MUTING INTERETHNIC CONFLICT IN POST-IMPERIAL BRITAIN: THE SUCCESS AND LIMITS OF A LIBERAL POLITICAL APPROACH

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In the years immediately following World War II, substantial numbers of people from South Asia and the Caribbean resettled in England. While these certainly were not England's first immigrants, their arrival and settlement eventually inaugurated a controversial round of political conflict and public concern about the increasingly multiracial composition of the population.

Britain relied heavily upon a liberal political approach to muting and marginalizing this kind of political conflict. This approach can be understood as consisting of several related elements. First, British law was exceptionally liberal in granting political rights to new arrivals. Since the vast majority of nonwhite immigrants arriving after the war came from the New Commonwealth, they were already British subjects and citizens of the United Kingdom. As a consequence, political rights were extended even to *first*-generation immigrants. In other words, British law politically incorporated new arrivals from former colonial areas even more readily than did (say) the laws of France, where citizenship was extended to most second- and third-generation immigrants born on French national territory. Second, norms of social and political respectability, the institutionalization of local Community Relations Councils (CRCs), and the Labour and Conservative Parties' organizational interests worked together to limit the politicization of racial issues. Race-related issues and passionate political appeals related to such topics were not admitted to the realm of legitimate and respectable public political discussion. Finally, where political entrepreneurs and fringe parties did bring race talk into national politics, the dynamics of liberal

democratic electoral competition successfully muted and reestablished the marginalization of such talk within a few short years.

The postwar politics of British race relations thus mark a particularly clear case of a type of approach to interethnic conflict commonly favored in current discussions of citizenship, nationality, and ethnic conflict. The liberal approach to interethnic conflict that underlies many of the major elements of British policy and political behavior also commonly informs comparative examination and analysis of ethnic politics. Common liberal assumptions prevalent in this area include the ideas that ethnic or racial conflicts are inherently less susceptible to negotiation than other forms of conflict, notably economic ones.[1] Following from this, the politicization of racial and ethnic conflict is believed to bode ill for peace and social order. Since it is commonly believed to be irrational and peculiarly unsusceptible to negotiation and peaceful resolution, it is also often believed that politicized ethnicity is bound ultimately to lead to violent social disorder and political instability.[2] Public discussion of race and ethnicity and the politicization of racially charged conflicts are therefore to be avoided.

A related set of liberal assumptions often prevails in current discussions of citizenship. Citizenship is normally treated as a legal status—that is, as a matter of legal nationality—and legal restrictions on nationality acquisition are then the focus of comparison. Legal nationality is assumed to be important because it is normally the necessary precondition for national voting rights. The entitlement to full political rights that legal nationality confers is in turn assumed to generate a sense of full membership, as well as social acceptance of those who are classified as full community members. Again, the liberal approach to interethnic relations is supposed to reduce social conflict, this time by favoring the social integration of immigrants or their descendants.

The British story suggests that liberalism works as an approach to the muting of interethnic political conflict. As such, it might at first appear as a relatively unproblematic illustration of the success of a liberal political approach. However, at the same time, the British story also suggests that the muting of such political conflict may have more limited value as a recipe for immigrants' social integration and the prevention of violent social and political conflict than is commonly supposed. Despite the success of this approach to the

muting of interethnic political conflict in Britain, violent disturbances in poor urban neighborhoods showed themselves to be a surprisingly intractable and enduring problem that outlasted both the politicization of racial issues and the rise of far-right parties. Successful depoliticization alone did not automatically result in full acceptance of minorities' rights to public presence, social order, or the elimination of violent conflict with an ethnic dimension.

This paper traces the history of the rise and subsequent significant abatement of racial conflict in postwar British politics. It also examines and analyzes the more significant violent urban riots of this period. Given Britain's more or less consistent reliance on a liberal political approach to the muting of interethnic conflict, it stands as a particularly telling illustration of the limits of that approach in terms of its translation of depoliticization into social integration and public order. The apparent anomalies of the British experience in this regard actually point to the need for refinement of the categories and assumptions which currently underlie and guide most of the growing literature on citizenship, nationality, and interethnic relations.

For one thing, the limits of the liberal political approach in Britain point to the need for a different approach to the examination and analysis of citizenship. If citizenship is understood as a matter of entitlement to public presence and influence, then it is not simply a matter of legal nationality. One needs to look beyond citizenship as an official status that confers a particular set of legal rights and thus beyond the rules and requirements regulating access to that status as well. What then becomes crucial are the social and institutional norms and practices necessary for the lived realization of citizenship understood as a matter of entitlement to public presence and influence. Social and institutional norms and practices that regulate the restriction or realization of citizenship in this sense help account for the apparent paradox of recurrent violent conflict and disorder in poor British urban neighborhoods where ethnic minorities are concentrated in the context of rapid civic incorporation of minorities, successful liberal depoliticization of racial issues, and marginalization of far-right parties.

POSTWAR PROSPERITY AND POLITICAL CONSENSUS

Overall, the years immediately after World War II were a period during which racial issues played very little role in British national politics. However, closer examination reveals that these years were in fact a time of submerged strains. These would later contribute to such marked symptoms of racial tension as the rise of the National Front (NF) and direct attacks on minorities residing in British cities.

THE PLACID SURFACE

During the immediate postwar period, the Labour and Conservative Parties enjoyed an overwhelming ascendancy in the British political arena. In 1959 the two parties together captured fully 93.2 percent of the vote.[3] The postwar Keynesian consensus was thus an overwhelming electoral success. This period can therefore be regarded as the heyday of state intervention directed toward increasing material security and equalizing economic outcomes between individuals and social groups.

During the latter part of this period, from 1964 to 1975, racial issues in Britain were also remarkably depoliticized. Britain's major political parties had a shared interest in keeping racial issues off the political agenda and therefore avoided making them a point of competition.[4] Surveys conducted during the 1966 election campaign found that most voters saw little difference between the major parties on race-related issues. Labour and Conservative leaders alike sought to depoliticize race because race-related issues constituted a troublesome point of internal division within both parties. Keeping racial issues off the political agenda thus helped both parties to bridge these internal divisions by turning their attention instead to issues on which there was a sounder basis for internal party consensus.

Depoliticization—at least in the absence of censorship—is an inherently fragile strategy. It takes only one party or party faction to rock the boat. For a while, party leaders were nonetheless able to depoliticize race successfully because they did not confront organized opposition to their position either within their own parties or from outside.[5] Neither party stood to benefit from politicization, and the success of the Keynesian compromise and postwar growth were

such that there seemed to be little available space in the British political arena for new, more extremist or ideological parties.[6]

Depoliticizing racial issues was also part of the broader consensualist strategy pursued by both the Labour and Conservative Parties during these years—i.e., avoiding "ideological" issues with the aim of capturing centrist voters.[7] Both parties regarded capturing these voters as the key to winning elections under prevailing conditions of close electoral parity between the two.[8] The avoidance of racial issues was thus part of the larger "catch-all" strategy that was increasingly adopted by parties throughout Western Europe.[9]

Britain's Labour and Conservative Parties also sought to ensure that discrimination and tensions with the established national residents would not lead to the politicization of racial issues by New Commonwealth immigrants. Together they therefore supported the establishment of local-level institutions designed to both mitigate local racial tensions and create a buffer between national party politics on the one hand and race-related conflicts and demands on the other. The parties therefore lent national financial support to the CRCs, which had emerged spontaneously at the local level in hundreds of British towns and cities.[10] This may explain why the national government during these years did not take a more active role in organizing immigrants' social integration than it did. While the Conservative Party facilitated Commonwealth immigration to the country to meet the demands of employers for additional workers during the 1950s and 1960s, the government did nothing to plan this immigration. Nor did it act to ensure that the increased demand for affordable housing and public services, including education, was met. Housing and services were in short supply after the war in any case, and immigration predictably increased pressure on the limited housing stock. The increased competition between immigrants and native workers for limited resources, especially housing, in turn provoked predictable tensions for which the immigrants were often blamed.[11]

On the positive side, it appeared that the leadership of the major political parties in London had succeeded in establishing an overwhelmingly liberal public discourse on race relations. Until 1976 this "liberal language of analysis [was] predominant amongst politicians, bureaucrats, certain of the quality media and leaders of key institutions such as the police."[12] Racial harmony was emphasized,

and open references to racial differences were generally avoided. This liberal discourse stood in contrast to the rhetorical connections increasingly made between minorities, on the one hand, and the lawlessness and disorder on the other, connections that informed mainstream public interpretation of the riots of the 1980s.[13]

UNACKNOWLEDGED UNDERTOWS

The depoliticization of race following World War II and the development of a liberal, antiracialist public discourse may appear to indicate that racial tensions were limited. Signs of racial harmony during the heyday of the Keynesian compromise may seem to point to a correspondence between interventionist national economic policy and the achievement of harmonious race relations. In reality, however, there were unmistakable signs of submerged racial tensions even during the heyday of Keynesianism, growing prosperity, and commitment to the welfare state.

