Here Taylor advocated freedom for the community relations officer to perform his work based on his expertise, not in service to the community as represented in the consultative committee. He also rejected the earlier model of liaison, bringing the whole of the community together, in favor of a social research agenda, one that would put into practice tested methods to establish their efficacy. The work, he said, was too important to be left in the hands of untrained workers.\textsuperscript{64} The new community relations officer, exemplified by Taylor, put into practice his technocratic expertise into the organization of community, but at the expense of the voluntary principles that animated much of community relations. Taylor warned against seeing the “traditional projects of Community Relations Councils” as central to the strategy of improved race relations in a local area. They were useful projects with benefits that brought people together, but he asserted the “prior need is to enable minority groups to gain sufficient self-confidence and experience to meet the majority group on terms of real equality. Black power precedes true integration.”\textsuperscript{65} Rather than individual needs, community relations should facilitate the empowerment of “black” community.

Since Taylor left the field of community relations, he did not have to worry about the impact the phrase “black power” could have on his career. Others did not have that privilege. As a government body, the Community Relations Commission was responsible to parliament. They became embroiled in a minor scandal in 1973, when Harold Soref, Conservative MP for Ormskirk discovered that the Community Relations Commission spent 100 guineas on 50 books published by Michael X for Black House. The books were never used but incited a mini Conservative fury and requests for the Community Relations Commission to make their finances more transparent to public scrutiny. Soref demanded of the Home Secretary, Robert Carr: “In many cases are not community relations officers employed by the commission and the

\textsuperscript{63} “Circular Letter from Nadine Peppard to Secretaries and Representatives of Liaison Committees and Liaison Officers,” September 6, 1965, 4462/P/01/001-2, LMA.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., 226.
council Black Power agitators? Soref’s comments illustrate the dangers of identifying community relations too closely with welfare for Commonwealth Citizens. In fear of losing their funding, the Community Relations Commission denied funds to the Community Relations Council in Newcastle on their employment of a former organizer with CARD. The Community Relations Commission deemed Chris Mullard too young, too political, and too radical to be representative of the whole community. Its responsibility to government necessitated the Community Relations Commission be hesitant to approve community relations officers considered “militant.” Characterizations such as Soref’s and comments such as Dearnley’s in Camden contributed to a desire on the part of community relations officers to distance themselves from a concept of community relations as welfare for immigrants and towards a commitment to serving the whole community. The funding of their councils depended on it.

Taylor’s comments and the articles by the community relations officers came at a time when five years of government funding established a cadre of community relations officers desirous of acquiring more status and authority in a larger field of social work and research. Bill Taylor and other community relations officers displayed concern as to the status of community relations officers within their localities and also relative to the Community Relations Commission. In a letter to the Community Relations Commission, Taylor called community relations officers, “the greatest amateurs in the world.” It was a new field, rapidly developing, and the web of relationships between the Community Relations Commission, local authorities, local voluntary community relations councils, as well as local populations of all races placed the officers in a precarious position. To better establish themselves as a voice within the constellation of Community Relations, the community relations officers established a professional organization, the Association of community relations officers in 1969.

Community relations officers and the commission considered the work very demanding, requiring the Officers attend a variety of meetings and social events, often working in the evenings. The Community Relations Commission sent guidelines for the employment of the officer to the local community relations councils, stressing the difficulties of the position and encouraging the community relations councils to hire mature candidates able to handle the “isolation” of the position, and the stresses of being both a “conciliator and a facilitator.” They provided the community relations councils up to £200 to advertise positions nationally, and could provide additional funds for the costs of the candidates to travel for interviews. Additionally, they encouraged the community relations councils “in order to obtain the best qualified and most efficient service, recruitment for posts of community relations officer shall

---

67 The Community Relations Commission eventually reversed their position, and Mullard served as community relations officer in Tyne and Wear for five years, eventually earned a PhD in the Sociology of Race, has written widely on Race in Britain, and more recently, headed the Notting Hill Carnival. “Area Roundup,” August 1970; Chris Mullard, Black Britain (London: Allen and Unwin, 1973).
be from the widest possible fields with preference being given to ability and maturity rather than sex, nationality or knowledge of languages.” As the Community Relations Commission disbursed the funds for the officer’s employment, they reserved the right to judge the suitability of candidates, and even demanded the right to attend interviews with the candidates. Brent Community Relations Officer Phil Sealy commented, “‘fear’ makes a mockery of democracy, and fear of losing their grant-aid has a marked effect on local councils in respect of their views and decisions, particularly relating to the appointment of an officer.” Here Sealy brought attention to the structural conditions that inhibited the independence of the local voluntary councils.

Despite the authority to deny funds for candidates considered inappropriate, the Community Relations Commission stressed that their guidelines for hiring a community relations officer served only as a prompt. They reiterated the importance of local committees employing an individual tailored to local circumstances. When considering the job description and role of the community relations officer, the local community relations council should take into account the number of immigrants; the ethnic composition of the area; the attitudes of the local authority; and the relative needs of housing, education, and leisure activities. The Community Relations Commission emphasized that the community relations officer was not to be a caseworker, but rather should focus on “developing relations, within the context of the Race Relations Act (1968), amongst all sections of the community, with regard to education and social services both statutory and voluntary leisure activities, employment services, and full democratic participation in the life of the town or city.” They outlined eleven perceived duties of the officer, emphasizing their roles conducting social research, providing information and expertise to other local agencies, facilitating discussion and cooperation, administering the voluntary council, assisting newcomers in accessing social services, and becoming “a familiar figure in the area, in whom representatives of every ethnic group can have confidence when difficulties arise.” They stressed the role of the community relations officer as a mediator, again placing him in the position of negotiating between multiple groups.

These multiple functions entailed a concern to define training for the community relations officer. A Race Today article emphasized the need for training before a candidate assumed a post, in the first year, and subsequently as the community relations officer gained experience. The prescribed course before a community relations officer took a post included instruction in principles of community work; aspects of social sciences and social psychology, including the psychology of prejudice; administration; finance and budgeting; communication;

70 Community Relations Commission, Working Group on Structure, “Conditions of Grant-Aid to Community Relations Councils,” n. d., CK 3/16, TNA.
74 Community Relations Commission, “Duties of a Community Relations Officer,” April 1, 1969, DD/CR/6/4, NoA.
75 Ibid.
race relations and immigration. In the first year of employment, the community relations officer should specialize according to the needs of his area, and as he progressed in his career, he could undertake further study and publish his own research. The Race Today plan for training emphasized the community relations officer as a researcher who could be trained in a general curriculum who would then apply that training to a local area.

As a figure or ideal type, the new community relations officer produced through these conversations invested in social research to formulate best practices and worked on behalf of the whole community. To prevent perceptions by white Britons that the community relations officer was a Black Power agitator or even an advocate for Commonwealth Citizens, community became the object of the community relations officer’s work. However, the community relations officer did not develop the community involvement of the whole of the local community. Encouraging the participation of members of ethnic minority members within their own communities became the object of community relations officer work. Increasingly, these discussions of the nature of the community the community relations officer served contributed to a perception of the ethnicity and gender of the community relations officer. The next section examines the tension between the community relations officer and the Assistant community relations officer to show the ways these discussions produced white men as capable of speaking for the whole community, while women and Britons of colour came to be perceived as serving particular populations.

IV. Who was the Community Relations Officer?

As there were nearly ninety community relations councils throughout Britain in the early 1970s, many community relations officers worked in small towns and rural areas, and without the support of the local authority. Increasingly, the Community Relations Commission provided funds for the employment of an assistant community relations officer. In addition to formal training in classes and conferences, the Community Relations Commission believed that the best training entailed an apprenticeship as an Assistant community relations officer and provided funds for forty such positions. Bringing assistants into the work of community relations, however, raised as many problems as it solved. While community relations councils welcomed an expansion of personnel for the increased work they could accomplish, relationships between the community relations officer and the assistant community relations officer proved strained. The Community Relations Commission, which employed an entire branch devoted to assisting the professional development of officers, showed concern to developing tensions regarding the role of the assistant, the relationship to the community relations officer, and the frustrations at the local councils these strains revealed. This section looks at tensions between the community relations officer and the assistant through efforts to define the position. As these roles became more distinct, they also became gendered and racialized.

Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

One frustration concerning the role of the assistant community relations officer regarded the lack of clear definition of the position. Was the assistant in a training position or an ordinary position in which the assistant community relations officer learned on the job? The difference concerned whether the assistant was a “straight from University understudy” or responsible for a particular role within the larger work of the local community relations council. These concerns reflected the growth of university degrees in social work and social administration, which influenced the growth of new community relations officers. In both cases, the Community Relations Commission considered the assistant position as an opportunity in which a young person of “calibre [could] acquire experience and skills without immediately having to shoulder the full responsibility of this work.”

In the trainee role, the assistant community relations officer took care of the administrative tasks of the office, and perhaps some casework. The varied functions the position demanded produced discontent among several assistants who left their positions because of an over emphasis on administration. The Community Relations Commission responded to these departures by emphasizing the need for a clear trajectory for the assistant’s work.

In cases where the assistant managed a particular concern, youth work, playgroups, or even liaising with one segment of the community, tensions arose with the community relations officer over the authority of the assistant. When the Community Relations Commission asked their regional development officers to report the causes for friction between community relations officers and assistants, they asked the development officers not to list “the usual observation that University-trained assistant community relations officers may often be brighter than their senior officers.”

Despite the differences in generation, education, and often race and gender, the Community Relations Commission was eager to find a balance of responsibility and develop work for younger officers within community relations. Most of the regional officers reported that even with initial tensions on the hiring of a new assistant community relations officer, the officers made concessions and worked together.

However, some of their descriptions point to larger tensions in the field. One regional assistant resisted the attempt to develop clear guidelines when local variations and individual personalities inevitably produced unique situations. Despite his insistence on the diversity of relationships, this regional officer sketched the imagined typical characters in a community relations office:

It is obviously difficult to make any definite recommendations in this area, when it is quite possible for an elderly, white, politically conservative community relations officer from a industrial background to get on well and form a good team with a young, black,
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

Marxist oriented ACRO who has worked in the voluntary sector for all his/her working life - unlikely perhaps, but not impossible.  

This employee of the Community Relations Commission imagined that community relations officers came from industrial backgrounds and were inevitably white, and assistant community relations officers identified with radical, black politics. This comment also shows the ways this Community Relations Commission officer perceived experience gained through industrial backgrounds as “conservative.” From the sketches of community relations officers writing in *Race Today* and further anecdotal evidence, community relations officers came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. They were white Britons and Britons of mixed heritage. They were born in Pakistan or in the West Indies. And yet, typical figures of the community relations officer and the assistant emerged.

In a similar way, community relations officers and assistant community relations officers came to be gendered as male and female. Job descriptions for play group leaders and language project organizers frequently requested female applicants. Tensions between male community relations officers and female assistant community relations officers were highlighted in a report from one of the Regional Development Officers: "a particular CRO, who, whilst being sure that the ACRO appointed is the most competent person for the job, since her appointment, seems to have had no good word for her. Could this be because she is taller than he, and a woman, to boot?"  

A report prepared in 1975 for the Action Committee on Sex Discrimination of the Association of Scientific and Managerial Staffs (which the community relations officers had joined the previous year) outlined the numbers of women in various levels of community relations work. Out of 248 employees, women comprised 100% of office assistants; 84% of playgroup workers; 43% of assistant community relations officers; but only 12% of community relations officers.  

Whereas in the early days of community relations in the 1950s, women dominated the field, by 1970, the diversified field created positions in which women performed certain specific activities and men coordinated the larger project of community relations.

This conceptualization of who worked at a general level and who worked at the particular level impacted hiring decisions in community relations. The report on unsatisfactory relationships between community relations officers and assistants contained a further general description of the assistants. The author described several instances of individuals being hired as community relations officers on the basis of their ethnic background, such as an example of a young Asian woman hired to run a language group, or a young West Indian man “who, it is hoped, will draw disaffected black youth or maybe the West Indian community as a whole, into the orbit of the Community Relations Commission."  

---

81 Assistant Development Officer (S), “Memo,” March 27, 1974, CK 3/16, TNA.
83 Diana Christensen, “Factors Leading to Un satisfactory CRO/ACRO Relationships,” n. d., CK 3/16, TNA.
regarding who could gain the confidence of particular communities, but also the absence of participants from certain communities within community relations. While some within the Community Relations Commission believed in hiring people of a particular ethnic background to liaise with those of a similar background, there were others within the Community Relations Commission who criticized this approach. As one regional development officer wrote:

Despite all the emphasis placed on ability, rather than colour, to do a particular job, there is still a kind of professional arrogance among certain ACROs and indeed CROs, which assumes that because an ACRO is black and the CRO is white, the former should become the chief spokesman or link man for the West Indians. I accept that in certain circumstances this may be inevitable, or indeed desirable, but I think the emphasis, both during recruitment and subsequent training, should be looking for, and developing, administrative and operational skills on a more widely based awareness of the community.  

