Race and Elections: The Participation of Ethnic Minorities in Politics

by

Muhammad Anwar

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Muhammad Anwar is Research Professor in the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations (CRER), University of Warwick, having formerly been Director of CRER (1989-94) and Head of Research, Commission for Racial Equality (1981-89). He has an M.A. in Sociology, an M.A. (Econ) and a Ph.D. in Sociology. He has written extensively on ethnic and race relations. Professor Anwar's publications include: *Between Two Cultures* (1976) *Who Tunes Into What* (1978), *The Myth of Return* (1979), *Votes and Policies* (1980), *Ethnic Minority Broadcasting* (1983), *Ethnic Minorities and the 1983 General Election* (1984), *Race and Politics* (1986) and *Race Relations Policies in Britain* (1991). He is co-author of *Participation of Ethnic Minorities in the October 1974 General Election* (1975), *Television in a Multi-Racial Society* (1982) and *Overseas Doctors* (1987). He is also the editor of *Muslim Communities in Non-Muslim States* (1980) and co-editor of *Black and Ethnic Leaderships* (1991).

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Political parties cannot rely on ethnic minority support without giving something in return. The concentration of ethnic minorities in some inner-city areas of Britain has maximised their statistical significance as electors. They are also increasingly aware of their importance in those areas and are now in a position to use their electoral power to influence the outcome of elections. The main political parties cannot afford to ignore ethnic minorities any longer. However, the representation of ethnic minorities is still small compared with their numbers and more needs to be done in this connection by the political parties and by the ethnic minorities themselves to achieve a fair representation.

The participation of ethnic minorities in the British political system gives them the opportunity to express their views on the policies of the political parties but also to articulate their needs as British citizens. Their participation in politics is also crucial for achieving equality of opportunity in the political system but also through it in other fields. It was for these reasons that I first monitored the participation of Asians in Rochdale in the parliamentary by-election in 1972 (Anwar, 1973). Since that time, I have monitored all the general elections and some local elections to see what progress has been made in relation to the political participation of ethnic minorities at local and national levels. This book covers my recent research in this context. It also includes the results of a special survey of political party candidates in the 1990 local elections and various other relevant aspects at that election in six local authority areas. I was assisted for this survey by Karen Ross who was then a PhD student at the Centre. I am grateful to her for her work. Her research is also reported in appendices 4, 5 and 6 under her own name. I am also grateful to Qadir Bakhsh, Hamida Kazi and Saadia Gulraja of the Race Relations Unit of the London Borough of Waltham Forest for their help in the research in Waltham Forest, in particular for the calculation of turn-out and the preparation of diagrams.

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who have helped me during my research, in particular, David Owen, Zig Layton-Henry and Mark Johnson.

Chapter One: INTRODUCTION

For a long time Britain has received and absorbed large numbers of people from other countries and many Britons went abroad to colonies as rulers, administrators, soldiers, businessmen and missionaries. Those who came to Britain in early and more recent periods were mainly white people and included: Germans, Dutch, Flemings, Wallons, Huguenots, Irish, Jews and Poles. It is only in the last half century that Britain has received in significant numbers from the former colonies workers and their dependents whose colour differs from that of the white indigenous population, although the presence of non-white(1) people is not new (Fryer, 1984; Visram, 1986). The main sources of this immigration are former colonies, the New Commonwealth countries of the Indian sub-continent and the West Indies. The estimated present day number of non-white people, also known as ethnic minorities, is just over 5.5 percent of the total population of 55 million. Over 50 percent are British born and thus over half of the ethnic minority population is not 'immigrant' but native British born. Most of those who arrived as immigrants have also taken up British nationality. Ethnic minorities in Britain have a right to vote and stand for elections both as citizens of the United Kingdom and as Commonwealth citizens. In this book we examine how far they have exercised this right and participated in the political process. First we will review briefly the process of immigration, the numbers involved, and the political and public reactions to immigration of non-white people, because this is directly relevant to their overall status in the society and to the chances of their participation in the political process.

Like the right to vote, one reason which helped the process of migration was that Commonwealth citizens had the right of free entry into Britain under the Commonwealth rules. With historical colonial links coupled with the personal knowledge about Britain of several thousands of soldiers and seamen from India and the West Indies acquired during the Second World War, some decided to stay in Britain and others came back to work in the expanding British industry after the war. They were initially welcomed by white British public as allies, who had defended

their nation (Cabinet Papers, 1950). However, before this period seamen had come to this country for many years and there were already established communities of non-white people in the ports, notably Bristol, Cardiff and Liverpool.