Urban Violence. In 1958 racial violence broke out in Nottingham and Notting Hill. The outburst took the form of attacks by local white residents on immigrants who had recently settled in the area. The clashes led to the election of a number of populist Conservative candidates to Parliament that year. Although the disturbances called national attention to race and immigration issues and to the absence of an explicit government policy on immigration, the parties remained reluctant to address these issues. Admittedly, some limited response from national political leaders was forthcoming in the form of preliminary immigration restrictions introduced by the Conservatives in 1961.[14] For the most part, however, consensual organized official silence was maintained, and the first local sparks of racial violence were swept under the rug.

Popular Attitudes. The exacerbation of local racial tensions was the hidden negative consequence of the established political parties' depoliticization of racial issues during this period.[15] Although little was said in Parliament on the subject of race during these years and while Labour and Conservative politicians alike treated it as a political nonissue, survey data indicate that powerful public concerns

about the growing presence of nonwhites developed during this period.

Popular concern with the major parties' neglect of racial issues merged in the form of growing disquiet with the numbers of immigrants arriving in Britain. Survey data show that during the 1960s and 1970s more than three-quarters of the electorate considered recent immigration rates to be too high. Surveys in 1960 found the electorate overwhelmingly opposed to immigration, by a margin of six to one.[16] The intensity of popular concern on this score is suggested by 1968 survey research findings which indicated that more than 25 percent of the British public identified immigrants as the most urgent problem facing Britain. When immigration restrictions were implemented, they were targeted at nonwhites from the New Commonwealth.[17]

The proceedings of the 1958 and 1961 Conservative Party conferences also reflected increasing grassroots pressure for attention to racial issues in the form of new restrictions on nonwhite immigration. The first motion to limit such immigration was introduced in 1958. In 1961 more than forty such motions were introduced, reflecting a precipitous increase of pressure on the Conservative Party from its constituents.[18]

Political Weakness of Liberals on Racial Issues. Precisely because the prevailing liberal forces within each party successfully depoliticized racial issues during this period, they never mobilized their constituents in active support of liberal racial policies. The lack of such a popular following was to prove problematic for the liberals once the consensus they had maintained in favor of depoliticization was broken in 1968 by Enoch Powell, a New Right Conservative MP, and then by other New Right politicians in the years that followed. The liberals had long held sway in Parliament, but they lacked active public support. Precisely because their established strategy had been to cooperate in silencing public political discussion of race, once the silence was broken and public debate was opened, the liberals found themselves in a weak position. Having focused on silencing the issue, they had not developed a discourse to address it.[19]

One might argue that xenophobia and racial prejudice among the general public are simply a given. By this account, the average party supporter could not be expected to exhibit the same liberal

high-mindedness as party leaders, and to initiate public discussion of race would inevitably have opened a Pandora's box of primordial prejudice. In reality, however, the available evidence suggests that British public opinion was quite malleable and that public speech by party leaders in favor of liberal positions on race issues had the capacity to significantly alter popular perspectives. The Labour Party strongly opposed the restrictions imposed by the Conservative Party on New Commonwealth immigration in 1961. In a well-publicized speech, Hugh Gaitskill argued that the government should do more to provide adequate social services, facilitate the integration of immigrants into British society, and prevent discrimination rather than pandering to racial intolerance by restricting immigration. Within a month of Gaitskill's speech, 14 percent of the electorate had changed its position to one more consonant with that which he had articulated.[20]

Even in Enoch Powell's home constituency of Wolverhampton, an examination of local press coverage of issues related to race and immigration suggests that popular concern with such issues generally did not take the form of antagonism toward immigrants per se, at least not prior to Powell's inflammatory anti-immigration speeches of the late 1960s. While there was extensive interest and community involvement in issues related to immigration and the social tensions it produced, it was mainly directed toward the reduction of discrimination and efforts to promote interracial harmony. In fact, even during the period of heaviest nonwhite immigration into Wolverhampton, no far-right or anti-immigrant group managed to attract any significant local following.[21] Thus substantial popular concern with race and immigration issues was not necessarily indicative of the inevitability of a populist backlash against minorities, even in Powell's home constituency.[22]

Popular concern about nonwhite immigration has the potential to lead to quite a range of political expression: from demands for immigration restrictions, to support for local race relations initiatives, to calls for more adequate social service provision from the central government, to violent collective attacks on immigrants like those that took place in Notting Hill. Gaitskill's speech demonstrated the substantial influence that organized political parties wielded in determining the direction that popular concern would take and thus the nature of its social impact. The problem was that

the internal divisions and electoral strategy of the major parties were such that public statements like Gaitskill's were few and far between. In conjunction with industrial decline, the major parties' depoliticization strategy would therefore set the stage for the rise of the far right.

ERUPTION OF ETHNIC CONFLICT IN THE 1970S AND EARLY 1980s

RISING INFLUENCE OF THE FAR RIGHT

As noted above, discussion of racial issues was repressed within the Conservative Party from 1964 to 1976 as part of the major parties' consensus to depoliticize racial issues. Challenges to the suppression of racial issues then developed through extraparliamentary groups, most notably the NF. These groups demanded that the parties acknowledge race as a relevant and legitimate political issue. They attempted to direct unaddressed popular concerns in a particularly pernicious direction, combining calls for expulsion of nonwhite immigrants from England with overt anti-Semitism and demands for British support of white Africa.[23] The NF was the product of a merger of a variety of extreme right-wing organizations, including the League of Empire Loyalists. Formerly a faction within the Conservative Party, the league had been discredited within the party by 1960 and sought new political allies.[24] Like Labour, the Conservative Party at the time regarded capturing swing votes at the center as the key to electoral success. This led to the marginalization and extraparliamentary organization of extremist elements that were no longer represented and therefore no longer captured within Conservative Party ranks. The NF thus capitalized on weaknesses of the very catch-all strategy that once seemed to make the two center parties so invincible.

During the 1960s the Conservative Party suffered what Andrew Gamble has characterized as a "crisis of ideology," which inhered in the party's inability to sufficiently differentiate its program from socialism and to present it effectively. As Gamble argues,

> Heath offered a detailed analysis of Britain's economic problems and a list of appropriate remedies, but he had little conception of

> how this programme could be presented to secure the support and enthusiasm of his followers in the party and in the country.[25]

Electoral evidence from this period suggests that a comparable crisis of ideology ultimately affected the Labour Party as well. Whereas in 1959 the two major parties together had captured over 90 percent of the popular vote, by 1974 they together captured only 75 percent.[26] Voters were pulling away from the two major parties, and this pulling away manifested itself in a variety of ways: challenges from third parties, the rise of extraparliamentary movements, the emergence of demands that conflicted with the positions of the parties' established leadership, and new intraparty conflicts within Parliament itself.

While the views of the New Right were still ununified and lacking in focus, the Conservative crisis of ideology nonetheless opened the way for their increasing influence on the positions of party leaders, particularly Heath.[27] The Monday Club was established within the Conservative Party during these years. The club opposed all nonwhite immigration and became the primary voice for illiberal, anti-immigration sentiment in Parliament. At its peak in 1972, the club claimed 34 MPs and approximately 6,000 members.[28] During these same years, the New Right became increasingly influential within the Conservative Party.[29] The increasing influence of the New Right and the establishment of the Monday Club were signs that under the still relatively placid surface of consensus politics, the major parties were increasingly unable to contain the popular undertows that would eventually tear the postwar consensus on economic and racial issues apart.