The emphasis on producing a general theory of community relations work and the efforts to produce a clear description of the duties of the community relations officer had resulted in the racialization of the Officer and the perceived ethnic background of those who could represent the entire community. This occurred through a national conversation, and was abstracted from the local tensions of organizing community.

V. Coda: The professional and the amateur in Yorkshire

A look at a particular case of hiring shows the ways one committee handled the tensions between the professional and the amateur as well as the tension between advocating for migrants and representing the whole of the community.

In the spring of 1973, the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations circulated a notice for a position as the community relations officer with special reference to the resettlement of Ugandan Asians in Yorkshire. A year previously, Idi Amin characterized the Asians of Uganda as “bloodsuckers”, disloyal to the nation, and demanded they leave the country. Of nearly 60,000 Ugandan Asians, 28,608 with British passports came to the United Kingdom, and on arrival, 21,987 people were housed for some period by an agency set up particularly for the aid of these migrants, the Uganda Resettlement Board. 85 The Resettlement Board operated sixteen centers, which provided shelter and food for the migrants, and employed officers to aid in their search for employment and housing. The Chairman of the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations, Donald Wade, called the resettlement of the Ugandan Asians a “humanitarian matter,” and explained that they were “in the position of refugees, and that called for the sympathy which has been so well known in this country over

---

84 Raj Nayer, “Memo,” March 4, 1974, CK 3/16, TNA.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

many years and many centuries. In Yorkshire, the committee recognized the Ugandan Asians not as British citizens accessing their welfare rights but as foreigners requiring aid.

Resettlement depended upon the availability of housing, and so as to not put strain on urban areas already perceived as overcrowded, the Resettlement Board adopted a policy of dispersal. The board recognized that dispersal was in conflict with providing the newcomers the security of being among people of similar backgrounds:

Although Uganda Asian families are facing difficulties of adjustment (particularly where there are language problems and there is not an existing Asian community) we thought it was better that they should find their feet, even in conditions less than ideal, in a town or village than lose their initiative in the artificial environment of a resettlement centre.

The imperative to move Ugandan Asians out of the resettlement centers governed the placement of families in local authority areas that could guarantee them housing. However, many of these authorities, called “Green Areas” by the board, had little experience with Commonwealth Citizens settling in their areas.

To ease potential tensions between Ugandan Asians and native Britons, the Resettlement Board provided the funds for local authorities and voluntary committees to hire temporary personnel to aid in integrating the newcomers into local communities. The Yorkshire CCR received such a grant for the employment of an officer for one year. Because there would be no local community relations council to assist the newcomers on their arrival, the roving officer would have to interact with several local authorities. The description of the position emphasized the difficulties imagined in settling the families. The ideal roving officer would provide “skilled assistance” as “the problems of citizenship of a whole family” could take much time and involve a variety of individuals and agencies. The letter to recommenders asked them to evaluate their candidate’s suitability on the following terms:

- capable of coping with correspondence and enquiries, and of liaising successfully with others working in this and adjacent fields;
- pleasant manner and be capable of getting on well both with colleagues and with any other people;
- genuine interest in the work;
- sufficiently broad educational background.

---

86 Donald Wade, HL Deb 6 December 1972 Vol 337 Cc252–90.
89 Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations, Form Letter, n. d., 49D79/2/2/24, WYAS-B.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

These qualifications emphasized the interactions of the officer with the regular welfare workers established in West Yorkshire. The Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations would support the work of the community relations officer, but the officer needed to act independently.

The eleven applicants for the position came from a variety of ethnic and employment backgrounds—some had been born in South Asia, some in East Africa, and some were native Britons. While the archives do not contain the selection committee’s discussions, a closer look at the applications reveals the kinds of experiences held by those looking for community relations work. The officer would represent the whole of the community, while working specifically with recently arrived Ugandan Asians and the local authority welfare departments.

The two white Britons who received interviews, but not the position, came from pastoral and social work backgrounds. John Glover, 42, worked as a Baptist minister in Manningham, Bradford, an area that acquired national prominence for its numbers of Pakistani immigrants. He stressed in his application his commitment to the area around his parish, and his work with housing associations and community development projects. While Glover had experience in the voluntary sector, Christopher Skinns, 24, held a BSc in Sociology and possessed only one year’s experience as a social worker in Teeside. He and his recommenders emphasized his interest in research and his experience with local authority social services. He wrote:

I have had for some time a theoretical interest in Community/Race Relations. My position as a social worker has allowed me to translate this into practice, as I have a large number of Indian, Pakistani and Jamaican families on my caseload. In addition I have helped in the settlement of Ugandan Asians in the administrative district covered by the area office at which I work. As a consequence I have had some considerable experience with the problems of resettlement and also passport applications, citizenship applications, etc.

Skinns’ description of his interests related theory to practice, and he conceived of community relations as social work with Britons of color.

Several of the applicants were recent migrants to the United Kingdom following Africanization in Eastern Africa. Bhupinder Singh Gill, 43, was born in Tanzania. He held citizenship of the United Kingdom and Colonies, the second-class citizenship category created for those Asians born in British East Africa, who became nationless on the independence of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Gill worked as a police officer for sixteen years, in Dar es Salaam and Tanganyika before being superseded by a “local” candidate and forced into early retirement in 1963. His recommenders praised his “integrity, reliability and utmost loyalty,”

---

90 Application for CRO, YCCR for John Reginald Glover, n. d., 49D79/2/2/22, WYAS-B.
91 Application for CRO, YCCR for Christopher Skinns, n. d., 49D79/2/2/22, WYAS-B.
92 Supercession Certificate Signed by R. H. Saidi, Chairman, Police Service Commission, Dar Es Salaam, Tanganyika, December 10, 1964, 49D79/2/2/22, WYAS-B.
and believed his experiences working in a multi-racial community in East Africa would translate well to Yorkshire.\textsuperscript{93} He received an interview but not the position. Another East African Asian, B. D. Bhatt, who identified as “British (origin Indian)”, worked as a barrister in Kenya, before moving to London in 1970.\textsuperscript{94} At 65, Mr. Bhatt seemed desperate for employment, and was happy to move to rural Yorkshire to assist other East African Asians in similar circumstances. Unlike Mr. Gill, Mr. Bhatt and two other British (origin Indian) applicants did not receive interviews for the position.

The applicant with perhaps the most experience, Bina Chatterjee, 34, received her BA from the University of Calcutta, and was working towards a PhD in sociology at the University of London. In her application, she emphasized both her extensive experience in casework with people of a variety of ethnic backgrounds as well as her current position with the Uganda Resettlement Board. Her appointment required that she live in a resettlement camp with the refugees, assessing their welfare needs and the special circumstances surrounding the difficulties of settling large families, the elderly, disabled and mentally handicapped, language she borrowed from the description of the position. She identified herself as “Indian”, and asserted the importance of the fact that she was the only Indian doing such assessment work in the camps. She portrayed herself as empathetic to the variety of problems the Asians faced adjusting to new environments and the “local problems” they discovered there.\textsuperscript{95} She wrote: “I feel there should be somebody to bring harmony and peace of mind of those people (who feel very much lost in the new surroundings) who knows the language, background and complications of these situations.”\textsuperscript{96} One of her recommenders, Nadine Peppard, former general secretary of the Community Relations Commission, and now employed as the secretary of the Uganda Resettlement Board, considered her suitable for other posts, but not the Yorkshire job. Peppard wrote, “This particular post...demands, in my view, a broader approach and a more extensive range of community work skills than Miss Chatterjee has to offer.”\textsuperscript{97} She was perhaps too empathetic to the particular problems of Ugandan Asians. Called to Leeds for an interview, the committee passed her over for the job.

The hiring committee of the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations offered the position to a “local,” Roger Crossland. Committed to voluntary service, Crossland helped form the Dewsbury Lions Club, and he was pursuing a degree in Social Sciences through the Open University.\textsuperscript{98} He had worked in industry and government, and perhaps most importantly, he had connections throughout West Yorkshire. Crossland was born in Halifax, attended grammar school in Huddersfield, received an intermediate BSc at the University of Leeds, worked in the

\textsuperscript{94} B. D. Bhatt to Donald Wade, April 18, 1973, 49D79/2/2/22, WYAS-B.
\textsuperscript{95} Application for CRO, YCCR for Bina Chatterjee, n. d., 49D79/2/2/22, WYAS-B.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{97} Nadine Peppard to Ford Longman, May 1973, 49D79/2/2/22, WYAS-B.
\textsuperscript{98} Roger Crossland, Personal Details and Experience, n. d., 49D79/2/2/22, WYAS-B.
chemical industry in Cleckheaton, and served as a tax officer with Inland Revenue in Huddersfield. Additionally, for the past year he had worked as a resettlement officer with the Uganda Resettlement Board Centre in Hemswell, Lincolnshire. His recommendation from his supervisor in Hemswell glowingly praised Mr. Crossland for displaying sympathy and patience on the job as well as collegiality. He wrote that Crossland had “built up a considerable knowledge of the Ugandan Asian culture and way of life generally, and not least, of their needs as they face a new life in Britain.” Crossland seemingly possessed both local knowledge and sympathy towards the refugees.

The committee preserved this particular set of resumes and recommendations perhaps because Miss Chatterjee protested Mr. Crossland’s appointment. She demanded the committee supply answers on why they chose Mr. Crossland when she held more qualifications. She accused the hiring committee of discrimination and practicing favoritism. Chatterjee pointed out that Mr. Crossland’s recommender personally knew members of the hiring committee. The committee denied the claims and said that Mr. Crossland had been everyone’s first choice. It seems that Miss Chatterjee did not pursue her threat to pursue the matter with the Race Relations Board, and Roger Crossland settled into his new role as community relations officer.

This particular case provides insight into the ways the Yorkshire Committee chose an officer to represent the whole community rather than an advocate for migrants welfare. The applicants from East Africa had first-hand experience of forcible migration and problems of adapting to life in Britain. Skinns had experience navigating social services and also the experience of individual casework. Bina Chatterjee expressed great sympathy for the experiences of the individuals being resettled and was pursuing an advanced sociology degree. She seemingly fit the profile of the new community relations officer. In choosing Roger Crossland, the committee in Yorkshire, with the advice of Nadine Peppard of the Uganda Resettlement Board, rejected those applicants with a greater knowledge of the immigrants and social services, and chose the applicant with the greatest knowledge of West Yorkshire. In doing so, they privileged the inhabitants of Yorkshire as in greater need of a community relations officer to help them receive the newcomers. The East African Asians were again local to nowhere.

VI. Conclusion

The case in Yorkshire illustrates the contradictory nature of professionalization within community relations. While others claimed more expertise, the Yorkshire Committee chose a community relations officer local to West Yorkshire to better facilitate the integration of Ugandan Asians into local communities. This chapter has traced two models of the community relations officer and considered the forms of action and representation each mobilized. The

99 A. S. Raven, May 15, 1973, 49D79/2/2/22, WYAS-B.
100 Donald Wade to Ford Longman, June 16, 1973, 49D79/2/2/22, WYAS-B.
Chapter 4: The Greatest Amateurs

older model, embedded within local communities, mobilized participation of the whole community to secure individual social rights. The new community relations officer, implementing a community development approach, sought to make communities responsible for organizing their own welfare. The two approaches overlapped in the day to day work of community relations, but the embrace of the community development approach by a cadre of officers committed to representing community relations as a professional field of social work, contributed to a broader sense of individual communities mobilizing in their own interests. This reproduced older attitudes that made participation in associational life crucial to participation in the wider community. However, the new community relations officer believed the voluntary community relations council hampered his efforts to organize community. Communities of Commonwealth Citizens did not need to participate in the wider community; it was enough that they were active in organizing themselves in the service of their own welfare.

With a dispersed structure of authority, local voluntary committees were free to make their own decisions on the best type of community relations officer based on what they perceived to be the needs of the area. As in Yorkshire, they could reject the professionalism advocated by the new community relations officers in favor of the older model of liaison.

The basis of professionalization of the community relations officer was the belief that the right information and education could change racist attitudes. This resulted in the commitment of resources on the part of Community Relations Commission into the employment and training of the community relations officer. Conversations concerning the role and duty of the community relations officer raised the multiple functions the community relations officer performed and the varied publics he served. While community relations councils provided an increasing amount of services in multi-racial areas, the new community relations officers distanced themselves from a “welfare” role and emphasized their work on behalf of the whole community. They encouraged individuals to act on their own behalf and for the betterment of their communities. These efforts to define a role created a typical community relations officer as white and male and created community relations officers of color as subordinate, despite a variety of local circumstances.