The real start of mass migration, after the Second World War, was the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* in June 1948. This ship came to Tilbury Docks with 492 immigrants from Jamaica; most of those had been to Britain during the war, had returned to the West Indies and were unable to secure work either there or in the United States. It was followed by SS *Orbita* and SS *Georgia* in the same year. After this immigration progressed slowly by air and sea and during the 1950s the number of immigrants from the West Indies increased reaching an annual rate of 30,000 in 1955 and 1956. The Conservative government elected in 1951 encouraged both emigration and immigration although concern was expressed in the House of Commons by some MPs about the number of coloured immigrants during that period. As pressure from some politicians and the public for immigration control grew (see below) the Conservative party changed its policy of free personal movement and migration for all Commonwealth citizens to a policy of immigration control and published a bill on 1 November 1961 to restrict free entry. As a result of the debate on immigration control, more and more West Indians migrated to Britain to beat the ban. It is estimated that 98,000 persons migrated to Britain from the West Indies between the beginning of 1961 and the middle of 1962 when the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962 came into force.

The migration to Britain from India and Pakistan started later than that from the West Indies, but also reached a very high level from 1960 onwards as people tried to enter Britain while there was still time (Rose *et al*, 1969). In the beginning the migration from the Indian Sub-Continent was unorganised but later it developed into chain migration where friends and relatives were encouraged and helped by 'pioneer' migrants to follow then. After the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962, the introduction of the voucher system reinforced the sponsorship and patronage of friends and relatives because the migrants already in Britain were in a position to obtain vouchers for their kin and friends.

Institutional arrangements also helped the process of migration from the New Commonwealth countries. These included the London Transport Executive's agreement with Barbadian Immigrants Liaison Service which loaned fares to Britain to several thousand Barbadians, and the recruitment of workers in Jamaica and Trinidad in the mid 1960s after the 1962 Act. Many workers, particularly women, were recruited from the West Indies for the National Health Service (NHS). In India and Pakistan textile and other companies advertised for workers and some workers were directly recruited by employers. This resulted into chain migration of Pakistani and Indians from the same areas. The Pakistanis who work in Lancashire and Yorkshire textile mills and the Sikhs in the car industry and foundries in the Midlands have also been part of such a migration process. Two other reasons for migration of Indians and Pakistanis to Britain were the partition of British India in 1947 when Pakistan was created and the construction of the Mangla Dam which in particular affected people from Azad Kashmir. In both cases large number of people were displaced and some looked for opportunities in Britain (Anwar, 1979).

Most New Commonwealth immigrants were economic migrants and they filled a gap for labour in particular in the unskilled sectors and poorly paid jobs as a result of the reconstruction and expansion of the British industry after the war (Patterson, 1968). Their position in the labour market is a fundamental aspect of their position in British society. The type of work available to them on arrival not merely governed their incomes, but also determined in which areas they settled, where their children went to schools, their chances of participation in civic life and their overall status in society. As they were granted access only to a limited range of occupations upon arrival or later on through the voucher system, there were and still are concentrations in certain industrial sectors and factories. This helps to explain their concentration in certain towns, cities and regions of Britain (see Chapter Two). On the other hand their concentration has given them more power, due to their numbers in various areas, in the political process.

The immigration of New Commonwealth citizens started slowly and peaked in 1961 and 1962. In 1956 just under 47,000 people entered Britain while this number rose to 136,000 in 1961 and 94,900 for the first six months of 1962 upto the introduction of the 1962 Act. As a result the number of New Commonwealth immigrants more than doubled in the inter-censal period of 1951-61 from 256,000 to 541,000. Those who came to Britain before the 1962 Act were predominantly economically active persons. They included a significant proportion of women among the West Indians, while the overwhelming majority of the Indians and Pakistanis were men. With the immigration control legislation the balance shifted between workers and dependents entering Britain. For example, between July 1962, when the Act became operative, and December 1968 only 77,966 voucher holders were admitted compared with 257,220 dependents (Deakin, 1970). This meant a drastic decline in the number of immigrants coming as workers. The net immigration from the West Indies, India and Pakistan between 1955 and 1968 was 669,640 (Anwar, 1979). The number of people admitted for settlement from all the New Commonwealth countries between 1969-77 was 318,521. Of these, 259,646 came as dependants and only 58,875 were male workers thus continuing the decline in the number of immigrants entering as workers. It is relevant to point out that, for example, in 1984 out of a total of 57,000 immigrants including whites, less than half 24,800 were from the New Commonwealth and this was reduced to 22,700 in 1988. In 1992 overall acceptances including removal of conditions of those already settled in Britain from the New Commonwealth numbered 27,900 (Home Office 1993) which was only just over half of all acceptances (52%). On the other hand it is worth pointing out that between 1971 and 1983 more people left Britain than entered it. Overall the net loss of migration during this period was almost half a million (465,000) mainly as a result of emigration to Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Canada, South Africa and the European Union (EU) countries. It is fair to conclude that large scale immigration from the New Commonwealth is now over and although we know that dependents of legally settled migrants face

difficulties in getting entry to Britain, as shown in some recent reports (CRE, 1985 and 1989).