More extremist elements calling for recovery of the British Empire or for active repatriation of minorities already living in Britain, as opposed to a mere freezing of future immigration, were driven out of the mainstream parties and the parliamentary arena, however. These views nonetheless attracted substantial popular support. The stage was thereby set for an upsurge in popular support for the NF. By the summer of 1976, the NF had emerged as a serious political force. Indeed the party frequently received at least 8 percent of the popular vote, and in a series of local elections that spring and summer it attracted as much as 15 percent of the returns. The party captured almost 20 percent of the vote in Leicester in the municipal

elections in May and also made a particularly strong showing in working-class districts of London and in Sandwell and Bradford. Meanwhile, skinheads in many areas staged a series of provocative marches.[30]

The rising fortunes of the NF on the electoral front in 1976 corresponded to a notable increase that year in the incidence of direct attacks on Asians (i.e., members of minority populations originating from the Indian subcontinent) living in Britain's cities.[31] Indeed despite its rising electoral fortunes, the main strategy of the NF was not to win elections. Given Britain's majoritarian electoral system, an objective of winning was clearly unattainable. The NF's central strategy was therefore to "repatriate" nonwhites through direct violent attacks on Asians living in communities with high concentrations of nonwhite residents. Rather than trying to displace the existing major parties, the NF thereby tried to reshape the social environment within which Britain's minorities lived in such a way as to make continued residence in Britain undesirable.[32] The Home Office estimated that 7,000 or more attacks would be reported in 1982. The East End of London was the site of a particularly high number of violent incidents.[33]

As the NF's extraparliamentary demands that race be put back on the political agenda reached their peak in the mid-1970s, the conditions that had deterred the Conservative Party from taking a strong position on such issues changed. The major reason that the Conservatives had agreed to the depoliticization of racial issues was that the party itself was internally divided on these issues. In 1961 there were three major positions on immigration within the party. First were the so-called "Tory radicals," who supported liberal immigration policies on the grounds that such policies were beneficial to the national economy. Second, there was a sizable contingent of "Commonwealth idealists," a group sympathetic to the empire. This faction consisted largely of former colonial governors and residents. Like the Tory radicals, the Commonwealth idealists were favorable to liberal immigration policies, though for different reasons. The idealists supported liberal immigration rules as an important manifestation of Britain's continued commitment to maintaining close ties with its former colonies. Finally, there were the supporters of the New Right, a faction increasingly strong in Conservative constituencies but still relatively weak in Parliament. The New Right primarily

represented the professional middle class and diverged from the other two factions in supporting such new restrictive immigration legislation as the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. Race and immigration issues therefore threatened to split the party, so their politicization was actively avoided.

By 1975, however, the segment of the Conservative Party with close ties to the empire had largely disappeared.[34] Moreover, because of perceived changes in domestic labor market conditions, those interested in using immigration policy for economic ends were no longer opposed to immigration restriction. Labor was no longer believed to be in short supply, and Tory radicals, supportive of the interests of British industrial employers, therefore no longer favored liberal immigration policies as they had immediately after the war.[35] With the decline of the Commonwealth idealist faction and changes in labor market conditions, a new consensus between the Tory radicals and the New Right developed. The party therefore became more receptive to tighter immigration restrictions, and the disincentives that had previously discouraged the Conservatives from campaigning on racial issues for fear of jeopardizing party unity were largely removed. Even as the strength of extreme right forces demanding repoliticization of racial issues grew, it also became increasingly safe for the Conservatives to respond to those demands.

Thus the repoliticization of race did not result from the efforts of extremist "entrepreneurs" capitalizing on popular prejudices alone. Rather, it resulted from the conjunction of such pressures with the changing dynamics of competition between the major parties and with the changing composition of forces within the Conservative Party itself. The major parties' centrist strategies were beginning to threaten the credibility of their claims to offer their followers distinct, meaningful political identities. Moreover, long-standing assumptions that had underpinned the parties' perceived interests in pursuing consensual strategies were undermined. The Keynesian compromise was not delivering the same rates of growth and employment as it had first seemed to promise, and pursuit of such policies may no longer have provided party leaders with the same degree of legitimacy and authority as it had originally. Building more distinct party identities and politicizing other issues may then have begun to appear more attractive. Meanwhile, the assumption of long-term parity between the parties was upset, as was the long-

standing belief that capturing "floating" centrist voters was the key to electoral success.[36] Given Britain's stable majoritarian electoral system, if the Conservative Party had enjoyed a more solid, stable base of popular support, the challenge of the NF might well simply have been ignored. If the major parties had spoken directly to rising popular concerns about race and immigration and worked to channel those concerns in more positive, liberal directions, it is unlikely that the far right would have found such a ready foothold. Finally, if the composition of the Conservative Party leadership had not changed, the need to maintain the support of the Commonwealth idealists would have foreclosed the strategy that Enoch Powell soon successfully introduced. Ironically the progressive abandonment of an imperial project paved the way for the promulgation of ethnic nationalism in British politics.

REPOLITICIZATION OF RACE IN NATIONAL POLITICS

By the late 1970s race was out in the open as an explicit issue in the major parties' political campaigns, and the Labour and Conservative Parties increasingly diverged in their positions on race-related issues. The Conservatives led the repoliticization of race, beginning with a series of speeches by shadow home secretary William Whitelaw. As Anthony Messina has argued, these speeches had the effect of "catapulting race to the forefront of British politics."[37]

Enoch Powell was particularly influential in upsetting standing beliefs about the advantages of centrist electoral strategies. His inflammatory anti-immigration speech of 1968 seemed to observers dramatically to demonstrate the potential electoral advantages of new, nonconsensual strategies of openly racist politicization of New Commonwealth immigration. Paul Foot summarizes Powell's contribution to British politics as follows:

> His campaign has altered the dimensions of political debate in Britain. Open attacks on coloured people and their presence in Britain are now part of respectable political controversy.[38]

As Gamble points out, however, the *content* of Powell's position on immigration actually did not diverge from standing Conservative Party policy. The departure that Powell introduced was instead rhe-

torical and inhered in "his attempt to stigmatize immigrants as strangers, an object of justifiable fear and hatred, and as a source of future division in the nation."[39]

This departure had considerable impact on Conservative intraparty politics and lent significant strength to the New Right. It suggested a viable solution to the crisis of ideology with which the party was struggling and to the declining electoral performance with which the crisis was associated. Powell's 1968 anti-immigration speech clearly violated the prevailing norms of "respectable" political expression. The speech won him lasting notoriety—and considerable attention. Heath dismissed Powell from his shadow cabinet for making it, but this dismissal did anything but diminish Powell's influence. As the letters and demonstrations supporting him underlined, unlike Heath, Powell was drawing strong popular support. Powell's speech marked "an attempt to search out a new constituency, by breaking with the restrictions placed on the politics of support by what was practicable for the politics of power."[40]

The success of that effort was soon demonstrated by the overwhelming immediate popular reaction. As widely reported at the time, within days of his speech, Powell received over 100,000 letters, fewer than 1,000 of them expressing disagreement. A Gallup Poll, the results of which were also widely noted, found that 74 percent of the population "agreed" with the speech.[41] The dockers' and meat porters' unions—seemingly unlikely supporters of someone as hostile to cooperative state-union relations as Powell—staged demonstrations supporting him. Powell thereby won personal support from the working class and demonstrated the possibility of attracting such support by "breaking down consensus politics and establishing the basis for a new popular Conservatism."[42]

By contrast, prior to his speeches on race relations, Powell had attracted few followers and was not seriously regarded as a potential future Conservative Party leader.[43] His failure to inspire enthusiasm is significant in light of the fact that he was also a forerunner of the New Right in his adherence to monetarism and advocacy of neoliberal economic policies.[44] Without inflammatory racism, Powell's monetarism was not attracting substantial working-class support. It was in using racism to sell the monetarist New Right to British workers that Powell's appeal became a model for future New Right strategy.[45] In advocating a peculiar melange of monetarism and

immigration restriction, Powell's position foreshadowed the new Tory strategy that would become ascendant with Thatcher's subsequent takeover of the party leadership.

Powell cast the existing terms of British citizenship into question by contrasting the legal terms of citizenship with a common sense standard of real "belonging." He attacked what he described as the "legal fiction" of Commonwealth citizenship, which he regarded as a manifestation of lingering illusions that Britain was still an empire rather than a nation.[46] Powell described the task facing Britain in 1972 as that of "rescuing its identity from the delusions and deceits of a vanished Empire and Commonwealth" and set himself the task of "defining a new national identity."[47] As early as 1969 Powell proclaimed that "nationhood, with all that word implies, is what the Tory party is ultimately about."[48] In 1972 Powell took a strong stand against Britain's admission of Asian Ugandan refugees, despite their legal status as full-fledged British subjects. Powell argued:

> The practice of international law which requires a country to readmit or admit its own nationals applies in our case only to those who *belong* to the United Kingdom and not to other Commonwealth citizens, whether classified as citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies or not.