As Commonwealth Citizens increasingly could not claim to represent the whole community, they critiqued the forms of representation mobilized through community relations and the universalist provisions of welfare. The next chapter shows the ways Commonwealth Citizens turned to their own culture to critique the project of community relations.
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community and the End of Community Relations, 1967–1982

rite now,
African
Asian
West Indian
an a Black British
stan firm
inna Inglan
inna disya time yah.

Far noh mattah wat dey say,
come wat may,
we are here to stay
inna Inglan
inna disya time yah...

Linton Kwesi Johnson, “It Dread inna Inglan (For George Lindo)”, 1979

In 1963, Linton Kwesi Johnson, age 11, traveled from Jamaica to London to join his mother in Brixton. As a poet and arts organizer, he represents efforts in the late 1960s and 1970s to claim a “black” identity for those young migrants and children of migrants raised in Britain. He told Andrew Salkey,

The kind of thing that I write and the way I say it is as a result of the tension between Jamaican Creole and Jamaican English and between those and English English. And all that, really, is the consequence of having been brought up in a colonial society and then coming over here to live and go to school in England, soon afterwards. The tension builds up. You can see it in the writing. You can hear it. And something else: my poems may look sort of flat on the page. Well, that is because they’re actually oral poems, as such. They were definitely written to be read aloud, in the community.¹

This younger generation of Commonwealth Citizens found voice for the kinds of cultural translation they performed in their everyday lives. Kwesi Johnson’s poems spoke to the concerns of a black audience, and they contributed to the creation of cultural community amongst black Britons.

While critics at the time and to this day have understood black cultural production, particularly by young people, as a reaction to increased far right activism and more authoritarian forms of policing, they should also be understood as a reaction to the forms of organization practiced by community relations. The earlier generation of community relations

believed that disadvantage would disappear with a generation of black Britons educated in British schools and with larger contacts in British society. Young Commonwealth Citizens became a test case for the ability of welfare to improve the quality of life of those born and raised in Britain, regardless of the background of their parents. However, Commonwealth Citizens came to see the state as perpetuating disadvantage both through universal provision and through the violence enacted by social democratic claims to act on behalf of the whole community. Commonwealth Citizens turned to culture to both organize their communities and also argued for their particular welfare needs on the basis of culture. Kwesi Johnson’s poem, “It Dread inna Inglan,” responds to both increased calls for Commonwealth Citizens to “Go Home”, but also makes claims for a new category of cultural identity—Black British.

The discourse of the New Right presented Commonwealth Citizens as members of distinct cultural communities and argued that the presence of cultural diversity inherently led to conflict. Proponents painted a picture of a homogenous British community upset by these newcomers and their different ways. Community relations managed the increasing diversity of Britain by negotiating both Commonwealth Citizens' access to welfare as well as local communities’ accommodation of Commonwealth Citizens. For the most part, local community relations councils successfully claimed that they acted on behalf of the whole community. However, that community fractured over time, as social workers turned to the language of distinct culture to define the ways Commonwealth Citizens participated in the local community. Increasingly, culture became the work of welfare as community relations councils facilitated the culture of Commonwealth communities. This chapter shows the consequences of the forms of community thinking mobilized since the 1950s through community relations. Commonwealth Citizens claimed the ability to speak for their own culture and in so doing denied the authority of community relations councils to speak for Commonwealth Citizens. The new emphasis placed on cultural rights displaced the social democratic sense of community animated by the pursuit of equitable social rights.

In London, two movements emerged to promote the culture of black young people through projects that favored black cultural nationalism. These forms of organization rejected the model of community relations through arguments similar to the ones propounded by Migrant Services Division and CARD. However, whereas those earlier forms reconciled themselves with community relations, in the 1970s, this was no longer possible. While community relations councils facilitated the cultural expression of young Commonwealth Citizens through their programs, more radical black-based movements critiqued the community relations councils, and those Commonwealth Citizens who participated in them, as perpetuating forms of colonialism in Britain. They also provided separate youth services to imbue black youth with a sense of black culture and continuity with earlier traditions of black activism.

While in London community relations councils faced attack from a newly mobilized black cultural politics, in West Yorkshire, community relations councils subordinated the experiences of West Indians to focus their energies on Pakistanis and Indians of several different faiths. The rise of Asian women seeking social services, as well as young people,
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

particularly girls, running away from home created the Asian family as in need of rescue from the dislocations of migration and industrialization. Community relations’ efforts to save Asian families sat uneasily with their efforts to promote the independence of Asian girls. Many white British members admired the Asian family and lamented the decline of British families and British forms of community. They facilitated the cultural claims of Asian fathers to demand particular services for their families. With the rise of “parental choice,” Asian families found a language to demand separate services for their daughters through their engagement with community relations councils.

These two case studies mobilized different forms of politics, but ultimately towards the same goals: recognition that cultural difference demanded particular forms of social services. Community relations councils continued to believe that welfare and information could secure the equitable participation of Commonwealth Citizens in the community, many Commonwealth Citizens no longer believed in the promise of universal social democratic community. Instead, they turned the language of community differences towards different ends, arguing that specific culture characteristics inflected their participation in British society. Much as Commonwealth Citizens had helped to make community relations in the early postwar years, they contributed to its unraveling in the 1970s, ushering in the era of multiculturalism

I. Young Englanders, Black Parents, White Schools

In 1967, the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants published a pamphlet titled, “The Young Englanders,” by a Research Fellow at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham. His biography in “The Young Englanders” identified Stuart Hall as Jamaican-born, and listed his recent employment history: secondary school

---

Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

teacher in Brixton, editor of the New Left Review, teacher at Chelsea College of Science. As Gail Lewis has argued, several of Hall’s works show an engagement with social policy, which she defines as “the ways in and mechanisms through which social integration and social order are achieved and maintained in ways that carry popular consent.” 3 In the 1960s and 1970s, Hall participated in a variety of activities undertaken by both the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants and its successors, the Community Relations Commission and the Commission for Racial Equality. In the 1960s, the NCCI nominated him to serve on the Social Work Training Advisory Panel, and although he did not join, he participated in several NCCI conferences as a speaker on young West Indians. In 1968, Hall directed a conference for youth leaders titled, “The Youth Service in a Multi-Racial Society.” 4 The Community Relations Panel of the NCCI described his talk, “Impediments to Britain becoming a multi-racial society: The history of the slow slide to segregation,” and the conference as a whole as, “very stimulating.” The Panel hoped the conference stimulated increased contact between the Youth Service and the NCCI. 5

The NCCI desired closer links with state welfare agencies because, by the late 1960s, the NCCI’s efforts to educate social workers, educators, and other officers of the welfare state succeeded in making welfare agencies aware of the importance of understanding the backgrounds of migrants. Examination of a Ministry of Labour document shows the ways central government welfare agencies portrayed Commonwealth Citizens, reflecting the efforts of social workers to make the backgrounds of Commonwealth Citizens known. In 1968, the Ministry of Labour sent Central Youth Employment Executive Circular 194 to all regional controllers, employment exchange managers, branch managers and local education authorities in England and Wales to educate youth employment officers and thus assist them in their work to find appropriate placements for immigrant youth.

The circular, "the cultural and national characteristics of newly arrived Commonwealth Immigrants and the countries from which they came," supplied political and geographic background of the various areas of the world from which migrants came, as well as a guide to the educational standards of different countries. In addition to literacy rates, national employment profiles, and description of the rural locations in which most people lived, the circular included details such as, "Indian women live a submissive life and spend most of their time doing housework, cooking and mending and light work on their land. Custom decrees that

Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

men spend most of their time with men and women with women."\(^6\) The circular confirmed a developing social work narrative that Pakistanis were self-segregating:

Pakistanis from village communities...probably do not speak English; will observe the tenets of their Muslim religion and a way of life which will make it difficult for them to adapt themselves to life in this country. On arrival in Britain they tend to seek out their own compatriots and to live in their own communities. It has been said that they are thus "...driven inwards and as a result are isolated."\(^7\)

The circular said little of Hindu religious customs, but the authors presented fourteen paragraphs on Muslim observances, which made demands on these Commonwealth Citizens’ time and could cause difficulties with employers. The circular explained Islam to welfare agencies to help them prevent potential misunderstandings between employers and workers.

The Ministry of Labour’s circular presented not only South Asians as unassimilable, but also West Indians. However, whereas Indians and Pakistanis possessed entrenched cultural systems, reproduced in tightly-knit families and closed communities, the guide argued that West Indians possessed no distinct identity after the break with the past occasioned by slavery. The circular stated: "Slavery left the people rootless and will-less with an imposed social structure based on the plantation system. It is not difficult to understand why a society like this which had been artificially created had to struggle to emerge with an identity of its own."\(^8\) While the circular acknowledged that upper class “light-skinned” West Indians were “English in outlook, ...the majority of the West Indians in Britain today, however, have come from semi-rural environment with a background of slavery. They are dark skinned, rich in folk-lore and with a culture which looks back to Africa."\(^9\) The resource list at the end of the pamphlet included several NCCI publications, but the tone of the pamphlet differed considerably from the NCCI line, including in its description of the conditions of migration and the caliber of migrants:

"The warm-hearted, out-going West Indians now in Britain have come from amongst the economically ill-favored in their own country."\(^10\) This contrasted sharply with the narrative presented by the Migrant Services Division from the West Indies Commission and community relations councils that stressed the agency of the economic migrant.\(^11\) The work of voluntary organizations to educate ordinary welfare workers in the backgrounds of Commonwealth Citizens succeeded in raising awareness of the cultural background of Commonwealth Citizens. Now, the NCCI and its successors needed to complicate the picture of the migrant’s culture circulating through government welfare agencies.

---

\(^6\) Central Youth Employment Executive, Ministry of Labour, *The Cultural and National Characteristics of Newly Arrived Commonwealth Immigrants and the Countries from Which They Came (Circular 194/68)*, 1968, 4.

\(^7\) Ibid., 7.

\(^8\) Ibid., 13.

\(^9\) Ibid., 14.

\(^10\) Contrast this to the narrative of Migrant Services Division discussed in chapter 2, or the work of the NCCI discussed in chapter 3. Ibid.

\(^11\) Discussed in chapter 2.
“The Young Englanders” complicated the portrait of migrants bearing a static cultural background, or in the case of West Indians, none at all. Examining “The Young Englanders” gives us a sense of the heightened concern with youth, and particularly “Immigrant Youth”, that emerged in the 1960s. If narratives surrounding youth fueled a “moral panic” around the deviance presented by affluent young people, then Hall’s essay presented a grounding dynamic of immigrant youth in English society. He argued that before “solutions” could be presented for their “problems,” the immigrant teenager needed to be understood as a traveller between two camps—between his home and the “native” culture. Hall reminded his readers that all immigrant teenagers were British Citizens, whether born abroad, born in Britain, or born of mixed parents. He marked the cross-cultural “community of the young” as possessing a desire to be free of constraint, discipline and the attitudes of their parents, at least until they settled in married families. Strong group loyalty and the casualness of their leisure plans marked the emergent attitudes of the youth culture, particularly those of the working class. These attitudes created hostility to all of those deemed outside, especially the immigrant teenager. The immigrant teenager, Hall suggested, desired the recognition and approval of his peers, to be one of them, a “Young Englander.” However, the culture of his home maintained its pull, and the immigrant teenager also embodied the beliefs and values of his family, who, Hall argued, carried their social identities around with them like “packs on their backs” because of the immigrant situation itself. Native hostility created defensive barriers that entrenched a sense of cultural identity amongst immigrant adults. The young immigrants, Hall feared, caught between two hostile groups, were “re-discovering their own racial and national identities and stereotyping their white counterparts,” representing “lost ground” in the struggle for integration.

In service of integration “on equal and honourable terms”, Hall’s essay sought to portray the in betweeness of immigrant teenagers to those proposing solutions to their problems. Hall suggested that the history of racism towards immigrants since 1958 contributed to the turning away from British society on the part of immigrants, leaving their children caught between the past and the future. Hall’s essay both reflected and shaped a growing consciousness of the problem of culture presented by immigrant teenagers, who were seen as between two cultures, or worse, as possessing no culture at all.

In the late 1960s, black cultural nationalism appealed to a variety of Commonwealth Citizens as a way to reconcile the distance between the culture of their home and wider British society. As Robin Bunce and Paul Field have argued, black power in Britain came to have diverse meanings. After Stokely Carmichael’s appearance at the “Dialectics of Enlightenment”

---


13 Hall’s argument about the different youth politics of the working class and middle class, towards which he only gestures in “Young Englanders” is expanded in *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain* (n: Routledge, 1993).


Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

Conference in London in 1967, a “vanguard” faction led by Obi Egbuna sought to establish black power as a small, militant group of individuals making a break with white society and respectable black communities in the interests of cultural nationalism and black liberation. Another group, shaped by their personal relationships with C. L. R. James, took over after Egbuna’s arrest for inciting racial hatred.\(^{16}\) Their Jamesian vision for black liberation espoused relationships with progressive whites and was rooted in the everyday experiences of black Britons. The nature of collaboration with white Britons continued to be a site of tension within black movements. Regardless of these different perspectives on the possibility of wider solidarities, black culture became the basis of participation in wider British society.