The estimated ethnic minority population in 1951 was 74,000. It increased to 336,000 in 1961 and to 1,316,000 in 1971. The increase between 1961 and 1971 was very significant. At the 1981 Census it was estimated that the ethnic minority population was over 2,207,000 although the Census excluded those ethnic minority households where the head was born in Britain. The 1991 Census, which included an ethnic question estimated the ethnic minority population as just over 3 million.

As mentioned above, ethnic minorities have settled in industrial areas where there were job opportunities. As a result the ethnic minority population is not distributed throughout the country in the same way as the white population. A large number of ethnic minorities live in a small number of local authority areas and there is further concentration of them in a small number of parliamentary constituencies and local electoral wards. There are also differences in terms of settlement patterns between the two large groups i.e. Afro-Caribbeans and Asians. The Asians are relatively found in more areas than the Afro-Caribbeans. The overall pattern of their settlement as presented in Chapter Two has not changed significantly in the last 20 years.

It is relevant to mention here some of the political and public reactions to the arrival and presence of ethnic minorities in Britain because these are relevant to and have bearings on their political participation. It appears from Cabinet papers that the Labour government discussed the immigration of non-white immigrants in May and June 1950. It concluded that no decision should be taken following the advice of the Home Secretary that the numbers were so small and that the legislation to control immigration could be controversial because of the Commonwealth rules (Cabinet Papers, 1950). During the Conservative government between 1951 and 1955 the immigration issue was raised by some MPs in the House of Commons and a few discussions took place in the Cabinet meetings and as a result in November 1955 a Committee of Ministers was set up to consider the issue. No action was taken as a result of the Committee report but it felt that non-white immigration was a problem

and it should be kept under review (Cabinet Papers, 1956).

While national politicians were discussing the immigration issue in committees there were also local reactions to non-white immigrants in some areas but these never reached the national public or political agenda.

The turning point was the race riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill in London in August and September 1958 which made national newspapers and broadcasting media headlines, so that the issue of immigration control was discussed widely and became subject of opinion polls. The Labour Party condemned the riots and issued a statement on racial discrimination which non-white people were already experiencing. It was also against immigration control, but the Conservative Party could not stand the public pressure and after the 1959 general election introduced a bill to control Commonwealth immigration. After this the issue of immigration of non-whites and now ethnic minorities has remained both in the political and public domain.

The 1964 general election provided an opportunity for the Conservative Party to claim the benefits of the 1962 Act and for Labour to accuse the Conservatives of using immigration as an excuse for their poor performance in education and housing (Foot, 1965). The Labour Party was elected to form the government but the result in Smethwick, where Patrick Gordon Walker, Labour Shadow Foreign Secretary was defeated by a local candidate, Peter Griffiths of the Conservative Party, who ran an anti-immigration campaign, shocked politicians (Hartley-Brewer, 1965).

It appeared that in some other areas anti-immigration candidates had also benefited. Four years later, because of the public reactions it was the Labour government which passed the second Commonwealth Immigration Act in 1968 restricting the entry of Kenyan Asians with British passports. However, it also passed the Race Relations Acts of 1965 and 1968 to tackle racial discrimination in employment, housing and the provision of goods, facilities and services including education. These Acts set up the Community Relations Commission (CRC) and the Race Relations Board (RRB) (see Anwar, 1991). After this the Conservative government passed the 1971 Immigration Act and the Nationality Act 1981. The Labour government passed another Race Relations Act in 1976

which set up the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) after merging the RRB and the CRC. Since 1979 Conservative governments have also passed various Immigration Rules thus making the entry of non-whites to Britain even more difficult.

The issue of non-white immigration also led to the formation of several active anti-immigrant organisations. The first two to oppose immigration were formed in 1960: Birmingham Immigration Control Association and Southall Residents Association. The National Front was founded in 1966 and started contesting elections on an anti-immigrant platform.

During this period Enoch Powell MP kept writing in newspapers and making speeches against large scale New Commonwealth immigration and then made his 'rivers of blood' speech in April 1968. Mr Heath, the Conservative leader at the time, declared Powell's speech to be racialist in tone and dropped him from his Shadow Cabinet. However, this did not stop Powell getting some public support and making non-white immigrants a topic of his speeches in the following period (Foot, 1969). A part of the Conservative Party manifesto at the 1970 general election was a new immigration act. The 1971 Immigration Act was passed extending the 1962 and 1968 Acts. Then came the expulsion of Ugandan Asians by President Idi Amin in September and October 1972 when 27,000 were allowed to come to Britain. There was an intense media coverage of this development and Powell and other anti-immigrants used the opportunity to exploit public feelings regarding non-white people. As a result the right-wing Monday club started a Halt Immigration Now Campaign in 1972. Since then every Conservative Party Annual Conference has received a significant number of resolutions, and immigration became a favourite topic at elections in some areas and sometimes nationally. As a result of 140 resolutions on immigration at the Annual Conservative Party Conference in 1976 the then Shadow Home Secretary, Mr Whitelaw, declared that the Party would work towards ending postwar immigration. In January 1978 Mrs Thatcher, the Conservative Party Leader, in an interview on the World in Action programme said that people were really afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with different cultures. She added that 'we do have to hold out the prospect of an end to