Instead, he argued, India was the Asian Ugandans' "true home," and it was therefore India that should readmit them.[49] Similarly, in a 1968 speech delivered in Eastbourne, Powell maintained that "The West Indian or Asian does not by being born in England become an Englishman. In law he becomes a United Kingdom citizen by birth; in fact, he is a West Indian or Asian still."[50] Here again Powell contrasted the legal definition of citizenship with his constituents' sense of who really "belonged" to the society, and he argued that the latter ought to take precedence over the former as the standard of true political membership. The result was to call into question nonwhite immigrants' official status as full-fledged British citizens.

As in his laissez-faire economic analysis, Powell thus set society against the state, country against crown, and set himself as the champion of the former against the latter. By linking a more nationalist standard of political membership with neoliberal economics in this fashion, Powell imbued the latter with new popular political appeal.

Disraeli had once rallied the working class to the Conservative Party with his "one nation" pro-imperial vision. Powell turned Disraeli's trick on its head, demonstrating that after empire, working-class support for the Conservative Party could be recaptured using nationalist appeals once again. But this time nationalism was turned against the imperial ambitions of the Disraeli years. Ironically the effect of this reversal was to reassert the superiority of white "Englishmen" over "black" citizens. The former were deemed true members of society, while the latter were asserted to be only legally or fictively so. The native white person was an "Englishman," the nonwhite immigrant at most a "United Kingdom citizen." As for the very sizable contingent of Irish and other white immigrants, they did not factor in Powell's rhetoric at all.[51] Powell thereby demonstrated that paradoxically the culmination of the Conservative Party's long retreat from its old imperial commitments reopened rather than foreclosed political opportunities for the Conservatives to reclaim the tried and true rhetorical trump cards of the imperial era. Powell's example thus laid the way for the Conservative reclamation of race, which subsequently became unmistakable during Thatcher's election campaign of 1978–79.[52] Immigration again figured prominently in the 1979 parliamentary election campaigns.[53]

RIOTS IN THE CITIES, 1980–81

In the 1980s a series of violent disturbances broke out in England's cities. In 1980 one such incident occurred in Bristol. In 1981 the number increased to thirty-five; the most dramatic took place in the Brixton area of London and the Toxteth area of Liverpool.[54] The riots took place in areas with unusually high proportions of minority residents, and they were marked by incidents in which Afro-Caribbean youths attacked either whites—usually police officers—or Asians—usually shopkeepers. Some observers misleadingly characterized these episodes as race riots or saw them as confirmation of existing fears of a distinctive black propensity to violent criminality and lawlessness.[55] The media, like many politicians, treated the riots of 1981 as an un-British phenomenon in a country known for domestic tranquillity and social peace.[56] However, police records and other reports pertaining to the most significant of the riots suggest that

significant numbers of white youth also took part in several of these incidents.[57] Despite their location in the ghettoes, these incidents may be more accurately characterized as retaliatory youth assaults against the police than as episodes of interracial violence per se. Nonwhites did not even constitute a majority of those arrested. Of the approximately 4,000 people arrested in connection with the July 1981 riots, only one-third were classified as nonwhite.[58] What the rioters arrested had in common was that they were disproportionately young and unemployed. Of those arrested, fully 70 percent were 21 or younger, and nearly half were jobless.[59]

The fact that these riots occurred soon after Thatcher took office is one of the strongest pieces of apparent evidence in support of the contention that economic liberalization policies led to violent ethnic conflict in Britain. In the aftermath of the riots, Labour MPs highlighted the coincidence between the summer's unprecedented wave of violent civil disorders and the doubling of the nation's unemployment rate during the first two years of the Thatcher government to just over 11 percent, the highest level in Britain since the 1930s. Thatcher's neoliberal economic policies and her monetarist approach to controlling inflation in particular were largely responsible for this precipitous short-term rise.

Aside from their timing, another aspect of the riots might also appear to confirm such an interpretation. Instances of urban violence had proven effective in the past as a means of attracting financial support from the central state to support social services in impoverished areas with relatively high proportions of minority residents. Like the Notting Hill riot of 1958, the riots of 1980–81 attracted needed state resources to deprived urban neighborhoods.[60] The 1981 riots led to increased government attention to urban social policy and an increased number of ethnic minority-led projects, including projects under the auspices of the Partnership Schemes and the Urban Programmes. Funding for the Urban Programmes was increased by just over 65 percent, and a new Youth Training Scheme run by the Manpower Services Commission was also introduced. Funding from private sources for projects aimed at reducing racial disadvantage in urban areas also increased dramatically, doubling between 1981 and 1985.[61] Ultimately, however, economic considerations alone cannot fully explain the riots. There was no consistent correlation between the severity of unemployment in particular areas and the severity of

rioting.[62] No rioting occurred at all in Glasgow and Tyneside, the two cities with the highest unemployment rates in Britain.[63] The riots of 1981 therefore cannot be explained in terms of rising levels of unemployment alone.

E. P. Thompson's work on early modern bread riots shows that violent episodic crowd behavior was sparked by perceived injustice, not by sheer material deprivation.[64] If perceived injustice played an essential part in motivating collective violence on the part of famished rural peasants , then on the face of it, it is not implausible that the same might well be true of poor urban rioters. Indeed the riots of 1981 were closely related to local tensions between law enforcement officials and local youth. By some accounts, tensions with local youth of Afro-Caribbean origin were particularly marked. Where riots broke out, they were most serious in areas where there was a tougher policing policy.[65] Since the mid-1960s, Britain's police forces had became increasingly removed from the residents of the areas in which they worked. The size of forces increased during these years, as did the use of patrol cars, which tend to create a greater sense of distance between police and local residents. The role of local police committees also declined markedly. At the same time, police forces became increasingly politicized and began to place greater emphasis on apprehending criminals as opposed to providing general assistance to the public, as they had traditionally done. This change in emphasis led to increasing reliance on several widespread policing practices that contributed to serious tensions with local residents. These included extensive use of Section 4 of the 1824 Vagrancy Act, commonly known as the "sus law." Using the sus law, the British police were empowered to arrest loiterers on suspicion of intention to commit a crime. Disproportionate numbers of minority youth were unemployed. They were therefore disproportionately apt to be "loitering" and were commonly portrayed as potential criminals. There was therefore no dearth of suspicious black loiterers, and the provision was used disproportionately against them. This practice generated ongoing tensions between younger members of ethnic minority groups and the police.[66] The sus provisions of the Vagrancy Act were abolished in 1981, but local police forces then began making more extensive use of their authority to stop and search suspicious people at their discretion, a practice with apparently similar effects on police-youth relations.

The two most dramatic riots of 1981, as noted, were in Brixton and Toxteth.[67] The events that triggered these riots, the behavior of the rioters, and the statements of young residents (including those who participated in the disturbances) all point to the importance of strained relations between the police and local residents. Like the riot of 1980 in Bristol, which was touched off by a police raid directed at underage drinking and illegal drugs,[68] both the Brixton and the Toxteth riots were clearly triggered by conflicts between police and local residents.

Local officers in the Toxeth area of Merseyside in Liverpool made extensive use of their authority to stop and search "suspicious" motorists and pedestrians in the months before the riot. The practice was, if anything, even more ineffective in Brixton than in Liverpool.[69] In the aftermath of the rioting, Lord Scarman was appointed to investigate its causes and to prepare an official report presenting his findings. The Scarman Report cited heavy-handed policing methods as a major underlying factor contributing to the outbreak of violence and recommended the elimination of such practices.[70] While Scarman agreed that general deprivation and disadvantage constituted "a set of *conditions* which create a predisposition toward violent protest," he stressed that the behavior of the police played an essential role in triggering the violence which ultimately occurred.[71]

The statements and actions of those involved in the riots support Scarman's conclusions. In the words of one observer of the riot in Toxteth, "The mob was not all drunk, nor blind with rage. Its members, rather, were in conscious rebellion against property and police."[72] In the Moss Side area of Manchester, rioters attacked a police station, throwing bricks at it and yelling, "Kill, kill, kill!" as they set fire to police cars outside. The message was clear and simple. As one rioter explained his involvement in the violence, "I've been arrested every week. Stop, search, stop, search. I threw a couple of bricks, hit a couple of policemen. Just getting my revenge."[73]

In Liverpool the rioters' one clear demand was for the resignation of the area's chief constable, Kenneth Oxford. Discussing the reasons for the anger evident in the rioting, one young resident said, "I never expected to work, because there's no jobs. What gets us is the feeling that you can't walk on the street without being picked up."[74] Living in overcrowded tenements, children from disadvan-

taged areas of Liverpool like Toxteth played in the streets from a young age, and naturally they tended to congregate there with friends.[75] As the site of daily activities that cannot be carried out elsewhere and as a gathering place for young people's peer groups, street space is apt to take on greater significance in areas like Toxteth than it might in more affluent or less densely settled communities. The restriction on the use of street space that police reliance on stop and search tactics created was therefore apt to be particularly resented. In explaining the events, one young rioter said of the police, "They hate us, and we hate them."[76] Surprisingly Oxford himself basically concurred in this interpretation of the riot in his district. As he explained to the press, "This was not a race riot. Their fight was with us."[77]

The riot in Brixton began when a crowd misinterpreted the intentions of a police officer who was apparently attempting to assist a black man who had just been stabbed.[78] The intensity of the crowd's reaction to this apparently minor incident becomes more comprehensible when considered in the context of recent events and innovations in "crime prevention" policing methods used in the neighborhood. Participants in the London rioting complained to reporters about the fact that after six months the police still had not found a suspect for a fire that had killed thirteen young people at a party in Deptford.[79] Several weeks before the riots, as part of a Black People's Day of Action, thousands of people had participated in a march protesting the police's failure to catch the arsonist(s).