As Hall’s pamphlet shows, there was a growing recognition that immigrant young people, particularly boys, faced a particular problem in adjusting to adult society. While Hall argued that these young immigrants’ position at the intersection of two cultures created the conditions of their struggles, young black men increasingly critiqued the engagements of their parents and respectable West Indians who worked within the model of community relations. Chris Mullard, born in Britain to West Indian parents, wrote of his personal struggles with identity, and also his experiences working as a community relations organizer in Tyneside. His book critiqued the term “immigrant” to represent the experiences of Black Britons, those born in Britain. He wrote:

>We can truly become ‘second generation immigrants’, adopting the same life style and attitudes as our parents, adopting the identity which white society wishes. We can assimilate, shrug off completely our background, pretend we are not black, and emulate the white Briton in every respect. We can pack up our bags and leave Britain and return to our parents’ homeland or find new life for ourselves in a non-racist country.

For Mullard, an in-between position was not possible. Mullard cited the psychological problems of adjustment among young black immigrants as well the self-destruction of isolation and crime that afflicted black Britons in their cultural void. He favored “constructive rebellion,” the formation of a black identity that rejected the white myths imposed on black Britons and conceived a sense of self-worth based on pride and appreciation of “our habits, customs and cultures.”\(^{17}\)

Mullard conceived the black Briton’s dilemma in the context of parental fears of discrimination and hostility towards their children. While he rejected their perceived disengagement as a model for his generation, he did not denigrate the first generation of West Indian settlers. In contrast, Wendell Chapman, a social worker in Huddersfield, attacked older West Indians, who did not support efforts by young West Indians to demand better for themselves. He suggested, “they think they need only go out to work and get their £40 a week. They have their colour TV, the house is nice and warm, and that’s it. They are quite satisfied

\(^{16}\) Egbuna’s arrest along with Michael X’s in 1967 show how the incitement to racial riot clause of the Race Relations Act of 1965 was used to persecute black Britons for resisting white racism.

Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

with things as they are despite the fact that they are making themselves more and more into second-class citizens. They are not thinking about life as it really is in Britain.” 18 Chapman’s comments reference the anxieties surrounding affluence and working class politics that emerged in the late 1960s. However, his comments addressed the specific consequences of economic security to black political participation. 19 He urged black Britons to stop blaming their problems on their ancestors’ enslavement: “Black people have a way of putting all their problems on to the fact that they were slaves. You wouldn’t believe it, but my great-great-great-grandfather was a slave as well.” 20 Chapman’s comments represent a reaction against the ways narratives of slavery shaped West Indian disengagement. Instead of sitting on the fence, the black Britons needed to “take responsibility within their communities,” to organize, and to become involved in political action. The nature of that political action remained contested.

While many within social welfare and amongst a new generation of Commonwealth Citizens portrayed a rift between immigrant parents and children, in North London, parents identifying as black formed two interrelated movements to work in accord with and on behalf of their children. John and Irma La Rose and Eric and Jessica Huntley, among others, formed the Black Education Movement and the Black Parents Movement to bring together black adults to advocate on behalf of their children. Both couples shared a history of leftist journalism and agitation in Trinidad, Venezuela and British Guyana. On settling in London, in the 1950s and early 1960s, each couple opened publishing houses and black book stores. The Huntleys named their publishing concern and bookshop Bogle L’Ouverture, after the leaders of rebellions in Jamaica and Haiti. They published Walter Rodney’s How Europe Underdeveloped Africa and The Groundings with My Brothers among other works, and John La Rose’s New Beacon Books published a number of works by Caribbean diasporic authors such as Andrew Salkey and Edward Kamau Braithwaite. 21 John La Rose also served as the first chairman of the reconstituted Institute of Race Relations. 22 These two movements to secure the place of black youth in British society drew from the larger rethinking of the relations of empire and Caribbean culture that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s.

Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

John La Rose’s archives at the George Padmore Institute document the black power groups active in London in the 1960s and 1970s, but it seems as if he and the Huntleys did not participate. Their contributions to a larger rethinking of what “black” could mean in the context of British identity lay in their publishing work and their efforts to organize local groups of black people to contest the discrimination they faced in their everyday lives. They did not believe that partnership with community relations could aid black efforts. In the opening meeting of the Black Parents Movement, John La Rose said,

the Community Relations organization and the Community Relations industry is a kind of colonial office for the black Community in this country, which seeks to undermine the independent organizational activity of the black population in dealing with its own struggles. We have seen how this has worked, and to some extent it has succeeded in undermining the independent organization of black people in various parts of London.\(^\text{23}\)

These critiques of community relations showed the way a shared interest in the social conditions of Commonwealth Citizens acquired different meanings based on who framed the discussion, and with what resources. La Rose’s comments also signaled a new appreciation of empire emerging in British society. He rejected the authority of those with imperial backgrounds to aid in the management of community. Instead, community relations was subject to renewed critique on terms that referenced anti-colonial struggles.

Both community relations and black organizations favored self-help approaches, but La Rose argued that self-help promoted through official channels constituted colonial government on the cheap. La Rose criticized the Community Relations Commission for undermining the efforts of Black Britons to organize on their own behalf. He also critiqued the Urban Aid Programme, which, beginning in 1972, distributed Home Office funds to organizations in areas of special need, particularly those that provided programs for black youth. La Rose argued that Urban Aid excused the state from providing services, which the state sponsored more cheaply through their meager grants to voluntary organizations. The Urban Aid Programme dictated the ways in which its funds could be used, undermining the organic forms of organization undertaken by Black Britons. The Black Education Movement thus provided a separate program of advocacy and organization that critiqued the terms of engagement of community relations and the ability of universal provision to achieve social security for everyone.

The interrelated black parents movements did not operate in a vacuum. Their efforts dovetailed with a heightened awareness of institutional racism, particularly within state schools. The Community Relations Commission also turned its attention to the education of young Commonwealth Citizens and facilities for their leisure. Begun through efforts in the mid-1960s by the NCCI, in the early 1970s the commission contributed to awareness of the ways educational materials contributed to racial disadvantage. In their Journal *Education and Community Relations*, for instance, they published a checklist for teachers to determine

\(^{23}\) John La Rose, “Welcome to a Meeting,” n. d., ca 1976, BPM/1/1/4, GPI.
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

whether or not a book was racist or sexist. They encouraged teachers to ask the following questions on encountering potentially problematic stories:

- **Relationships:** Do the whites in the story have the power and make the decisions? Do non-white people function in essentially subservient roles?
- **Standard for success:** What does it take for a character to succeed? To gain acceptance, do non-white characters have to exhibit superior qualities? In friendships between white and non-white children, is it the non-white who does most of the understanding and forgiving?
- **Viewpoint:** How are ‘problems’ presented, conceived and resolved in the story? Are minority people themselves considered to be ‘the problem?’ Do solutions ultimately depend on the benevolence of a white person?
- **Sexism:** Are the achievements of girls and women based on their own initiative and intelligence, or is their success due to their good looks or to their relationship with boys?\(^ {24} \)

The Community Relations Commission encouraged teachers to think through the dynamics by which characters of different races interacted. Their questions also show the ways gender dynamics began to be visible as a set of power relations.

While the Community Relations Commission educated teachers to reform their practice, New Beacon Books and Bogle L’Ouverture published books for children that drew from Caribbean and African folk traditions, such as *Anancy’s Score*, written by Andrew Salkey and published by New Beacon Books. With the growth of awareness of the importance of books to shape the racial attitudes of children, New Beacon and Bogle L’Ouverture provided black-written and produced books that found their ways into the libraries of the Inner London Educational Authority and throughout Britain.\(^ {25} \) In doing so, they began to provide alternative materials on race and education to service providers and demonstrated the particular cultural needs of black children in schools.

The Black Education Movement not only addressed narratives surrounding black characters in educational materials, it also confronted the experiences of black youth within schools. Located in Haringey, the Black Education Movement pressed the local education board to consider the ways “banding” encouraged immigrant children to be labeled “Educationally Sub-Normal” and shunted to separate schools.\(^ {26} \) Again, the Black Education Movement’s work was both intellectual and pragmatic. In 1971, New Beacon books published educator Howard Coard’s *How the West Indian child is made educationally subnormal in the British school system*:

\(^ {24} \) “Racialism and Sexism in Books - a Checklist, Education and Community Relations September/October, Vol. 5, No. 8,” n.d., JLR/1/1/1 (1/2), GPI.

\(^ {25} \) “Gillian Klein, Centre for Urban Education Studies to Home Office,” January 16, 1978, LMA/4462/J/01/007, GPI.

Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

_the scandal of the black child in schools in Britain._ This book challenged the forms of universal provision by claiming they produced the inequality of Commonwealth Citizens. In addition to institutional critiques, the Black Parents Movement also challenged individuals within schools. They circulated incidents of harassment of children to their members. A leaflet titled “We’ve Had Enough Miss Curtis!” publicized the ways the Head Mistress of the Hornsey School for Girls prevented students from taking their exams, terrorized them in retaliation for contact from parents, and generally made their lives miserable. They circulated the leaflet to encourage black parents to take an active role in their children’s schools. The activism of these two movements connected larger conditions with the everyday experiences of black Britons.

In addition to countering the discrimination and stereotypes confronting black people in schools, the Black Education Movement began to provide alternative forms of education through the formation of the supplementary schools. The La Roses’ George Padmore Supplementary School, founded in 1969, was the first supplementary school in Britain. The school, run by parent volunteers, supplemented the education received by black youth in ordinary schools, providing extra courses in English, science and mathematics. Importantly, the school also provided an education in African heritage, bringing in African and Caribbean adults to share their life stories with the students. The school also invested in elevating Afro-Caribbean culture and history through lessons in Caribbean food and music and teaching written works such as biographies of Marcus Garvey and Rodney’s _Groundings with my Brothers._ In creating intergenerational alliances, the George Padmore Supplementary School created continuity and imbued confidence in its pupils. La Rose’s son Michael attended the George Padmore Supplementary School, eventually becoming a teacher towards the end of its existence in the 1990s. The incidence of supplementary schools demonstrate the inadequacies of welfare provision to support individual citizens equally and presented a critique to the norms that infused state services.

While at the George Padmore Supplementary School in Haringey, education in black history and culture was central to the agenda, in Lambeth, the local community relations council folded the Ahfiwe Supplementary School into its larger program of community relations. Begun in 1974 by Ansel Wong along similar lines to the George Padmore Supplementary School, the Ahfiwe Supplementary School occupied space in a building managed by the Council for Community Relations in Lambeth (CCRL). In 1975, the school began to receive funding from the Inner London Educational Authority and the Home Office Urban Programme, and in 1977 a professional staff re-launched the school. Rather than a black cultural agenda, the Education Coordinator, Patricia Thomas, emphasized that the school, in addition to helping students with skills, sought to create a different learning atmosphere by imparting “facts about their environment.” Students at the school participated in art-making workshops and produced poems detailing poverty in their borough and a desire to leave the urban environment for the

---

28 Black Parents Movement and Black Students Movement, “We’ve Had Enough Miss Curtis!,” n. d., 4462/Q/01/004, London Metropolitan Archives.
pleasures of the countryside.\textsuperscript{32} This officially funded project emphasized skills, parental involvement, and assisting young people to achieve their potential, not the project of creating black culture favored by the George Padmore Supplementary School.

It was perhaps controversial to advocate black culture too forcefully within the context of state-sponsored community relations. A controversy in the Council for Community Relations in Lambeth's newsletter illustrates the challenge cultural production by black youth presented to many white Britons. In 1975, “Lambeth Blues,” the newsletter of the CCRL, published two poems by Janet Morris, a young woman who volunteered at the Gresham Project in Lambeth. Included in an exhibition of black writers sponsored by the Borough's amenities committee, her poem, “Babylon,” provoked a flurry of criticism concerning the CCRL’s support for the young woman’s views. “Babylon” (reproduced in Appendix 1), spoke of the disrespect, harassment and violence shown to black young people by the police. The poem ended with the hope that the black Britons' time to challenge “Babylon” would come soon.\textsuperscript{33} The poem provoked the Lambeth police forces. The police community liaison officer approached the community relations officer of the CCRL and complained, in the community relations officer’s words, “that the poem had had an adverse effect upon the morale of the police and consequently community relations.”\textsuperscript{34} He demanded that the CCRL repudiate the poet. More than the poet’s words themselves, the Lambeth Police forces did not approve of the community relations council's sponsorship of her views. The Council for Community Relations in Lambeth would have to choose a side in an increasingly violent conflict.