immigration except, of course, for compassionate cases' (*Granada TV*, 30 January 1978). This interview received a very wide coverage in the media and some of the coverage was very critical of Mrs Thatcher's remarks. However, it brought the issue of non-white people in Britain once more onto the national public and political agenda. Other main events which helped to focus on non-white people in the 1980s and early 1990s included: inner-city riots in Bristol in 1980, Brixton and Toxteth in 1981 (Scarman, 1981) and Handsworth and Tottenham in 1985 (Gifford, 1986), the issue of the Hong Kong British passport holders and other British Dependent Territories when the Nationality Act 1981 was going through Parliament and the British Nationality (Hong Kong) Bill in 1990 during which Norman Tebbit MP proposed a 'cricket test' of loyalty of ethnic minorities in Britain, the Rushdie Affair in 1989 and the issue of refugees and asylum seekers. All these events received very extensive media coverage. More recent events include the victory of the British National Party (BNP) in a council by election (see Chapter Nine) which again started a debate about the presence of ethnic minorities in Britain. At the same time the number of racial attacks and harassment cases have increased. A recent ICM opinion poll for the *Sunday Express* found that more than 80 percent of those questioned were concerned about immigration with 36 percent favouring enforced repatriation (*The Sunday Express*, 27 September, 1993). This poll shows that there are racist attitudes and behaviour in Britain in the 1990s. At the same time there are thousands of acts of racial discrimination which ethnic minorities face every day because of their colour and religious and cultural backgrounds.

All the above political and public reactions to ethnic minorities have also made them aware of their insecure position in society. As a response to these dangers over this period, they have formed organisations to counter anti-immigrant propaganda and started organising mobilisation and participation in the political process. Because participation in the political process allows ethnic minorities to articulate their needs and to express their views on the policies of the political parties, it is also essential for ethnic minorities to achieve equality of opportunity through the decision making process. This book presents some relevant

information in this context.

Chapter two deals with the settlement patterns of ethnic minorities indicating their statistical significance in the areas of their settlement. Chapter three analyses the participation of ethnic minorities in the electoral system and chapter four examines the voting patterns of ethnic minorities. Chapter five describes the political parties' initiatives and examines the representation of ethnic minorities at national and local levels. Chapter six analyses the attitudes of candidates to relevant issues and chapter seven describes and analyses the political parties' position on election issues in the 1990 local elections and in the 1992 general election. Chapter eight examines race relations in the political context and chapter nine analyses the anti-ethnic minority electoral support. Finally, chapter ten draws some conclusions about the current participation of ethnic minorities in the political process and how it is likely to develop in the future.

Chapter Two: LOCATIONS AND IMPORTANCE OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

The 1991 Census, which included an ethnic question, shows that the ethnic minority population in Great Britain was 3.1 million out of the total population of almost 55 million. Ethnic minorities have settled in industrial urban areas where there were job opportunities. This applied both to those who initially had freedom of movement and to those who came through government and employers recruitment efforts (Anwar, 1979). This means that the ethnic minority population is not distributed throughout the country in the same way as the white population. They are highly concentrated which makes them statistically significant in the political process in the areas of their settlement. It also makes their organisation and mobilisation easier.

The 1991 Census shows that most of the ethnic minorities are to be found in the South East (56.4%) especially in the Greater London area (44.8%), the Midlands (27%), the North and the North West (16.5%) and the remainder (5.5%) in the South West, Wales and Scotland. The contrast between the concentration of ethnic minorities in London and the South East (56.4%) compared with the white population (29.9%) is particularly marked. Regional distribution of ethnic minorities is presented in Table 1.

Out of the 3.1 million ethnic minority population an estimated 1.5 million are of South Asian origin, 0.88 million are of Black-Afro-Caribbean origin and the remaining 0.64 million ethnic minorities are Chinese or belong to other ethnic minority groups as presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Ethnic Minorities in Great Britain by Region, 1991