It was shortly after this protest that operation Swamp '81 was launched. Young black residents reportedly saw the operation as a demonstration by the police that they alone controlled the streets, not the thousands of blacks who had recently marched (through the streets) in protest against them.[80] An intensive saturation campaign, Swamp '81 involved deploying some 112 police officers to "flood" designated areas of Lambeth thought to be particularly ripe for crime. A new helicopter brought in to sweep over the playground and chase out suspects reportedly delighted local children and undoubtedly made the operation a great deal noisier and more impossible not to notice.[81]

The officers flooding Brixton also made extensive use of stop and search powers to apprehend suspected robbers and thieves. From 6 to 11 April alone, some 943 persons were stopped and 118

arrests were made in conjunction with the campaign. Despite the aggressive approach, the results were not particularly impressive from a crime prevention standpoint. Of those stopped or arrested, fewer than 25 were ever formally charged with theft, and fewer still were ever convicted.[82] These figures suggest that in the name of upholding law and order, the police succeeded only in carrying out an organized campaign of harassment against the local population.

To understand the behavior of the rioters in the disturbances, it is essential to recognize the concentrated symbolic enactment of ongoing conflicts between police and residents over control of public (street) space. The rioters in Brixton aimed in part to demonstrate that their control of movement in the streets was superior to that of the police, at least as long as the riot lasted. One reporter described the riot:

> The battle was for the power to pass along the streets. The police would test their ability to do so by forming a phalanx behind plastic riot-shields, advancing a block, and stopping with nowhere to go until the order came to go back again. The rioters, knowing the area far better, would greet the advance with a shower of missiles, sprint round the block, and appear again at the other end of the street to meet the phalanx coming back. It became a ritual.[83]

By this description, the behavior of the rioters appears as a coherently choreographed display of their superior ability to move, and to control movement, about the neighborhood streets. The rioters were described here as literally pushing the police around. Despite its ritual quality, if this was a reprisal against the authorities who had been pushing around Brixton's young residents, both the fact and the form of the rioters' retaliation were quite physical and literal. The behavior of the police for which the rioters retaliated was also literally that of controlling and restricting their targets' movement about the streets. The riots were not just inarticulate acts of misdirected rage against poverty. They are better understood as political conflicts about access to, control over, and free movement within public space. That is, they were violent conflicts over citizenship. However, to appreciate the stakes of the riots in this sense, citizenship must be understood in terms of the entitlement to public presence and influence in shaping the terms of collective life. Such

entitlement and influence is constituted and expressed through social and institutional practices, not simply in terms of the formal rights contingent upon official nationality.

RENEWED MARGINALIZATION OF RACIAL CONFLICT IN BRITISH NATIONAL POLITICS: THE SUCCESS AND LIMITS OF A CLASSIC LIBERAL POLITICAL RESOLUTION

WANING POPULAR INTEREST IN RACE AND IMMIGRATION ISSUES

Asked on the eve and the day of the 1983 national elections which issues had influenced their choice of candidates, only one percent of voters surveyed designated immigration as having been a relevant concern.[84] While the results of such surveys are inherently imperfect, the contrast with the levels of popular concern exhibited in surveys of the 1960s and 1970s is nonetheless dramatic and unmistakable. By 1986 grassroots interest in immigration within the Conservative Party was also in decline.[85]

DECLINE OF THE FAR RIGHT

During the 1980s the far right seemed to be on the rise on the European continent. By contrast, in Britain it was clearly in decline, having peaked in 1976 and subsequently receded. On the face of it, this decline was surprising, especially given the record levels of unemployment in Britain during the 1980s.[86] The major reason for the far right's unusually poor fortunes in Britain during the 1980s was the rise of the Conservative New Right and its abandonment of postwar consensus politics in favor of Thatcherism.

Thatcher's election to office spelled disaster for the far right as the Conservative Party captured their supporters. As one commentator put it, "The NF . . . was utterly side-swiped by the advent of Thatcherism." The NF's attacks on Thatcher's appointment of Jews to her cabinet were not enough to keep most far-right supporters on board. Given Thatcher's initial tough stance on immigration and the overall stridency of her political style, the far right was left with little

basis on which to distinguish itself from the center right in terms that would appeal to disgruntled working-class voters.[87]

More surprisingly, Thatcher's election had a similarly dampening effect upon the influence of the Monday Club and its extremist anti-immigration demands within the Conservative Party. In the wake of the Monday Club's loss of influence, new anti-immigration organizations emerged within the party, but they proved much less cohesive than the Monday Club and exerted little influence.[88] Indeed by 1986 a new intraparty consensus on immigration had apparently emerged. The party was by then remarkably united behind the new status quo. The influence of far-right cliques within the party had been greatly eroded, and liberals within the party had come to accept existing immigration controls as a necessary measure to preserve harmonious race relations.[89] The late 1980s thus resembled the late 1960s and early 1970s in that race and particularly Commonwealth immigration restrictions were again removed from active political debate. However, the late 1980s differed from earlier years in that this time popular concerns regarding race and immigration were not simply shunted from the political arena for fear of activating intraparty divisions. Instead a real consensus was apparently established.

MORE RIOTS IN 1985

The decline of racial politics and far right parties did not, however, restore lasting social harmony to disadvantaged urban areas. Despite signs that racial tensions were ebbing at the national political level, rioting in England's major cities nonetheless recurred. In 1985 there were three major riots: in Handsworth (Birmingham), in Brixton (London), and in Tottenham.[90] Like the 1981 riots, the riots of 1985 all took place in areas characterized by high levels of social and economic disadvantage.[91] As in 1981, however, tensions between youth and the police, not poverty per se or frustration with state withdrawal from society, played a key role in touching off each of the riots.

In July 1985 some seventy local youths in Handsworth started a riot which resulted in looting and in the burning of police cars. Less than two months later, violence again broke out, this time on a larger scale, culminating in four deaths and the burning of some forty-five

buildings in Lozells Road. The resulting damages were estimated at £2 million.[92]

The context in which violence emerged was one of rampant unemployment and cuts in social expenditures. Handsworth was an especially impoverished area of Birmingham. The fundamental cause of deprivation in the area was the long-term decline of the British automobile industry, the former mainstay of the city's economy. As the industry declined between 1978 and 1984 and new sources of employment failed to develop, Birmingham lost a third of its manufacturing jobs, resulting in extremely high levels of unemployment in the city's least fortunate districts, particularly among younger members of ethnic minority groups. In 1984, four months after leaving school at age 16, 95 percent of Handsworth's black school leavers and 84 percent of their Asian counterparts remained jobless.[93] Surveying the damage in the aftermath of the riot, Clare Shorts, MP for Handsworth's Ladywood constituency, asserted that it could be "explained in three words: employment, employment, employment."[94] The effects of unemployment were compounded by expenditure cuts that reduced funds available for community projects to a grossly inadequate level. In the wake of these cuts and the abolition of the West Midlands Metropolitan Council, the "future viability of the scores of voluntary projects in the area [was thrown] seriously into doubt."[95]

There had been a history of cooperative community-police relations in this area. Given this history, the *New Statesman* argued that cuts in state funds for community development projects, not policing policies, were the essential cause of the violence. As one reporter put it succinctly, "Take away the funds that prop up the tottering communities, and that's that for community policing." An explanation of the violence that centers on policing policy is also counterintuitive given that the riot broke out the very morning after a local carnival supported largely by the police as part of their acclaimed community-based approach in Handsworth.[96] It should be noted, however, that the superintendent supportive of community policing policies was replaced in April 1985, just three months before the first disturbance in the area. Following his replacement, local police began to crack down on illegal behavior that had previously been tolerated. The crackdown resulted in a series of raids which in turn heightened tensions between the police force and the local community.[97]

The events immediately responsible for triggering the September riot suggest that police-community relations problems did play a significant role in provoking the riot, the area's community policing history notwithstanding. The riot immediately followed the arrest of a young black man outside of a local pub for an alleged parking violation. The arrest came in the context of a crackdown on drug dealing outside the pub. Police in the area had been understood to be "soft" on marijuana-related offenses, as well as on parking violations.[98]

Once the riot started, the violence took on the character of a conflict between local black residents and Asian shopkeepers. Most of the violence took the form of attacks by blacks on the cars and shops of local Asian merchants.[99] Rioters left black-owned establishments in the same area conspicuously untouched, and they did not damage public buildings in the area. Only one window of the local school was broken, and the area's new recreation center was left undamaged.[100] The pattern of looting and burning suggests that tensions between blacks and Asians played a greater role in shaping the behavior of the rioters than local leaders cared to acknowledge. Nonetheless, it should be noted that such tensions were not what set off the riot in Handsworth. Resentment against a police action that appeared unfair given established local norms was.