In response to the police liaison officer’s remarks, as well as an editorial in the \textit{South London Press}, the community relations officer, George Greaves, wrote that the reactions to the poem were “of the type that make even the moderate, conciliatory blacks rush to man the barricades.”\textsuperscript{35} He defended the right of the Council for Community Relations in Lambeth as well as the Community Relations Commission to reproduce the poem in their official materials. He argued,

It is because the feelings expressed in the poem are fairly widely held and because they lie at the root of a considerable amount of conflict between young people and the police, that we feel they must concern all who are interested in good community relations. If we avoid the real issues, however abrasively expressed, we will continue to

\footnotesize{

\textsuperscript{30} Harris and White, “Michael La Rose,” 148.


\textsuperscript{33} Janet Morris, “Babylon,” \textit{Lambeth Blues} no. 2 (June 1975).

\textsuperscript{34} George Greaves, “The ‘Babylon’ Controversy,” \textit{Lambeth Blues} no. 3 (August 1975).

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.

167}
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

deal in palliatives, deceiving ourselves that all is well. In the meantime the embers will be burning underneath.\textsuperscript{36}

Greaves, born in Guyana, and who served in the RAF during the World War II, migrated to Britain in 1948. Like the Huntleys and the La Roses he represents a first generation migrant committed to advocating on behalf of black youth in the face of increasingly aggressive policing operations against them.\textsuperscript{37} All of these black adults wished to secure the social rights of education as well as providing the space for cultural expression for black youth.

But while Greaves continued to believe in the community provision of welfare, black radicals could not. When national stories began circulating of street crime in Lambeth, with newspapers claiming that you were more likely to be knifed in Lambeth than in New York City, Peter Strick, a member of the CCRL, criticized an editorial in \textit{Race Today} for “castigating community workers who are actually trying to do something to help these youths.” Rejecting \textit{Race Today}’s claims that community relations workers were parasites feeding on “deprived sections of the community,” Strick wrote, “the unemployed black youths of Brixton will no doubt be heartened to know that the staff of \textit{Race Today} stand openly with them. But that is not enough. Expressions of solidarity are a cheap answer to urgent social problems. ‘Fine words’ – as the English proverb puts it – ‘butter no parsnips.’ “\textsuperscript{38} Strick’s conciliatory approach emphasized everyday conditions, organized efforts to ameliorate them, and sought partnerships with others interested in the social conditions of black youth.

This community development approach no longer found favor with the black radical politics of the Race Today Collective. They replied:

The missionary of yesterday is the Community Relations hack of today. That white missionaries have been joined by black ones hardly alters the substance i. e. the subjugation of blacks to capital’s merciless rule...all previous roles of do-gooders and hangers-on in the black community are in the merciless process of redefinition. None shall escape. Maybe the following Jamaican proverb might have slipped you but be assured it will be of the greatest assistance in redefining your role. Your task, Peter, is ‘to drink milk not to count cow.’\textsuperscript{39}

The Collective’s response emphasized the importance of the larger picture in the face of the details, and in the larger picture they perceived the re-inscription of colonial roles in Britain. Drinking the milk of welfare, they argued, did not change the structural conditions of blacks in

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

Britain. The two positions both acknowledged the relationship between the social status of Commonwealth Citizens to their political participation in Britain. However, they differed widely between performing the everyday work of social welfare and presenting the larger conditions that shaped the struggles of black Britons.

These discussion of the problems surrounding the culture of the black teenager demonstrate that by the 1970s, it was longer possible to believe that the local community could secure social rights. The collapse of community came from multiple directions. As the authors of Policing the Crisis argued, the rise of narratives of mugging and criminal youth represented a breakdown of the postwar consensus and the rise of consent to more authoritarian forms of state power.  

In reaction to the criminalization of their children, black parents formed organizations to provide means of identification that countered public narratives of disorder and delinquency, as well as the ways social work and education narratives framed immigrant youth.

The efforts of the Black Education Movement and the Black Parents Movement became the basis of initiatives in other localities to foster the cultural production of black youth, not only young men. These two movements critiqued the discrimination faced by black youth in schools and helped black youth take pride in a unique cultural heritage. While work within community relations favored supporting migrants’ cultures in service of promoting their confidence in larger society, these two movements rejected the model of community relations to secure the status of Black Britons. However, it was not only community relations which these movements critiqued. They faulted the universal provision of services which, they argued, perpetuated young immigrants’ disadvantage rather than contributing to their ability to overcome it. By not addressing broader structural conditions, they argued, community relations abetted institutional racism.

London witnessed not only the origins of radical black politics, but also the rise of radical Asian identities based in youth movements.  

II. Asian Girls

In “Listen How the Caged Bird Sings: Amarjit’s Song,” Carolyn Steedman recalls her experiences teaching English as a second language to young Asian students in a northern city. One nine-year-old girl, Amarjit, adapted an assigned fairytale into a song. Captivated by the song, Steedman recorded Amarjit and played the recording for the school assembly. The assembled laughed, the laughter of “confusion and embarrassment.” Steedman vowed never to

---

40 Hall, Policing the Crisis.
manage a school assembly again, but the experience stayed with her. Steedman’s essay is an attempt to understand the song and the laughter and to explain how a nine year-old-girl, migrant and working class, made sense of her experiences through her exploration of a new language, its intonations, its timings, and its structure.

Steedman argues that Amarjit’s song showed her identification with a caged bird, a symbol of a girl’s place in a Punjabi home. Punjabi families, Steedman argued, considered their daughters to be too precious to release, but also not valuable enough to cherish. Steedman believed that through adapting the story into a song, Amarjit was coming to terms with a “mechanism of her culture,” its reproduction of gender roles, and her future place as a wife to be sent away from her family. Steedman’s essay not only makes sense of Amarjit’s perception of her social reality, but also the ways the education of children learning English as a second language cast the learner as a problem. At the assembly, Amarjit’s creative efforts to master English could not register with the audience because her adaptation of a European tale into an English song did not fit into the expectations they had of her to perform “something Indian.”

Steedman’s essay is remarkable for her insights into language education, her commitment to thinking through class, race and gender together, as well as the empathetic reading she provides for Amarjit’s song. This section considers the ways community relations efforts in West Yorkshire portrayed Asian women and girls both as caged birds, but also on occasion as freed birds. These efforts show the ways anxieties surrounding the breakdown of marriages in a permissive society found an outlet in efforts to preserve traditional Asian marriages. Community relations councils organized marriage counseling services and sought to provide opportunities for Asian women to meet other women in their new communities. In their work, “Asian” increasingly came to mean “Pakistani” and “Muslim.” These efforts reinforced a traditional sense of marriage, but were in tension with other efforts to support Asian youth breaking the confines of family lives portrayed as strict and confining. Instead of a response to a timeless culture carried by migrants to Britain, these efforts reflected the particular realities of providing welfare to communities in the 1970s.

The rapidly changing demographics of Asian settlement in Bradford contributed to local authority anxieties to provide these newcomers adequate welfare. Commonwealth Citizens from Pakistan and India began arriving in West Yorkshire in response to advertisements for night shift workers in the woolen mills. In the census of 1961, 5,334 people who were born in Asia lived in Bradford, out of a total population of nearly 300,000. In a year, the number of Commonwealth Citizens migrating from Asia doubled. Men arrived in increasing numbers, older men sending for their sons and nephews, so that by 1962, the medical officer of health reported 10,000 Pakistanis in Bradford, who comprised 10% of the male workforce. In January, 1962, a small pox outbreak, which led to six deaths, brought nationwide attention to Pakistanis in Bradford and the poor conditions in which they lived. The Department of Health hired two


170
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

Pakistani liaison officers to survey the housing conditions of the Pakistanis, to translate local authority pamphlets and to act as translators between Local Authority welfare services and the Pakistanis. This first official survey of Pakistanis showed that most of them desired to return to Pakistan after making enough money. However, few of them were able to do so.

Instead of workers returning to Pakistan, an increasing number of wives and children travelled to join men already resident in West Yorkshire. A study in 1965 estimated that Pakistani men outnumbered Pakistani women in West Yorkshire by a ratio of 12 to 1. In 1961, of 5,512 births in Bradford, 133 were born to Indian or Pakistani mothers; in 1964, of 5918 births in Bradford, 294 were born to Asian mothers. This growth in the percentage of children born in Bradford to Asian mothers paralleled the numbers of children from South Asia in Bradford’s schools. In 1967, the immigrant liaison officer for the Bradford Education Department reported that there were 3,000 “Asian immigrant children” in Bradford’s schools, with 20 to 25 new immigrant children and mothers arriving each week. These children presented problems to educators as they debated how to teach them English, and how many immigrant children a classroom could tolerate. In Birmingham in 1962, the Local Authority warned that six non-English speaking children in a classroom of 40, or 15%, constituted the “danger point.” In 1967, the Home Office advised local authorities that Section 11 of the Local Government Act made central government funds available for the employment of special officers to manage the increased pressure put onto services by the presence of Commonwealth Citizens. Without accurate measures of immigration populations, they used the percentage of immigrant children in schools as an index of the larger population of immigrants in a local authority area. The Home Office calculated that school populations containing more than 2% “Commonwealth immigrant” children qualified local authorities for grant aid for the employment of special officers. In Bradford, some schools reported immigrant populations of 40% of the total number of children.

In the Birmingham survey that proposed 15% as a reasonable number of non-English speakers in a classroom, the authors acknowledged an awareness that real numbers were far less important than the perception that a school had “gone black.” The danger point was reached when “white parents may fear that a school is ‘going black’ altogether and/or that its educational standards...are in danger and may seek other schools just as they may seek somewhere else to live.” This example of parental choice, before this phrase became a favored policy of later Conservative Governments, shows the ways officials considered the provision of services to migrants with an eye towards white British opinion.

44 “Report by the Medical Officer of Health of Bradford in Response to a Questionnaire Submitted by the Association of Municipal Corporations,” n. d., ca 1962, BBD1/7/T9771, WYAS-B.
45 “Immigrants in Bradford,” n. d., ca 1965, BBD1/7/T9771, WYAS-B.
46 Mr. G. S. Dhaliwal, quoted in “Children Torn Between Two Worlds,” Telegraph & Argus, January 21, 1967.
48 City of Birmingham, “Answers Provided by the City of Birmingham in Response to a Questionnaire Submitted by the Association of Municipal Corporations,” October 29, 1962, BBD1/7/T9677, WYAS-B; City of Birmingham, “A. Spalding, Director of Education to Henry Patten, Town Clerk,” February 4, 1963, BBD1/7/T9677, WYAS-B.
Commentators from a variety of perspectives could not ignore the demographic realities of Bradford’s growing relative Asian population. The 1966 Report of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Planning Council emphasized the importance of Commonwealth Citizens to the Region’s economy, and forecasted the challenges to be wrought by industrial change. The influx of migrants from the Commonwealth to West and South Yorkshire between 1951 and 1961 countered the tide of outmigration in the area and contributed to steady rates of production. As these migrants were young and mostly male, they also increased the proportion of the population in the “working age” groups. Surveying the industrial scene, the Council warned that it could, "no longer be assumed that men or women of any age will necessarily expect to find full-time employment in their immediate local community." Commenting on the Regional Planning Council’s forecast, the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations prophesied the effects of mine closures on the competition for employment in West Yorkshire. They imagined middle-aged ex-miners competing with coloured school leavers, "both prepared to travel ten or twenty miles to find a job." In addition to male workers, the Committee argued: "As the social emancipation of Asian wives develops there must be an expectation that they too will seek employment and will be more willing for their daughters to do so. There are implications here regarding the whole question of the relative proportion of full-time jobs for men and women in any one locality." They warned that these dislocations of occupation, race, and gender could produce a perfect storm of atomization and potential anomie. The committee concluded, “the implications for community relations do not need stating.” Organizing community in these economic and social circumstances acquired increased importance, and many English participants in community relations focused their efforts on intervening in the lives of Asian women to stem the challenges posed to the Asian family by migration and their relocation to an industrial society.

In Bradford, the Magistrate’s Office, the Probation Office, and the Bradford Consultative Committee for Commonwealth Citizens organized a matrimonial panel to save Asian marriages from the strains imposed by migration and the “sophisticated” urban environment in which they newly found themselves. The joint committee argued that the transfer to an industrial and urban society transformed the “cultural patterns and relationships, particularly those from the under-developed areas of Asia, there is not only the changed method of doing things, but changed habits in their way of life involving standards of nutrition, health, education, and social stability.” Officials posited that the history of men migrating to Bradford and living without the steadying influence of elders precipitated a conflict with the arrival of their wives and the reassertion of their culture within the home. Knowledgable of social services, women brought their domestic troubles to the authorities in Bradford. The magistrate suggested that their

---

50 Ibid., 3.
51 Ibid., 2.
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

complaints were much the same as Englishwomen—“cruelty; lack of maintenance; affiliation orders; neglecting children; assaults.” However, language difficulties prevented the Probation Office from handling these cases efficiently.