Regions and Metropolitan Counties	Total Population (000s)	Whites (000s)	% of GB	Eth. Min. (000s)	% of GB
South East	17,208.3	15,512.9	29.9	1,695.4	56.2
Greater London	6,679.7	5,333.6	10.3	1,346.1	44.6
East Anglia	2,027.0	1,983.6	3.8	43.4	1.4
South West	4,609.4	4,546.8	8.8	62.6	2.1
West Midlands	5,150.2	4,725.8	9.1	424.4	14.1
West Midlands MC	2,551.7	2,178.1	4.2	373.5	12.4
East Midlands	3,953.4	3,765.4	7.3	188.0	6.2
Yorks & Humberside	4,836.5	4,622.5	8.9	214.0	7.1
South Yorkshire	1,262.6	1,226.5	2.4	36.2	1.2
West Yorkshire	2,013.7	1,849.6	3.6	164.1	5.4
North West	6,243.7	5,999.1	11.6	244.6	8.1
Greater Manchester	2,499.4	2,351.2	4.5	148.2	4.9
Merseyside	1,403.6	1,337.7	2.7	25.9	0.9
North	3,026.7	2,988.2	5.8	38.5	1.3
Tyne & Wear	1,095.2	1,075.3	2.1	19.9	0.7
Wales	2,835.1	2,793.5	5.4	41.6	1.4
Scotland	4,998.6	4,935.9	9.5	62.6	2.1
Great Britain	54,888.8	51,873.8	100.0	3,015.1	100.1

Source: Adapted from Owen (1992)

It is clear from Table 2 that Indians are the largest single ethnic minority group (0.84 million), followed by Black-Caribbean (0.50 million) and Pakistanis (0.48 million). The Census shows that Black Afro-Caribbeans are highly concentrated in Greater London (609,700) and the West Midlands metropolitan county (92,000). Comparatively South Asians are more dispersed. For example, while two fifths of Indians and over half of Bangladeshis live in Greater London less than a fifth (18.4%) of

Pakistanis are living in this area. Almost two-thirds of the total population of Pakistanis live in the conurbations of the West Midlands (20.7%), Yorkshire and Humberside (19.9%) and the North and North-West (18.2%) and Scotland (4.4%). The settlement pattern of Pakistanis in these regions is not a chance phenomenon but came about as a result of active kin-friend chain migration (Anwar 1979). In addition to the London area (52.7%) Bangladeshis are also found in the West Midlands (11.9%) North and North West (11.3%) and Wales (2.3%). Similarly just over half of the Chinese (53.3%) are in the South East and the rest are scattered in all regions with 14.3 per cent in the North and North West and a significant number of them in Scotland (6.7%).

Table 2: Ethnic Groups in Great Britain, 1991 (000s)

Ethnic Group	Great Britain	England	Wales	Scotland
White	51,873.8	44,144.3	2,793.9	4,935.9
Ethnic minorities	3,015.1	2,910.9	41.6	62.6
Black-Caribbean	500.0	495.7	3.3	0.9
Black-African	212.4	206.9	2.7	2.8
Black-other	178.4	172.3	3.5	2.6
Indian	840.3	823.8	6.4	10.1
Pakistani	476.6	449.6	5.7	21.2
Bangladeshi	162.8	157.9	3.8	1.1
Chinese	156.9	141.7	4.8	10.5
Other Asian	197.5	189.3	3.7	4.6
Other-other	290.2	273.7	7.7	8.8
Total popn.	54,888.8	47,055.2	2,835.1	4,998.6

Source: Adapted from Owen (1992)

The migration from the New Commonwealth to Britain was initially predominantly male. Over all the balance of the sexes among ethnic

minority population is now corrected as shown by the 1991 Census. However, some South Asians with more recent migration history still have more males than females. For example, there are 1091 males per 1000 females for Bangladeshis and 1063 males to 1000 females for Pakistanis (in 1961 82 per cent Pakistanis were male). Among whites there were more women, 935 males to 1000 females. On the other hand the ethnic minority population is much younger than the white population. It has fewer older people, 3.2 per cent compared with 17 per cent for the white population. It is worth pointing out that more than half of the South Asians (51.9%) and 45.5 per cent black groups compared with only about 32 per cent of the white population are aged under 25. Almost 36 per cent of South Asians are under 16 years compared with 30 per cent black people and only 19.3 per cent of the white population.

It was mentioned above that the concentration of ethnic minorities in some areas means that at least in statistical terms they are in a position to influence the political process. Within the regions outlined above they are even further concentrated in some parliamentary constituencies and local election wards. The 1991 Census shows that there were 78 parliamentary constituencies with more than 15 per cent ethnic minority population (23 with over 30 per cent). In 1981 there were 58 constituencies with more than 15 per cent of the total population living in households with head born in the New Commonwealth and Pakistan (NCWP). It is estimated that there are now over 125 parliamentary constituencies in England with an ethnic minority population of over 10 per cent. Table 3 presents a list of 30 top constituencies in terms of ethnic minority population.