The same was true of the riot that occurred in Brixton soon thereafter.[101] As in the case of the 1981 riots, blacks were not the sole participants in the night's violence. Rather, black and white residents alike took part.[102] Caution is therefore in order in interpreting the violence in Brixton as a "race riot." The riot was one of local residents in an area with a high proportion of minority residents, and it was directed against the area's police force.

In a scenario strikingly similar to that in Brixton, the 1985 riot at the Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham was provoked by the death of a black woman during an unauthorized search of her house.[103] Like Handsworth, Tottenham had enjoyed relatively cordial relations between police officers and community residents. The chief superintendent of police, Colin Crouch, was a strong advocate of community policing. Rank and file officers, however, proved resistant to the restraint that Crouch's philosophy demanded. During the week prior to the riot, a stop and search operation was set up at

the entrance to the housing project.[104] The resulting riot was the most serious to take place that year.[105]

As in the case of the other disturbances of the late summer and early fall, the riot was perceived and presented in the press as having a clear racial aspect. Thus according to the usual pattern, the disturbance was interpreted as a race riot because of its location in a predominantly black neighborhood and because of the ethnically based targeting of attacks that appears to have shaped the violence that unfolded.[106] However, tensions between local residents and the police, not ethnic tensions that emerged in the wake of the state's withdrawal from social relations in the interest of economic liberalization, were clearly what triggered the disturbance. As for the violence that occurred in Toxteth, Liverpool, on 30 September, it too was provoked by the same kinds of tensions between community residents and the police force that had touched off violence in other areas.[107] These riots arose neither from poverty per se nor state absence, but rather from conflicts and perceived injustices associated with active state efforts to reduce local crime and disorder.

The exclusive preoccupation of many observers with socioeconomic forms of deprivation in the riot-prone areas has encouraged them to overlook specifically *political* forms of deprivation in these areas. It has long been argued that political violence and civil disorder are apt to emerge where political institutionalization fails to keep pace with political mobilization.[108] It should therefore be noted that areas where the major riots occurred were characterized by not only high levels of poverty and social disadvantage, but also low levels of integration into effective representative institutions. As Benyon points out, life in these violence-prone neighborhoods afforded residents "few institutions, opportunities, and resources for articulating grievances and for bringing pressure to bear on those with political power."[109] Media reports of the riot in Handsworth similarly noted the "absence of any political power for such communities."[110] Significantly, although complaints about police misconduct were frequent in these areas and were a major focus of the demands of the autonomous black organizations that emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s, complaints by community residents on this score did not suffice to change local policing practices.[111]

Paradoxically perhaps, the lack of channels for effective political expression and representation in these communities did not re-

sult from the weakness of the central state in relation to these communities. In fact, it was the central state itself that abolished local governments in London and Handsworth, where some of the most serious rioting took place. Furthermore, the ability of local authorities to fill the gaps left by cuts in central state provision were limited through rate-capping, a restriction imposed on local authorities by the central state.[112] The declining power and influence of Britain's labor unions in the wake of Thatcher's defeat of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) strike of 1984–85 may logically be expected to have further diminished the availability of institutional channels for the collective expression of grievances. Union channels may have been particularly significant to Britain's minority residents. As Albert Hirschman has suggested, where official channels do not make "voice" a viable option, dissatisfaction may instead be expressed through "exit."[113] Unemployed residents of housing projects like Broadwater Farm Estate, however, are unlikely to "exit" for the simple reason that they may have nowhere else to go. In this context, violent forms of extra-institutional political expression like the riots of 1981 and 1985 are not entirely surprising.

CONCLUSION

Interethnic conflict has never been as severe, prolonged, or violent in Britain as it has been in many other countries. However, as an unusually clear case of reliance on widely accepted liberal political wisdom in the management of interethnic relations, recent British history reveals the virtues and limitations of such an approach with exceptional clarity. Interethnic political conflict and violent social disorder in postwar Britain have risen and fallen entirely independently of changes in legal criteria for nationality and voting rights. A remnant of imperial paternalist ambitions, British law vis-à-vis New Commonwealth immigrants was extremely liberal in this regard. New Commonwealth immigrants enjoyed the status of U.K. citizens and were therefore free to emigrate to England without restriction until 1962 and continued to benefit from liberal access to voting rights thereafter.

Nonetheless, developments in 1960s and 1970s Britain had much in common with more recent developments in Germany, where minorities' access to national citizenship was much more restricted.[114] Both witnessed many of the same developments: the short-lived rise of new far right parties, competitive politicization of nonwhite immigration, attempted promulgation of ethnic nationalism, and violent attacks on foreigners residing on national territory. Moreover, the political sequence underlying these developments in each case was quite similar. Given that Britain's attribution of citizenship to its nonwhite immigrants was exceptionally liberal, while German law has been exceptionally restrictive in this regard, an approach to citizenship and immigration politics that looks beyond legal nationality and its comparative accessibility is clearly in order.

The vicissitudes of post-imperial British racial politics also point to the need to transcend the statutory approach to citizenship. In order to account for the apparent paradox of recurrent urban violence and social disorder in the context of an otherwise apparently successful liberal political approach to the muting and marginalization of social tensions associated with immigration, a thicker approach to belonging is in order. Citizenship is a legal label that confers a bundle of rights and duties, but it should also be understood as a matter of real entitlement to public presence and influence as regulated and enforced by social and institutional norms and practices. The realization of citizenship therefore depends on factors other than formal nationality and voting rights. As Britain's recent urban riots suggest, viable democratic supportive institutions—from policing policy to local government—are also essential to citizenship and social integration, of which the integration of minorities or immigrants is but one aspect. The possession of the political rights linked to citizenship does not guarantee that civil rights, usually thought of as anterior to voting rights and less exclusive in their application, are realized in daily practice. To understand the riots of 1981 and 1985, one must appreciate that centuries after the freeing of peasants from their estates, even voters with national citizenship may not be free, practically speaking, to move freely within, much less beyond, their own urban neighborhoods. Comparative research on citizenship and interethnic relations needs to look beyond the law to the social and institutional norms and practices that shape minorities' lived sense of entitlement, public presence, and

influence. Voting rights matter, but formal political rights alone cannot be treated as a proxy for effective social trust, practical acceptance, and the lived sense of full membership conducive to social integration and lasting reduction of violent social conflict.

NOTES

This research was assisted by an award from the Social Science Research Council of an SSRC-MacArthur Foundation Fellowship on Peace and Security in a Changing World.

1. For recent notable examples of this claim, see Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner, eds., *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), p. xviii, and Daniel Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 224.
2. For example, on the inevitably corrosive effects of ethnic politics on established political parties and other "brokerage institutions" that contribute to democratic stability and peaceful conflict resolution, see Alvin Rabushka and Kenneth Shepsle, *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1972), pp. 6, 66, 83–84, 90. One might argue that these claims are only intended to apply to "plural" or what others have called "deeply divided" societies and are therefore not applicable to the British case. However, in their treatment, it is ethnic politics themselves that distinguish plural societies from their more stable and peaceful pluralistic counterparts (p. 62). Thus where ethnic politics develop, their emergence is interpreted as a sign of transition from a pluralistic to a plural society (p. 93). A pluralistic version of ethnic politics is therefore a logical impossiblity within the system of definitions presented.
3. Colin Leys, *Politics in Britain* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), p. 65.
4. Anthony Messina, *Race and Party Competition in Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 2, 36–37. Also see Paul Foot, *The Rise of Enoch Powell: An Examination of Enoch Powell's Attitude on Immigration and Race* (London: Cornmarket Press, 1969), pp. 92–93, on the Labour and Conservative Parties' active cooperation in dampening down racial issues during the 1966 election.
5. Messina, pp. 6, 26–27, 46–49, and 183–84.
6. For classic examples, see Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963); Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*, rev. ed. (New York: Free Press, 1962).