To save these Asian marriages, and the time of the probation officers, the Probation Officer, George Moore, consulted with the community relations officer of the Bradford Committee for Commonwealth Citizens and together they recruited fourteen Asians—Muslim, Hindu, Sikh—to provide a voluntary advisory service to couples facing marital challenges. These volunteers provided important “knowledge of the background and culture” of the problem couple, and the probation office provided training in techniques of social work to save marriages through attentive listening and wise counsel. The matrimonial panel argued, “our major social institutions are not making an impact on these family set-ups, no doubt due to ignorance on the part of the immigrants, and, obviously steps will have to be taken to increase the stability of these families in an alien environment” Much like the polygamous marriages honored in British courts discussed in Jordanna Bailkin’s recent work, here was another instance of the British state preserving a traditional culture of marriage. The Asian volunteers in the matrimonial panel sought to diminish the ignorance of their fellow immigrants regarding the social welfare services available to them—not only maintenance in the case of desertion, but counseling to save their marriages.

The probation service needed translators because the women coming to them did not know English. The language barriers troubled others concerned for community relations. For instance, the organizers of a conference in West Yorkshire to translate between teenagers and their parents planned "for those women who need most help in their isolation and loneliness (often because they speak little English) condensed Urdu translations of the main speeches." The idea that Asian women in Britain experienced a kind of purdah was shared amongst many in community relations, including by some Asian women. The Working Party of Yorkshire Women’s Organisations formed to bring women in contact with each other:

We came together because women, left alone in the home, wilt like deprived flowers. We need sustenance from outside - and not only from our own families! English women have known this. Now it is our turn to help those who have come from countries where large families and cohesive village communities had lessened this problem of loneliness. Our new women colleagues from countries where much of the life is lived out of doors in tropical climates can find the four bleak walls of northern houses almost a prison.

57 Working Party of Women’s Organisations, Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations, “Newsletter 1,” April 1970, 49D79/2/1/3, WWYAS-B.
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

In India and Pakistan, women depended on large extended families. In West Yorkshire, Yorkshire women—English, West Indian and Asian—would help to create a cohesive village community to help these newly isolated women.

This tension between bringing the lonely Asian woman into broader society and preserving the traditional Asian family sat uneasily, particularly as regarded the next generation of Asian women in Britain. Would they be Asian or would they be British? Many of them identified strongly with Yorkshire. Miss Manjeet Bhogal said, "I can speak perfect broad Yorkshire but not English." Miss Jasbir Kaur Khaul told a reporter, "I am more of a Yorkshire girl than an Indian." Journalists found these regional identifications compelling, and wrote several articles about these “New Yorkshiremen.”

More than the regional affiliations of young Asians, journalists reported on the threat to the Asian family presented by Britain’s welfare society. A *Yorkshire Evening Post* article in 1974 described the “quiet revolution” being undertaken by women and teenagers of both sexes against the authority of Muslim elders. The author, Derek Naylor, argued that these revolts threatened “the whole structure of the muslim way of life.” Naylor argued that it was not simply migration that affected the stability of Pakistani families, but that welfare services also contributed to its transformation. Homes for the elderly and social security lessened the dependence of elders on their children to support them. Without a clear role within the home to care for her relatives, wives accustomed “to a lifetime of subservience, are emerging to seek help from probation services and race relations advisors.” Welfare services destabilized the mutual bonds of care and support within the family by providing alternatives.

If modern Britain destabilized the bonds of Asian families, then local efforts in Yorkshire would work to put them back together again. Peggy Holroyde was among the most enthusiastic members of the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations, and she not only published booklets on the religious background of Asian migrants, but also dedicated herself to organizing women as a body to aid other women. Holroyde’s Working Party of Yorkshire Women’s Organizations supported the Asian woman as she took her first steps out into wider society. The working party also sponsored a series of conferences to increase understanding between generations of Asian and West Indian families, as well as between British and immigrant sections of the community. Britons, “not knowing the religious and cultural background, do not fully appreciate the tensions and pressures within the Asian and West Indian communities themselves.” The conference intended to teach white Britons that it was not race that was the crucial difference, but “education and culture.” The conference committee assumed that the

---

58 Manjeet Bhogal, “What’s It Like to Be Integrated?,” *Newsletter 2*, November 1970, 49D79/2/1/3, WWYAS-B.
61 Ibid.
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

Asian parents, having newly arrived from a rural and illiterate society into “our highly sophisticated urban societies” did not understand the culture of Britain, for example parent teacher associations. The working party organized the conference on behalf of the Asian teenager caught between two cultures.

Manjeet Bhogal, the young woman who spoke Yorkshire but not English, wrote a small article for the Working Party’s newsletter, and her essay reveals the pressure put on young Asians to walk a fine line between two cultures. Bhogal came to Britain from India as a young child, knowing no English. She wrote of the acceptance she found at first, but also of rising and invasive curiosity about her background on beginning junior school. Bhogal found Britons to possess many opinions on Asians: “Like many people they thought I lived in a tent with wild animals roaming free. Indians are dirty, and smell of curry, they have lots of grease on their hair, they have no manners because they eat with their hands - this is the impression that the British have.”63 She replied, “I am not dirty. Why should a small minority give us all a bad name? I was told my breath smelt of onions, yet I won the first prize in a dental competition in the Junior School. Why are the good points ignored?” The ignorance and negative stereotypes of Indians provoked Bhogal to counter with positive qualities of Indians as a group. In addition to countering stereotypes, the essay presented her views on marriage, (she did not want an arranged marriage, and did not believe women should be dependent on men), and her views on her parents (she loved and respected them), but not her views on a career. Bhogal’s essay demonstrates the prescribed topics to be covered by a young Asian woman discussing the clash of cultures. She did not present an alternative narrative of her experiences as a young woman

63 Manjeet Bhogal, “What’s It Like to Be Integrated?”
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

in Britain, but instead countered what she perceived to be British perceptions of her life and the choices available to her.

West Yorkshire newspapers regularly featured profiles of “liberated” young Asians, and they particularly enjoyed reporting on the Yorkshire Working Party of Women’s Organization’s conference. One article emphasized the teenagers speaking at the conference, rather than the parents or the social researchers who also participated. The author, Ian Gretton, emphasized the culture clash as one that was happening in the relationships between parents and children. He called their communication difficulties “a problem such as has never before been experienced by British citizens.” In highlighting the stories of the teenagers on the panel, Gretton emphasized the desire of the teenagers to be free of their parents. He quoted Vijay Malik, the assistant community relations officer in Bradford, at length: "Girls are not allowed to go out dating. I don’t see why fathers should put so much restriction on their daughters and pretend to carry on the traditional Asian culture. Asian teenagers only want their parents to have a little faith in them, a little trust.” Malik emphasized the rigidity of Asian parents, and the desire on the part of the teenager for respect. Tacitly, Gretton attributed their success in becoming “coloured Englishman” to their ability to speak English and their desire to mix with English people. In this vision of integration, the school played a crucial role as the site where young Commonwealth Citizens first encountered wider British society. Articles like Gretton’s contributed to broader perceptions on the part of Britons that Asians desired to keep themselves separate, that they hoped to do the same for their young people, and that the burden of integration rested with young Asian people who should embrace the freedoms offered to them by English society. Coloured Englishwomen featured in the newspapers were often Hindu or Sikh, but rarely, if at all, Muslim. John Naylor, the community relations officer of the Bradford Consultative Committee, suggested that in reaction to these new “freedoms” amongst young Britons, the Muslim community became more inward-looking and protective, particularly of its girls.

These Britons who worked in community relations in Yorkshire found much to admire about Asian families. One community relations council member expounded the positive aspects of their cultures and argued that Britons “can learn from their life-styles; Their hospitality that often far exceeds our own, the larger role religion plays in their lives (beliefs are too often lacking in our society), the cleanliness of the Muslims, but above all the very active tolerance found in their religions.” This author believed that the culture of Asian families served as a mirror to British culture, which lacked these strong ties of kinship and tradition. In a 1971 follow up to the conference, the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations decided to “Let the Parents Speak.” The conference program asked, “what must it then be like if a family comes from distant societies in space and time, especially rural ones where children are still brought up on the 'good old virtues', and is then projected into the free-for-all atmosphere of the UK where, modern young people over 18 are virtually free to do what they wish?” In admiring

64 Andrew Wainright, “East Comes West - a Background to Some Asian Faiths by Peggy Holroyde,” Newsletter 3, April 1971, 49D79/2/1/3, WWYAS-B.
65 Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations, “Let the Parents Speak,” n. d., 49D79/2/1/3, WWYAS-B.
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

Asian families, these British observers also lamented the decline of communal bonds among the British. Admiring Asian culture, however, contributed to a rising conflict over who could arbitrate the culture of ethnic communities.

One campaign in the 1970s highlights the anxieties raised by the education of Muslim girls and the conflict over who could speak for their culture. In 1970, reports first reached the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations of demands by parents for the local education authority to provide single-sex education for their daughters in the context of the reorganization of the school system under the new Conservative Heath Government. As local authorities prepared plans for schooling in their areas, the question of the remaining single-sex schools became a topic of debate. Into this debate regarding the nature of secondary education, the case of a thirteen-year-old girl, Kulsumbanu Patel caught wide attention in West Yorkshire and beyond. In 1973, Kulsumbanu’s father, Abdullah, withdrew his daughter from school on her placement by the Bradford Education Department in a co-educational high school. Another father, Riaz Shahid, sent his daughter, Anne, to Pakistan, rather than enroll her in a mixed secondary school. The Bradford Education Department brought a suit against Abdullah Patel and won. Patel appealed to the government Department of Education and Science and the courts, which sided with the local authority. However, at this point, Kulsumbanu turned sixteen, and therefore was no longer subject to compulsory schooling. The case became a flashpoint for discussion of the accommodation of Muslim culture in state social services.

Abdullah Patel ardently fought for his daughter’s right to be educated in accordance with her religion and coverage of his struggle with the local authority shows the ways his culture became the terms of the debate. A graduate of Bombay University, he participated in the Bradford Coloured People’s Union, and through that association, acted as an interpreter for Asians in local disputes and organized protests against the treatment of immigrants by officials on their arrival. On the refusal of the Bradford Department of Education to accommodate his daughter’s religion, he formed the Bradford Muslim Parents’ Association, which claimed a membership of 4000 people and broad community support for their demands. They demanded that Muslim students be excused from school assemblies; exempt from religious education classes; and that Muslim girls should not be required to attend school with boys. Additionally,

they demanded that the “uncivilized exposure” of children’s bodies and actions that encouraged the “demoralization” of Muslim children be discontinued. Patel suggested to a reporter from the *Times* that the Bradford Education Department refused his daughter a place in the all-girls school because they perceived him to be a black power leader and an agitator. The *Times* reported that Arthur Hutchinson, member of the Bradford Metropolitan Council, asked Patel if his daughter could be taught by male teachers, or only “women or eunuchs.” Patel responded that she would wear a veil around male teachers. The disrespect of Hutchinson shows the ways Britons marshaled their understanding of Islam against Patel’s claims. They also show the limits to cultural accommodation on the part of the Bradford council towards Patel and his daughter.

At a meeting of the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations, the vice-chairman, Owen Jones, stated the issue was not simply about the ability of parents to choose the way their children should be educated, but reflected a “violent contrast” of the values of two societies: British and Muslim. He said, “education encourages people to think for themselves, make their own decisions, and choices, and question the mores of their society. The values and beliefs of parents and the community are no longer accepted as a matter of natural respect. In short, education is likely to result in individualism. Islam however, is strongly communal.” He argued that it was not the mixing of boys and girls that presented a challenge to religious parents, but the ways English education emphasized the cultivation of the self. Jones argued that Muslim parents objected to “the exposure of Muslim girls to current educational and social developments in Britain. These are characterised by openness and individualism.” Here, Jones showed the admiration for the communal values of Islam, which had decline among the British.

When the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations discussed the draft paper, several Asian members of the Council objected to the portrayal of Islam and Muslims. One member, Fazlun Khalid, described the portrayal of Muslims as dull, and stated that many Muslims valued openness as well. The committee decided to convene a panel including Jones, Khalid, Peggy Holroyde, and a “Muslim lady”. The final discussion paper retained Jones’ observations on the difference in individualistic/communal values, but also included comments on the context of school reorganization, an extensive discussion of Islam, and the shared values of Muslim parents and British parents in desiring single-sex education for their daughters.