There are now several hundred local election wards with more than 10 per cent of ethnic minority population. Out of the 10,500 local election wards in Great Britain 1,309 have more than 5.5 per cent (the national average) of their population from ethnic minorities. Out of these 100 wards have over 43 per cent ethnic minority population as shown by the 1991 Census. The highest ethnic minority population of 90.21 per cent was recorded in Northcote in the London Borough of Ealing, followed by Spinney Hill in Leicester with 82.52 per cent of ethnic minority population. It is worth pointing out that in 1981 there were 17 wards

where over half of the population was composed of ethnic minorities (Anwar, 1986). However, in 1991 there were 55 wards with more than 50 per cent ethnic minority population. Table 4 shows how the ethnic minority population has changed in the 17 wards between 1981 and 1991.

Table 3:   Thirty Top Parliamentary Constituencies in Terms of Ethnic Minority Population, (1991)

Parliamentary Constituency	Total Pop.	Ethnic Min. pop.	% of total population			
			E.M pop.	Black	South Asian	Other
Birmingham, Ladywood	80008	44503	55.6	17.3	34.6	3.7
Brent South	80366	44556	55.4	25.4	22.5	7.5
Birmingham, Small Heath	81280	44689	55.0	11.7	39.6	3.7
Newham North East	81896	43747	53.4	12.2	35.2	6.1
Ealing, Southall	97280	49829	51.2	6.9	39.0	5.3
Birmingham, Sparkbrook	75492	36975	49.0	7.9	36.8	4.3
Newham North West	60457	28856	47.7	19.3	23.6	4.9
Bethnal Green and Stepney	80394	34479	42.9	5.5	34.4	3.0
Brent North	81002	34371	42.4	8.6	25.3	8.6
Tottenham	99445	38129	38.3	24.8	6.8	6.8
Leyton	76921	29239	38.0	17.9	15.3	4.8
Leicester East	85472	32461	38.0	2.3	33.5	2.1
Ilford South	77681	28625	36.8	6.7	25.8	4.3
Brent East	81683	29992	36.7	15.6	13.8	7.3
Bradford West	97058	35450	36.5	2.3	31.9	2.3
Hackney North and Stoke Newington	91363	31846	34.9	20.8	8.2	5.8

Croydon North West	74379	25391	34.1	14.5	13.9	5.6
Vauxhall	91533	30528	33.4	25.4	2.5	5.4
Peckham	76168	25166	33.0	25.8	1.8	5.4
Leicester South	95504	30884	32.3	3.1	26.1	3.1
Hackney South and Shoreditch	89894	28928	32.2	23.1	4.2	4.8
Lewisham, Deptford	78038	25075	32.1	24.8	1.9	5.5
Norwood	74976	22895	30.5	23.5	2.7	4.4
Harrow East	104802	31004	29.6	4.2	20.6	4.9
Feltham and Heston	110697	32646	29.5	2.3	22.8	4.3
Walthamstow	64604	18909	29.3	11.1	13.0	5.1
Bow and Poplar	80648	22796	28.3	8.8	15.0	4.4
Streatham	78322	20717	26.5	16.1	5.9	4.5
Tooting	87429	22963	26.3	12.2	8.7	5.4
Slough	109394	28166	25.7	3.5	20.1	2.1

Source: 1991 Census (Crown copyright) produced by NEMDA, January 1994.

It is clear from Table 4 how the ethnic minority population has changed in these areas. It is worth mentioning here that the 1981 Census estimate was based on head of household born in New Commonwealth countries and Pakistan (NCWP) which did not take into account ethnic minorities where the head of household was born in this country. Therefore, the 1981 Census figures were always seen as under estimates. In this respect the 1991 Census which included an ethnic question is more reliable. For this reason a list of wards with 50 per cent or more ethnic minority population is presented in Appendix 2. Similarly additional parliamentary constituencies with 15-25 per cent ethnic minority population are presented in Appendix 1 (addition to those presented in Table 3).

Table 4: 17 Local Wards Showing Ethnic Minority Population in 1981 and 1991

Ward	Borough/District	Ethnic Minority Population	
		1981	1991
Northcote	Ealing	85.4	90.2
Soho	Birmingham	71.7	66.9
Glebe	Ealing	71.0	81.1
University	Bradford	67.6	73.9
Brookhouse	Blackburn	66.1	78.0
Wycliffe	Leicester	65.7	50.5
Spitalfields	Tower Hamlets	63.1	72.8
Spinney Hill	Leicester	61.8	82.5
Mount Pleasant	Ealing	58.8	74.2
Sparkbrook	Birmingham	55.0	66.6
Upton	Newham	55.0	71.8
Kensington	Newham	55.0	74.2
Handsworth	Birmingham	54.0	69.3
Wembly Central	Brent	53.3	66.8
Kensal Rise	Brent	52.9	46.5
Sparkhill	Birmingham	52.6	62.3
Aston	Birmingham	51.0	54.6

Source: for 1981 (Anwar 1986:22) and for 1991 (1991 Census)

It must be stressed here that it is not only the number of ethnic minorities in certain areas which makes them electorally important but also whether they actively take part in the process through registration on the electoral register, and if they are on the register, whether they come out to vote and how they compare with white people in terms of such participation.