7. Messina, pp. 13–14.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
9. Otto Kirschheimer, "The Transformation of Western European Party Systems," in *Political Parties and Political Development,* ed. Joseph La Palombara and Myron Weiner (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 177–200.
10. Ira Katznelson, *Black Men, White Cities: Race, Politics, and Migration in the United States, 1900–30, and Britain, 1948–68* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), and Messina, p. 55. These organizations were originally created through grassroots initiatives directed primarily at easing the initial adjustment of immigrants from the Commonwealth to life in the British Isles.
11. Foot, *Rise of Enoch Powell,* pp. 130–31. Also see A. Sivanandan, "Race, Class, and the State: The Black Experience," *Race and Class* 17 (Spring 1976): 347–68.
12. John Benyon, "Spiral of Decline: Race and Policing," in *Race, Government and Politics in Britain*, ed. Zig Layton-Henry and Paul B. Rich (London: Macmillan, 1986), p. 240.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Messina, p. 24.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 26–27.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
18. Andrew Gamble, *The Conservative Nation* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 181.
19. Foot, *Rise of Enoch Powell,* pp. 142–43.
20. Messina, pp. 28–29, and p. 189, n. 22.
21. Foot, *Rise of Enoch Powell,* p. 57.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 43–54. The nonantagonistic nature of early immigration concerns in this area is also noteworthy in light of the fact that the West Midlands subsequently emerged alongside London as one of the NF's two strongest geographical strongholds. (See Martin Harrop et al., "The Bases of National Front Support," *Political Studies* 28 [June 1980]: 271–83.)
23. François Duprat, "La Percée politique du nationalisme en Grande-Bretagne," *Défense de l'Occident* 25 (June 1977): 57–65, and Messina, pp. 123–24, 186–87.
24. Gamble, *Conservative Nation*, p. 177. Also see Christopher T. Husbands, *Racial Exclusionism in the City: The Urban Support of the National Front* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983), p. 6.
25. Gamble, *Conservative Nation,* pp. 91–92.
26. Leys, p. 65.

27. Gamble,*Conservative Nation*, p. 92. At this point, however, the New Right figured as an influence on Heath himself, rather than as the source of a successful challenge to the existing Conservative Party leadership.
28. Messina, p. 138.
29. The major strength of the New Right, like the Labour Left, however, was outside of parliament, among the party's constituents (see Leys, p. 65).
30. R. W. Johnson, "Rebirth of the Right," *New Statesman and Society* 4 (8 March 1991): 10; also see Messina, p. 124, and Paul B. Rich, "Conservative Ideology and Race in Modern British Politics," in Layton-Henry and Rich, eds., p. 57.
31. R. W. Johnson, p. 10.
32. Messina, p. 124.
33. Zig Layton-Henry, "Race and the Thatcher Government," in Layton-Henry and Rich, eds., p. 91.
34. Messina, p. 144.
35. Sivanandan, pp. 349–51.
36. Messina, p. 18.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 125–26.
38. Foot, *Rise of Enoch Powell,* p. 140.
39. Gamble, *Conservative Nation*, p. 121; also see Foot, *Rise of Enoch Powell,* p. 39. Foot notes that Powell never made any published statement in support of immigration control until 1964, by which time such control was "an expression of mainstream opinion in the Party."
40. Gamble, *Conservative Nation*, p. 121.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 121; Rich, "Conservative Ideology," p. 53. Analyzing the reasons for support given by signers of a random sample of 3,537 of these letters, Diana Spearman found that 1,128, or almost 32 percent, cited fears of British culture and traditions. Ironically, Spearman's analysis of the content of these letters suggests that the vast majority supported Powell as a victim of an unjustified abridgement of the right to free speech, given Heath's removal of him from the shadow cabinet following the speech. Spearman divided supportive responses into seven categories based on stated grounds of support: complaints regarding immigrants' behavior, fears for British culture (including fears for British culture with special emphasis upon liberty), strain on social services, fear of repetition of events in the United States, financial fears, overpopulation, and racism. Spearman's statistical analysis of the distribution of supportive letter signers in the random sample among these categories found that a mere 0.3 percent appeared to support Powell out of sympathy with racism per se, whereas a striking 24 percent cited concern for liberty, usually meaning free speech. In fact, fully 74 percent of signers counted in the "fears for British culture" category actually fell within this subset ("Enoch Powell's Postbag," *New Society*, 9

May 1968, pp. 667–69; rpt. as "Letters of Blood," *New Statesman and Society* 5 [28 August 1992]: xii–xiii.) However, in the wake of Powell's dismissal, what was bound to have been most immediately striking was that he had received an incredible number of letters, almost all of them supportive. Gamble's analysis is therefore not undermined by Spearman's findings; what is called into question is the conclusion of party leaders and many commentators that Powell actually attracted overwhelming support by tapping a reservoir of popular racist sentiments. It is difficult to know what those responding to the Gallup Poll agreed with when they classified themselves as agreeing with the speech. As noted, Powell's policy position was no different from the established Tory position at the time. It was the tone and rhetoric of the speech that were considered shocking and provoked his dismissal. It is unlikely that respondents meant to indicate that they "agreed" with the tone and rhetoric of the speech, those being features of a speech of which one "approves" or "disapproves" rather than "agrees" or "disagrees." In asking respondents whether they "agreed" with the speech, the poll asked the wrong question. Nonetheless, the message that the results communicated to observers would have been that popular reaction to the speech had been overwhelmingly favorable.

42. Rich, "Conservative Ideology," p. 53; Gamble, *Conservative Nation*, p. 121–22.

43. Foot, *Rise of Enoch Powell,* p. 138.

44. Rich, "Conservative Ideology," p. 55.

45. 1972, Powell characterized the Conservative Party as properly "a capitalist party and a party of free enterprise [that] accepts the market as the arbiter of measurable material benefit and rejects the state." He therefore called for the reduction of the state's involvement with unions and for state withdrawal from its role in setting exchange rates and in providing housing and other social services. These measures, Powell argued, would reduce inflation and help to restore a free society. While in office, the Conservative leadership resisted Powell's ideas, but their ideological appeal made them increasingly attractive and difficult to ignore once the party returned to opposition (see Gamble, *Conservative Nation*, pp. 115–18).

46. Paul B. Rich: *Race and Empire in British Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 207, and "Conservative Ideology," p. 52.

47. Cited in Gamble, *Conservative Nation*, p. 120.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 119–20.

49. Cited in Harry Goulbourne, *Ethnicity and Nationalism in Post-Imperial Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 117. Emphasis in original.

50. Cited in Foot, *Rise of Enoch Powell,* p. 66. In his address to a political meeting in Gloucester in October 1969, the logic of Powell's appeal again ran along these lines. In response to a question from the audience, Powell asserted that "The British people have been told that they must deny that there is

any difference between those who belong to this country and those others. If you persist in asserting what is an undeniable truth, you will be hounded and pilloried as a racialist" (cited in Foot, *Rise of Enoch Powell,* p. 104).

51. For historical information on English hostility toward and violent attacks against Irish, Jewish, and other white immigrant groups, see Panikos Panayi, ed., *Racial Violence in Britain 1840–1950* (Leicester and London: Leicester University Press, 1993), and Paul Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965).

52. For over a decade, no prime ministerial candidate had directly addressed the issue of race. It was therefore remarkable when in a televised interview in 1978 Thatcher announced that the issue should be subject to official political discussion: "I think there is a feeling that the big political parties have not been talking about this [immigration] and sometimes . . . we are falsely accused of racial prejudice. . . . Now we are a big political party. If we do not want people to go to extremes—and I do not—we must talk about this problem and we must show we are prepared to deal with it." When asked whether she was trying to recapture Conservative voters who had defected to the NF, she similarly stated: "Oh, very much back, certainly, but I think that the National Front has, in fact, attracted more people from Labour than from us; but never be afraid to tackle something which people are worried about. We are not in politics to ignore people's worries: we are in politics to deal with them." Given her televised and widely reported reference to the "swamping" of British culture by immigrants in 1978, many accused Thatcher of not merely attending to the issues of concern to the NF's supporters, but of pandering to their prejudices as well (Messina, p. 144; quotes from Messina, pp. 127–28 and 143–44. Originally reported in *The Times*).