The “Education of Muslim Girls” placed the decision of Abdullah Patel in the context of the reorganization of Bradford schools, which reduced the number of all-girls schools to one school, which was eventually closed. The paper also emphasized the broader discussion of

---

72 Fazlun Khalid, quoted in Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations, “Notes of the Meeting of the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations Held at the Civic Hall, Leeds on Monday 10th March 1975 at 7.30 P. M.,” n. d., 49D79/2/1/3, WWYAS-B.
parental choice in the matter of education raised by the Secretary of State for Education, Margaret Thatcher. They placed the decision of the Conservative Government in conflict with the decisions of Labour-controlled local educational authorities to implement comprehensive education on the principle of zoning. Muslim parents like Abdullah Patel regarded discussion of parental choice seriously and made their claims on these terms. Additionally, the authors argued that the timing of the girls transfer to high school occurred in the moment of reorganization, and the transition heightened a sense of conflict. If the girls attended a single-sex school, or if Bradford only supported co-educational schools, the conflict would not have arisen.

Despite this discussion of contingency and political debates surrounding education, the paper mainly placed the issue of the girls education in the context of a clash between Islamic and British values. It was not enough that schools accommodated the clothing of conservative Asians, provided them appropriate meals, or allowed girls to avoid mixed physical education classes. These accommodations did not allay the anxieties of Muslim parents concerning the exposure of their daughters to “permissive” British mores. The authors stressed that this was not simply about relationships between boys and girls, but about the pluralistic values now being adopted within schools. They wrote, “many schools no longer present their pupils with a set of beliefs, values and attitudes which society requires them to accept. Instead they are invited to discover their own meaning and make their own responses to life in terms of beliefs, morals and values.” They pointed to the teaching of humanism in religious education and the teaching of D. H. Lawrence’s Sons and Lovers as examples of the new pluralism. The paper stated, “Muslims often characterise [pluralism] by the term ’permissiveness’, which evokes the concepts of a society in which rejection of traditional mores is encouraged rather than merely permitted, applauded rather than tolerated and sometimes reluctantly accepted.” In addition to heightening the differences between British pluralism and Islamic community, the authors then sketched the importance of community within Islam, the bonds of reciprocity and honor that governed relations between the sexes and within families. They referred to suras from the Quran to assert the religious basis of Muslim feelings. The Yorkshire Committee explained Islamic culture to secure the social rights of a community.

The Yorkshire committee also sought to make the feelings of Muslim parents understandable to English audiences. They discussed the lack of educational facilities in many Pakistani villages, and the ways that boys received more public education than girls. Many families believed, they suggested, that a girl learned all she needed within the home from her mother. In keeping his daughter at home, the Pakistani father acted in line with not just his religion, but the social context of the Pakistan he left behind. However, the authors also acknowledged the changing status of women in the family in the rest of the world, including Islamic countries. They recognized the danger if "British Islam [became] a decadent expression

---

73 Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations, “The Education of Muslim Girls - A Discussion Paper, 1.”
74 Ibid., 2.
75 Ibid., 2.
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

of their faith and British Muslims a perpetually unskilled element of society.”76 In discussing the possible ways that Muslim parents could educate their daughters in Britain according to their customs and religious faith, the authors emphasized the importance of girls receiving education, preferably with accommodation in British state schools. They urged consultation with citizens in the production of education policy and the importance of recognizing and encouraging the promotion of cultural pluralism. Otherwise, Muslim girls would become the “semi-literate mothers of the next generation of Muslim Britons—lacking English themselves and unfitted for life in Britain.”77 They argued that preventing Muslim girls from receiving an education was detrimental not only for the girls, but for British society as a whole.

The authors of the report did not ultimately include a “Muslim lady,” but did include Abdullah Patel, the father in question, and Muhammed Iqbal, the author of an essay, “Islamic Education and Single Sex Schools,” which argued for the religious basis of single-sex education. By including these members, the Yorkshire Committee sought to work with the Muslim fathers most invested in single-sex education for their daughters. However, a review of the “Education of Muslim Girls” in the journal Education criticized the committee for parroting extremist beliefs. The comment, titled “Islam—The Sectarian Threat to LEAs”, diminished the religious arguments in favor of single-sex education by arguing that the controversy surrounding Kulsumbanu Patel was a “sectarian travesty grounded in a conservative attitude to Islam found in particular in Pakistan and in some parts of the Arab world, notably Saudi Arabia. In the intellectual centre of modern Islam, Cairo, it would receive no condonation [sic], because it is recognised that the central tradition of Islam has been its willingness to adapt to changing social conditions.”78 The authors of the Education comment mobilized an interpretation of Islam against the Yorkshire Committee’s claims. They blamed the controversy on the Community Relations Commission, whose role, they argued, was to intervene in such discussions. The official statement from the commission read: “It is for the Muslim community itself to decide what is required from the education system.” This state commission refused to intervene in the interests of social provision in what it perceived as an internal matter for a cultural community.

The controversy surrounding Kulsumbanu Patel’s education gestured to a new politics of community. Her father’s desire for her to receive single-sex education represented a demand too extreme to be accommodated by the whole community represented through the Bradford Department of Education. The schools of Bradford accommodated choices of clothing, food and excusal from Christian-influenced school assemblies based on religious belief, but would not provide single-sex education. Patel did not demand Muslim education, but his basis for demanding single-sex education was on religious terms. The Yorkshire Committee intervened in the debate and explained the perspective and culture of the Muslim parents who demanded respect for the tenets of their religion. In many ways, Patel worked through the Yorkshire

76 Ibid., 4
77 Ibid., 7.
78 “Islam - the Sectarian Threat to LEAs, Education, October 24, 1975, Quoted in Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations Circular,” n. d., 49D79/2/1/3, WWYAS-B.
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

Committee for Community Relations to further his own interests. However, their interpretation of the way Islam impacted the community of Muslims was itself up for debate with the Muslims who participated in the committee as well as within the wider discussion of the controversy. The status of the Asian family in Britain, and particularly the Asian girl within that family, presented a way for Britons to work through broader economic and social changes. The Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations framed migration to Yorkshire as initiating a clash of cultures, in which they mediated to promote the interests of understanding and harmonious community relations. Interest in the modern Asian girl as a source of conflict within her family gave way to the silent Asian girl whose culture needed to be preserved. Through these discussions, Asian came to mean Muslim, and culture gave way to religion as the set of identifying markers of this community in Britain. Once settled in Britain, British industrial modernity no longer presented a threat to the Asian family. Instead, it was the Asian family that contributed to the unraveling of the community provision of social services. In some ways, Patel’s exercise of his parental choice was a revolt against the ability of Bradford Council to arbitrarily make decisions, such as ending single-sex schooling, in the interests of the whole community. Rather than making his claims for expanded services on the basis of his participation in the whole community, Patel and his organization made their claims on the basis of his religious community. Although there was a limit to the accommodation of culture on the part of the local authority, the Muslim community had now found the language to make its particular claims.

III. Bradford Coda: Culture, Representation and Community

The Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations ended in 1979 due to a lack of finances. The Bradford Community Relations Council’s history in the 1980s shows the tensions over who could appropriately represent cultural communities. In 1987, a group of young local authority officers succeeded in winning nine of fifteen positions in the Bradford Community Relation Council’s executive committee, including chairman and vice-chairman. The council’s new chairman, Ishtiaq Ahmed, worked for the Calderdale Council as a race relations advisor, a new type of local authority office which gained increasing favor throughout Britain in the early 1980s. Ahmed’s election as chairman represented a reversal of older certainties of ethnicity and community representation. In response to the election, several leaders of Muslim organizations called the elections unfair and threatened to quit the community relations council. The Yorkshire Post called the controversy a generational conflict, in which the older “traditional ethnic minority leaders” gave way to younger leaders without ties to “to the religious and cultural associations which form the power base of the city’s older ethnic leadership.”79 Ahmed served on the community relations council as a representative of the Council of Voluntary Service in Bradford rather than as a representative of an ethnic organization. He represented the whole community rather than a particular ethnic community.

But it was not only a generational conflict and representational confusion, party politics played a part as well. Ahmed and others employed by West Yorkshire authorities formed an informal support group called the Black Workers Collective, which its critics labeled a “radical pressure group.” Faqir Mohammed, the general secretary of the Bradford Council of Mosques, called the young bloc “extreme Left wingers who are not looking at the interests of the community as a whole.”

The Council of Mosques represented 33 Muslim Organizations in the city, and claimed to represent 15,000 Muslims. The Council of Mosques and two other Muslim organizations quit the community relations council in protest of the new executive. It was not only Muslim organizations who claimed the new executive could not represent the whole community; Sikh and Hindu organizations also considered quitting the community relations council, but ultimately did not.

The Bradford Community Relations Council continued to be supported by 15 mosques and over 100 organizations, but the controversy reveals the new settlement of community in the 1980s. Another Council of Mosques representative, Raja Najbat Hussain claimed, “The CRC has finished its role. We do not need this organisation any more. We have good relations here. Every community now has its own voice, its own organisation, the confidence to speak out and know they will be listened to.” Hussain claimed that the whole community no longer needed organizing, particularly not by potential radicals, and that communities knew how to organize themselves to have their voices heard. Hussain, chairman of a local Conservative association, found an ally in Conservative Councillor Eric Pickles, who called for a review of the

---

Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

organization. The emergence of leaders of ethnic communities as important party political figures diminished the ability of community relations councils to maintain work free from politics. Their participation within ethnic associations and other organizations diminished the authority of local community relations councils as the collective body most able to speak on behalf of the whole community.

Pickles particularly targeted the new chairman and vice-chairman of the Bradford Community Relations Council for their stance on the Honeyford affair, a local scandal in which a headmaster claimed that white pupils constituted the new ethnic minorities in Bradford schools. Ray Honeyford also criticized Asian parents for the rates of absenteeism at his comprehensive school, but particularly the local authorities endorsement of the ability of parents to remove their children from schooling. Honeyford’s comments provoked an investigation by the Bradford Education Department, and later a review by the school’s board of governors. The *Times* covered the story extensively, claiming Honeyford’s treatment set a precedent of a “new intolerance” against free speech. Honeyford eventually retired early with a large settlement, but Pickles’ charge against the new officers of the community relations council concerned their signatures on a local authority internal document, which argued that race training for Honeywell would serve no useful purpose. Pickles critiqued the partisanship of the new executive and rejected their claims to act in the interests of the whole community. These young, Asian, local authority employees could not be recognized as leaders within the framework of leadership in community established through community relations practice. Parental choice and the critique of cultural accommodation created a new politics of multiculturalism in which authority was based on cultural leadership and welfare for the whole community was not possible and even less desired.

IV. Conclusion

This chapter examines two narratives of family, culture and community in the 1970s to show the consequences of the forms of community thinking mobilized through community relations since the 1950s. Community relations councils remained committed to a vision of the whole community ensuring the rights of every citizen. However, the increasing visibility of far right movements and more authoritarian forms of policing showed the violence enacted on behalf of the community of social democracy. Many Commonwealth Citizens could no longer accept the claims of community relations councils to organize on their behalf and turned to cultural identities as the basis of their participation in wider British society.

Young people became an important site for these struggles as many perceived them to be torn between the culture of their home and wider British society. In London, parents organized movements to provide their children with a black cultural identity. They looked to international black activism to rethink the historical relationships of empire and contemporary social conditions. These movements reproduced the arguments concerning structural inequality

---

86 “Tory Attack on Race Group Chiefs.”

183
Chapter 5: The Ends of Community

mobilized by Migrant Services Division and CARD in the late 1950s and 1960s. However, whereas those earlier movements either fostered the growth of community relations or reconciled itself to community relations, this was no longer possible in the 1970s. These two movements and wider black radical discourse rejected the model of community relations to secure the social rights of Commonwealth Citizens, arguing that the provision of welfare could not challenge structural disadvantage, and more damningly, that universal provision created structural disadvantage.

In West Yorkshire, Asian youth represented the abilities of the family to persevere through a society in economic and social change. Community relations councils conceived of Asian families as caught between two worlds, leading to marital crisis and teenage revolt. They sought to counsel troubled Asian marriages to provide stability to migrant families experiencing culture shock. They also sought to interpret teenagers to their parents to counter the ostracism faced by young Asian teenagers who identified more strongly with the youth culture of Britain than the traditional cultures of Asia. Their efforts represent a lament for the decline of community amongst Britons, but their embrace of the Asian family would come at the expense of the Asian teenager. The case of Kulsumbanu Patel shows the ways the Muslim Parents Association worked through the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations to forward its agenda for single-sex educational facilities for Muslim girls. Using the language of parental choice, the Muslim Parents Association demanded accommodation for their religion from the local authority. The Bradford Educational Authority did not have the resources or the interest in providing single-sex education, prompting the Muslim Parents Association to fundraise for separate schools. By 1984, the Bradford Council stated that there were as many 1000 Muslim girls in the city who did not attend school.87 The parental right to choose trumped these young citizens’ rights to education.