Chapter Three: ETHNIC MINORITIES AND THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Registration

The first step towards participation in local, general and European Parliament elections is registration on the Electoral Register. However, the Electoral Register normally tends to provide an incomplete picture of all those eligible because it is published four months after it is compiled and is invariably 16 months out of date when it is replaced by a new Register. Thus 'at all times, large numbers of dead people are on the register while people who have moved are not registered in respect of their current address' (Leonard, 1968: 16). As a result the Electoral Register is at any time no more than 94 per cent accurate as a record of all those who are eligible to register. It tends to become inaccurate at a rate of a half per cent per month due to removals, right up to the last month before it is replaced when its accuracy drops to 87 per cent (Gray and Gee, 1967). In addition to these problems some ethnic minorities experience language difficulties; some may not be familiar with their political rights; still others probably feel their stay in Britain is a temporary one and do not therefore get involve in the political process. We examine here what progress has been made in this respect by the ethnic minorities in the last three decades.

A study in 1964 showed that less than half of all Commonwealth immigrants were registered (Deakin, 1965). Ten years later a sample survey of 227 Asians and Afro-Caribbeans and 175 whites, in 1974, from the same areas showed that although improvements had taken place ethnic minorities were still five times as likely not to have registered to vote as were whites (Anwar and Kohler, 1975). Only 6 per cent of whites were not registered compared with almost a quarter (24%) of ethnic minorities. When those who had recently moved and new voters (18 years old) were excluded, it was found that the figure for whites remained 6 per cent compared with 27 per cent Asians and 37 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans who were not registered in that year. However, further research in 1976 in two areas where fieldwork had been undertaken in 1974 showed a great

improvement in the levels of registration of ethnic minorities. In Bradford, 9 per cent of Asians were not registered as against 5 per cent of whites from the same areas. In Birmingham only 5 per cent of Asians and 13 per cent of West Indians were not on the register compared with 4 per cent of whites from the same areas (Anwar, 1979). It appeared that this improvement took place because of the efforts of the then Community Relations Commission, the two local authorities, local community relations councils, political parties and also some ethnic minority community groups.

A survey in 1979 in 24 parliamentary constituencies with ethnic minority concentrations, of 1,115 whites, 595 Asians, 152 Afro-Caribbeans and 65 members of other ethnic minority groups (Chinese, Malaysian and Cypriots) showed that overall 23 per cent of ethnic minority respondents were not registered compared with 7 per cent whites. It was found that 23 per cent of Asians and 19 per cent Afro-Caribbeans were not registered. If we compare this with the 1974 survey we find that some ethnic groups improved more than others: the level of registration among Afro-Caribbeans rose by 18 per cent (from 63% in 1974 to 81% in 1979) while among Asians it increased from 73 per cent in 1974 to 77 per cent in 1979; for whites it remained virtually constant (94 per cent in 1974 and 93 per cent in 1979) (Anwar, 1980).

To put the 1974 and 1979 surveys in a wider context we may consider an OPCS study undertaken in 1981 at the time of the Census. This showed that in Inner London both the Asians and Afro-Caribbeans had about double the non-registration rate of white people (27%, 24% and 12% respectively) (Todd and Butcher, 1982). It also showed that generally the situation with regard to registration had deteriorated in comparison with the survey of Electoral Registration in 1966 of eligible people in England and Wales (Gray and Gee, 1967). In 1966 only 4 per cent were not registered compared to 6.7 per cent in 1981.

In 1983 the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) undertook a survey of registration in inner-city areas. This survey showed that among those qualified to be registered, 17 per cent of whites and 20 per cent of ethnic minorities were not registered (Anwar, 1984). Compared with the 1979 survey the level of registration had particularly fallen amongst whites

from 93 per cent to 81 per cent. On the other hand the level of registration amongst ethnic minorities as a group had improved marginally from 77 per cent in 1979 to 78 per cent in 1983. However, while there was a slight improvement for Asians (77% to 79%) the level of registration for Afro-Caribbeans had fallen in 1983 from 81 per cent in 1979 to 76 per cent. It is worth pointing out here that in both 1979 and 1983 surveys there was a lot of variation in registration levels at constituency level as far as ethnic minorities were concerned. These were linked mainly with the policies of the Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and the efforts of others concerned.

A study in Bradford in 1986 found that 18.2 per cent of Asians, 14.6 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans and 18.1 per cent of whites from the same areas were not registered. However, after taking out those who had a good reason for non-registration (moving house, not eligible because of nationality) 4.7 per cent of Asians, 8.4 per cent Afro-Caribbeans and 3.9 per cent of whites were not registered. (LeLohe, 1987). This certainly shows improvement compared with the 1976 survey of registration in Bradford referred to above.