53. Whereas a mere 6 percent of Conservative candidates had cited immigration as an issue in their campaign addresses in 1974, 25 percent mentioned the issue in 1979. There was a similar upsurge of attention to the issue on the part of Labour candidates: 27 percent addressed themselves to the issue in 1979, whereas only 2 percent had done so in 1970 (see Messina, p. 130).

54. Ceri Peach, "A Geographical Perspective on the 1981 Urban Riots in England," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 9 (July 1986): 396.

55. See Stuart Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978).

56. Benyon, p. 236. Also along these lines, Ralf Dahrendorf commented that the riots marked "a breakdown of traditional British society in which people were basically well-behaved toward each other" (cited in Marguerite Johnson, "Anger in the Streets," *Time* 118 [20 July 1981]: 30).

57. Paul Gilroy, "Steppin' Out of Babylon—Race, Class and Autonomy," in *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and Racism in 70s Britain,* ed. Centre for Cultural Studies (London: Hutchinson, 1982), p. 279.

58. Peach, pp. 399–405; Benyon, p. 229. It should be noted, however, that the riots of July 1981 would appear to have involved more participation by

poor whites than the April 1981 riot in Brixton, where white rioters were not in evidence. (See Tony Bunyan, "The Police against the People," *Race and Class* 23 [Winter 1981]: 153–70.)

59. Benyon, p. 229; Peach, pp. 396–402.
60. In the wake of the Nottingham riot, the local council extended previously denied financial grants to the local Voluntary Liaison Committee and to the Coloured People's Housing Association (see Messina, pp. 55–56).
61. Layton-Henry, pp. 89–90.
62. Peach, pp. 396–402.
63. "Britain's Inner Cities," *The Economist* 280 (18 July 1981): 27.
64. E. P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present*, no. 50 (February 1971): 76–136.
65. Peach, pp. 396–97, 408–9.
66. Benyon, pp. 229–30, 261.
67. The riot that broke out in Brixton lasted three days. In the course of the rioting, 226 people were injured (including 150 police officers), 26 buildings and 20 vehicles were burned, and over 200 people were arrested (see Layton-Henry, p. 87).
68. Peach, p. 407.
69. Between January and July 1981, officers from four of the larger police stations in Merseyside stopped and searched almost 4,000 people. As in Brixton, this strategy did not prove particularly effective from a crime-detection standpoint. The 3,842 "stops" carried out by officers from these four stations resulted in a mere 179 arrests. In other words, more than 95 percent of those stopped and searched were never charged with anything whatsoever. (See Rob Rohrer, "Why Police Opened Fire," *New Statesman* 102 [18 September 1981]: 5).
70. Layton-Henry, p. 90.
71. Scarman Report; cited in Benyon, p. 228.
72. "Britain: The Tops of Volcanoes," *The Economist* 280 (11 July 1981): 28.
73. Cited in M. Johnson, p. 32.
74. Cited in Mike Phillips, "Rage That Shattered Thatcher," *New Statesman* 102 (17 July 1981): 8.
75. F. F. Ridley, "Unemployed Youth in Merseyside," *Political Quarterly* 52 (January–March 1981): 23.
76. Cited in M. Johnson, p. 32.
77. John Brecher and Seth Mydans, "Britain's Days of Rage," *Newsweek* 98 (20 July 1981): 34.
78. Peach, p. 407.
79. Phillips, "Rage That Shattered Thatcher," p. 8.

80. Mike Phillips, "It Couldn't Happen to the Met. . . ," *New Statesman* 101 (17 April 1981): 3.
81. "Police off Brixton's Map," *The Economist* 279 (18 April 1981): 54.
82. Benyon, p. 231.
83. "Police off Brixton's Map," p. 55.
84. Ivor Crewe, "How to Win a Landslide without Really Trying: Why the Conservatives Won in 1983," in *Britain at the Polls 1983: A Study of the General Election*, ed. Austin Ranney (n.p.: AEI, Duke University Press, 1985), p. 176.
85. Layton-Henry, p. 96.
86. R. W. Johnson, p. 10.
87. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
88. Rich, "Conservative Ideology," p. 66.
89. Layton-Henry, p. 96.
90. Peach, p. 396.
91. Benyon, p. 268.
92. *Ibid.,* pp. 263–64; Derek Bishton, "This Isn't a Riot—It's a War," *New Statesman* 110 (13 September 1985): 12.
93. "Poor Handsworth's Asians Pay the Price of Prosperity," *The Economist* 296 (14 September 1985): 59.
94. Bishton, p. 13.
95. *Ibid.,* p. 12.
96. *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13. As *The Economist* reported, under the auspices of a police force that had been "handling Handsworth 'sensitively' since well before 1981," the Sunday before the rioting "had been Handsworth's carnival day, with jolly bands in the streets, as policemen swapped hats with buxom ladies and puffed cautiously on hand-rolled smokes. In the happy aftermath there were, on Monday, only a dozen policemen on the district's streets" ("Now Handsworth Burns," *The Economist* 296 [14 September 1985]: 16).
97. Benyon, pp. 263–64.
98. "Poor Handsworth's Asians", pp. 59–60.
99. *Ibid.*; "Now Handsworth Burns," p. 16.
100. "Poor Handsworth's Asians," p. 60; "Now Handsworth Burns," p. 16. Interestingly, both Afro-Caribbean and Asian community leaders were at pains to deny that the riot represented an ethnic conflict. After the riot they appeared "together in solidarity in front of the cameras" and pointed out that Asian youths had numbered among the perpetrators of the violence (see Bishton, p. 13).

101. The incident that triggered the Brixton riot of 28–29 September was the shooting of a woman by police forces while they were searching her home for her son. A delegation of the woman's relatives and other residents was formed and went to the police station, where they confronted officers about the shooting. A crowd rapidly developed to witness the confrontation. The police promised the delegation that an enquiry would be conducted to investigate the shooting. The crowd was not satisfied with this promise, however, and expressed dissatisfaction by verbally challenging the police. Within less than an hour, petrol bombs were being constructed and thrown at the police station. Widespread looting and burning of stores and cars up the street eventually ensued, resulting in damages estimated at £3 million and some 220 arrests (see Benyon, p. 264, and "The Cops Still Kick Ass," *New Statesman;* 110 [4 October 1985]: 5).

102. Benyon, p. 264; Wiseman Khuzwayo, "Saturday Taught Me It Takes Seconds, Not Hours, for Full Riot to Break Out," *New Statesman* 110 (4 October 1985): 5; "The Cops Still Kick Ass," p. 5.

103. The police maintained that the woman had simply collapsed during the search. Her family, however, claimed that she had been assaulted by the officers involved in the search and that they had subsequently failed to call an ambulance (see Peach, p. 408; Benyon, pp. 266–67).

104. Black youths complained that they were being singled out and subjected to abusive treatment. In this context of increasingly tense community-police relations, the police stopped and searched a car driven by Floyd Jarrett, a young black man well known in the community for his involvement in the local social center. Eventually Jarrett was arrested on charges of assaulting an officer while his car was being searched, charges he denied. Five hours later, the police carried out a search of his home, during which his mother died. Jarrett alleged that the police had stolen the key to his house during his arrest. The police denied his allegations (see Benyon, pp. 266–67).

105. A number of police officers were shot, some 200 officers and 20 others were injured, petrol bombings were reported, fire was set to cars and buildings, stores were looted, and the local police commissioner was stabbed to death.

106. Only a few shops were looted, but as in the other riots, those that were targeted were generally owned by British Asians, while businesses owned by British Afro-Caribbean blacks in the same area were conspicuously spared. Likewise, *The Economist* characterized the perpetrators of the violence as "a mainly black mob." The housing project where the riot occurred, the worst in Haringsey, itself had a majority of black tenants ("Burnt Hopes," *The Economist,* 30 September 1981).

107. In the context of a reported increase in police-community tensions in the area that summer, four young black residents were denied bail at the magistrates' court. That night, a protest began outside the Toxteth police sta-

tion which ultimately led to a number of attacks on police cars and officers (see Benyon, p. 264).

108. See Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969).
109. Benyon, p. 268.
110. "Handsworth *Is* a Social Issue," *New Statesman* 110, 2842: 3.
111. Gilroy, p. 304.
112. "Handsworth *Is* a Social Issue," p. 4; Andrew Gamble, *The Free Economy and the Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1988), p. 115.
113. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).
114. See John Leslie's contribution to this volume.