We do not know what Kulsumbanu Patel thought about her education or the decision of her father to remove her from school. The Yorkshire Committee recognized the right of her father Abdullah to speak on her behalf through its acknowledgement of his religious background. In London and Bradford, the framework of leadership and community established through community relations practice, which favored respectable citizens who could claim to work in the interests of the whole community, broke down. In London, black leaders rejected the respectable community relations councils. In Bradford, the community relations councils rejected respectable leaders in favor of “traditional” ones. In supporting the most “traditional” version of the Asian family, the community relations councils contributed to placing Asian girls outside of welfare. It was no longer the work of the community to ensure the social rights of the citizen, but instead to acknowledge and support these forms of cultural difference and separatism.

Community relations councils continue to exist today, but the era of community relations came to an end with both a bang and a whimper.\(^1\) In 1981, the Conservative Government passed the British Nationality Act, which brought an end to the category of Commonwealth Citizen, and as Kathleen Paul has argued, formulated British citizenship on ties of blood and birth.\(^2\) From its inception, the category Commonwealth Citizen propelled the formation of community relations councils, which argued for the shared history of empire as justification for Commonwealth Citizens’ claims to social rights in Britain. The end of the Commonwealth Citizen marked the end of the late empire, a period defined by contestation over the relationship between social status and political rights; between cultural identities and structural inequalities. In the British imagination, the welfare empire faded, and nostalgia for the imagined certainties of the Victorian era and the bellicose deployment of imperial pomp in the South Atlantic ascended to prominence in the public engagement with empire.\(^3\) The Falklands War mobilized a rhetoric that kith and kin awaited rescue by Britain, and those who claimed ties of ancestry to Britain replaced those other subjects of empire in legal standing and the popular imagination.

In addition to this legal change, 1980 and 1981 also witnessed extensive riots in Bristol, London and Liverpool as young black Britons protested police harassment, pervasive unemployment and racial discrimination. The Scarman Report confirmed the perspective of the rioters that the police targeted young black men as suspected persons under the 1824 Vagrancy Act. The rise of more violent forms of policing by special patrol groups of the Metropolitan Police in London and throughout the country revealed the institutional racism of public bodies.\(^4\) The Commission for Racial Equality, formed in 1976 from the merger of the Community Relations Commission and the Race Relations Board, asked the government for increased funds to educate employers on discrimination, to create more programs for black youth, and to strengthen the local community relations councils. For the first time in the twenty years since the government first investigated the problems of Commonwealth Citizens, the government refused an increase in funds to these councils to manage diversity.\(^5\) From every perspective—

---

Conclusion

local police divisions, black Britons, and the state—these local councils could no longer claim to promote “good” community relations.

The loss of faith in community relations also represented changing rationales of state policy towards ethnic minority Britons and welfare. From the mid-1970s, the Home Office began to favor direct grants to ethnic minority organizations rather than funding these organizations through local community relations councils. These patterns of state spending created ethnic minority organizations as part of a specific group recognized in national terms, not as constituent bodies of local communities. In addition to state funds to ethnic minority organizations, the Home Office encouraged the employment of ethnic minority officers or race relations advisors by the local authority. The direct negotiation between the local authority and ethnic communities concerning their social rights contributed to the diminishment of community relations councils’ claims to work on behalf of the whole community. Together, these conditions represented a new political settlement in which multiculturalism became the recognized vision of society.

Community relations created the conditions through which multiculturalism emerged in Britain. Thirty years after the end of community relations, it seems its successor, multiculturalism, is now in the midst of reappraisal. Multiculturalism envisions British society as composed of discrete cultural communities, each with their specific social needs. It has assumed a taken for granted status as a recognition and acceptance of cultural difference. However, current debates about multiculturalism in Britain make it seem as if multicultural policies are both everywhere and nowhere.

As a question of policy to secure diversity and equality as outcomes, a variety of figures from across the political spectrum are in the process of re-evaluating multiculturalism. The Conservative critique of state multiculturalism suggests that it is cultural minorities who must reach out to wider society. However, with the rise of nationalist rhetoric, the society they portray is one drawn on exclusive terms. Those who argue for pluralism remain critical of the ability of state policies to promote the inclusion of those perceived to be outside of the national community. The Parekh Report of 2000 argued that Britain should be understood as both a community of communities and a community of individuals. This formulation acknowledges both the contested and open nature of community identification and the more individualistic claims of rights-bearing citizens. The authors of the report desired an increased apparatus of monitoring to ensure diversity in a range of institutions, but those practices have come under

---


Conclusion

scrutiny for the ways bureaucratic forms of reporting constitute a significant task that leaves persistent inequalities unaddressed. Moving beyond policy and bureaucratic practices, Paul Gilroy suggests we should celebrate multiculturalism from below, those everyday individual encounters that cross communal lines. However, in many ways, celebrating a convivial culture shares a logic with Prime Minister David Cameron’s “Big Society,” that individuals alone bear the responsibility for their participation in society. These conversations show the issues at the heart of this dissertation—the meanings of citizenship; the nature of inclusion; who should work on behalf of equality, and on what terms—remain unresolved.

Debates concerning multiculturalism are not solely based in questions of national culture and participation, but include discussion of social provision and the role of the state in guaranteeing the individual rights of its citizens. Austerity measures enacted by the government have reduced social provision in an era of economic downturn. These cuts to benefits and services are not simply efficient measures to manage budget shortfalls, but reflect particular ideologies mobilized around claims of common sense. Three decades of privatization have created social security as a matter of individual choice not the product of collective action. These measures gave rise to narratives of “welfare scroungers,” diminishing the responsibility of the community towards the individual citizen and obscuring the lived realities of the most vulnerable members of society. These tensions surrounding national identity and social citizenship produce discussion of the inherent conflict between “old solidarity” and “new diversity.” In this moment, we are left with more questions than answers: What is the responsibility of the state towards its citizens? How do citizens understand their rights and responsibilities towards each other? How does culture define individual participation in the community? How can inclusivity operate on terms that do not impose a false universality?

These questions are not exclusive to the postwar era and indeed represent a longer story of pluralism in British history. In addition to the transhistorical nature of these issues, many commentators acknowledge the ways Britain’s particular history represents an early

---


instance of problems endemic in Europe, the North Atlantic world and beyond.\textsuperscript{16} Comparison with Europe suggests that in the postwar era, Britain experienced “intercontinental” migration earlier than other European nations, developed proactive integration policies earlier, and also produced reactionary nationalist movements first. Despite this perspective, I do not argue that Britain represents a paradigmatic experience of migration and diversity, but that its particular history allows us to understand the global reconfigurations of nation, society and community in the late twentieth century.

Understanding the management of diversity in postwar Britain reveals both the conditions from which multiculturalism emerged and presents an expanded framework in which to understand the negotiations of citizenship, culture and community. Many commentators discussing contemporary multiculturalism take for granted a narrative that presents the already formed nation-state adapting to the presence of immigrant newcomers. I argue that Britain’s postwar experience of diversity cannot be understood without situating the British polity and its social formation in imperial contexts. As such, this dissertation represents a small offering in service of Paul Gilroy’s exhortation that the “colonial past should be made useful.”\textsuperscript{17} The line that connects the high empire of the nineteenth century to forms of multiculturalism in the present is not straight. This dissertation does not present the history of multiculturalism as one that occurred out in the colonies in the far past, but does so through locating the imperial within Britain in the years after World War II. In doing so, we see the ways the late empire shared much in common with the project of social democracy. We also see how and in what moments consciousness of imperial solidarities gave way to more exclusive identities. Social democracy cannot be disentangled from imperial forms of rule, and understanding the ways both shaped the acceptance and participation of Commonwealth Citizens in British society presents different alignments between political, social and cultural domains and alters the terms of social democracy and the late empire.

The local occupies an important place in the imperial framing of what has been a dangerously parochial national story of social democracy. From its inception, social democracy demanded the negotiation of community and a reckoning with the status of migrants from the decolonizing empire. The local delivery of welfare created a politics that drew on pluralist forms of citizenship and opened the space for imperial identities to be mobilized to obtain services and standing in local communities. The forms of corporate representation shaped the terms by which Commonwealth Citizens participated in their local communities, as they increasingly claimed standing on the basis of their ability to represent cultural communities. The politics of the late empire shaped the forms of community organization in Britain, but by the 1970s, the internal contradictions of community relations impeded its ability to act on behalf of the whole community. The community of social democracy gave rise to the multicultural nation.


\textsuperscript{17} Gilroy, After Empire, 3.

188
Conclusion

Community relations brought together a variety of actors to incorporate Commonwealth Citizens into local communities and expand the reach of welfare. The presence of Commonwealth Citizens in the range of functions that created welfare prevents the easy characterization of who participated in community relations and on what terms. The social workers that organized community relations councils were both white, native Britons and Commonwealth Citizens. The members who participated in voluntary community relations represented a wide range of interests, and show the communal formation of social democracy. These members participated not as individuals but as representatives of the local authority, of voluntary social service agencies, of political parties, of trade unions, and of voluntary associations. As Commonwealth Citizens formed organizations based on their ethnic identities, this representational model contributed to their participation in these councils as members of cultural communities. Most, but not all, who participated shared a commitment to the role of welfare to secure the social rights of all in the community. By incorporating imperial personnel, representatives of high commissions and social scientists, these councils brought the global reengagements occasioned by the end of empire to the local communities of Britain.

Understanding community relations shows there can be no simple return to social democracy and its dream of collective security. From its inception, community, and questions of inclusion and exclusion, shaped the delivery of services and the nature of activism to expand the participation of citizens in society. The history of community relations shows the ways ideas of cultural difference contributed to the marginalization of Commonwealth Citizens. It was not only extremists who portrayed Commonwealth Citizens as inherently different, but those most fervently in support of their social rights. From organizing the community to secure the social rights of individual citizens, community relations came to serve as the conduit through which separate communities made their claims. Multiculturalism emerged from the partnerships between voluntary social service agencies and imperial forms of community organization. This formation, which acknowledged the unique claims of culturally coherent communities, ushered in a new politics of cultural authenticity and could not sustain a vision of a whole community.

This dissertation does not discount the work of voluntary councils or the ordinary citizens who sought to create a more equitable society, but instead asks what we should demand of our government. Welfare was meant to transform social conditions to create a community that secured the equality of citizens. However, the persistence of inequalities, both economic and those exacerbated by racial discrimination, revealed the ways welfare was always limited by the local politics of its implementation. Inequalities, coupled with the contradictions of participation and representation upon which the structure of social democracy depended, led to the end of community relations. In place of the whole community mobilized to secure the social rights of the individual citizen, the individual citizen now participated in society on the basis of her culture.

As national debates challenge multiculturalism in Britain, nostalgia for a uniform past provides a balm for present woes. We must examine the local and global formations of welfare and citizenship rather than dwell in historical fantasies. Understanding community relations can help explain the present crisis of social democracy and suggest different strategies of inclusion.
Bibliography

Archives Consulted
Bradford Local Studies
George Padmore Institute
Greater Manchester County Record Office
Hackney Archives
Keighley Public Library
Lambeth Archives
London Metropolitan Archives
The National Archives, Kew
Nottingham Public Library
Nottinghamshire Archives
Southwark Archives
Tower Hamlets Local History
West Yorkshire Archives Service – Bradford
West Yorkshire Archive Service – Leeds

Government Reports and Publications
Central Youth Employment Executive, Ministry of Labour. *The Cultural and National Characteristics of Newly Arrived Commonwealth Immigrants and the Countries from Which They Came (Circular 194/68)*, 1968.


Bibliography


Parliamentary Debates


Newspapers and Periodicals

*Anglo-Caribbean News* [London]
*Daily Mirror* [London]
*The Friend: A Quaker Weekly Journal* [London]
*Guardian* [Manchester/London]
*Guardian Journal* [Nottingham]
*Information* [NCCI]
*Lambeth Blues* [CCRL, London]
*Liaison* [NCCI]
*The Listener* [London]
*Evening Post* [Nottingham]
*New Community* [London]
*Prospect* [London]
*Race Today* [London]
*Sunday Times* [London]
*Telegraph* [London]
*Telegraph & Argus* [Bradford]
*Times* [London]
*West Indian Gazette* [London]
*Yorkshire Evening Post* [Leeds]
*Yorkshire Post* [Leeds]
Bibliography

Published, Recorded and Broadcast Sources

Works Cited
Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Appendix 1: Texts referenced in Chapter 5


Babylon patrolling the streets
Always spitting at a nigger's feet.
You try to fight back
But you're outnumbered
'cause they bring the fleet

The day will come when we'll be strong
To fight the babylon back.
Rise up you niggers and face the facts,
You'll always be harassed because you're black.

Meat wagons heavily rumbling down the street,
You hear the patter of a nigger's feet,
A scream rings out, a shout is muffled,
Another nigger just been gutted.

When will it end?
It will be soon,
They said man could never reach the moon.
But Brothers and sisters, all you niggers
Our time will come soon.

Amarjit’s Song

The song is so sad
I can’t bear
to listen to it.
The songbird wants
to get out and fly away.

No, no, said her mother
Don't be silly, Redigan.
That bird
cost me a lot of money