Table 5: Non-Registration by Ethnic Group 1991

Ethnic Group	Proportion not registered %	Base (= 100%)
White	6	9,170
Black	24	154
Indian, Pakistani	15	259
Bangladeshi	24	68
Other groups		
All eligible people	7	9,652

Source: Adapted from Smith (1993)

As a follow up to the 1981 OPCS survey another survey of registration

was conducted in 1991 at the time of the Census (Smith, 1993). This survey shows, using the categories in the ethnic question in the Census, that 24 per cent of Blacks, 15 per cent of South Asians, 24 per cent of other ethnic groups, and 6 per cent of white people were not registered (Table 5 gives the details).

This survey also showed that overall 20.4 per cent respondents in Inner London were not registered, which is worse than the 14.4 per cent recorded in 1981. Since almost 26 per cent of ethnic minorities live in Inner London it is not surprising that their non-registration levels are so high. The 1981 and the 1991 OPCS surveys asked about reasons for non-registration. Many gave more than one reason but 48 per cent in 1991 said they 'didn't know'. In 1991 30 per cent did not register because they did not complete 'Form A' or supply the relevant information and 19 per cent stated that they did not wish to be registered or could not be bothered, 22 per cent said that there was a doubt about their eligibility. Doubt about the residence status was the most common reason (13%) given as compared with the other eligibility criteria i.e. age (5%) and nationality (4%). The 'Poll Tax' could also be a reason for not registering in 1991. In addition to these reasons ethnic minorities face additional difficulties such as newness, the language difficulty that some Asians and other ethnic minority groups face, the general alienation of some groups, the fear of racial harassment and racial attacks from the extreme right-wing group people, who could identify Asians, Chinese, and others from their names on the Register. Finally, high levels of non-registration could be simply due to the policies of the Registration Offices which have not changed their methods in this respect to meet the needs of their multi-racial electorates (Anwar, 1986).

Turn-Out

If ethnic minorities are on the Electoral Register do they come out to vote? It is difficult to calculate turn out for all ethnic groups by the fact that Afro-Caribbeans and other ethnic minority groups with anglicized names are not easily identifiable from the Electoral Register. One way to overcome this difficulty is to compare Asians with non - Asians either by

observing voters as they come out of polling stations at elections or by checking the marked registers after a particular election. There could be a small margin of error in identifying the name and the ethnic group of some electors as some Asians also have anglicized names. Another method of assessing turn-out rates is through a survey when electors on the register could be asked to recall whether they voted at any particular elections and the results can then be compared with the turn-out recorded by polling clerks. To examine a pattern regarding turn-out of Asians vs non-Asians results from several local and national surveys undertaken over a period of 28 years are used.

A survey in Bradford in 1966 showed that in local elections the maximum turn-out among Asians was 13 per cent compared with the highest, 27 per cent for non-Asians (Le Lohe, 1975). It must be mentioned here that generally turn-out at local elections is lower than at general elections. A survey at the October 1974 general election in Bradford and Rochdale showed that the turn-out rate among Asians was 57.7 per cent compared with 54.6 per cent from non-Asians (Anwar, 1975). At the 1979 general election turn-out rates in 19 parliamentary constituencies were calculated. In 18 of the 19 areas the Asian turn-out was higher compared with that of non-Asians. On average it was 65 per cent for Asians and 61 per cent for non-Asians. Additional work was undertaken in Bradford West, Rochdale and Burnley constituencies which showed that Asian voters turn-out was 73.1 per cent compared with 56.5 per cent for non-Asians (Anwar, 1980). This confirmed the general trend of higher turn-out rates for Asians. However, once again this trend was checked at the 1983 general election. In the 20 constituencies covered in the survey in 1983, some of which had been covered in the 1979 survey, overall 81 per cent of Asian electors turned out to vote compared with 60 per cent of non-Asian electors. In 18 of the 20 constituencies turn-out among Asians was higher than non-Asians (Anwar, 1984). The survey also found that almost a quarter of the electors on the register in the 20 constituencies included were Asians. Therefore the greater likelihood of their turn-out to vote suggested that they had a significant impact on the outcome in those areas. Although no special survey of turn-out was undertaken at the 1987 general election we could estimate this from a survey of voting intentions

conducted by the Harris Research Centre for *The Asian Times*. It interviewed 707 Asians and 299 Afro-Caribbeans. The results showed that 74 per cent of Asians stated that they were absolutely certain to vote compared with 51 per cent Afro-Caribbeans (*The Asian Times* 5-11 June, 1989). Some survey work after the election in five Northern towns, where respondents were asked to recall whether they had voted at the 1987 general election, showed that 63.8 per cent of Asians, 45.2 per cent of whites and 36.3 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans had voted (Le Lohe, 1990).

No survey of comparative turn-out rates was undertaken at the 1992 general election but a survey by the NOP for *The Independent on Sunday* and the Runnymede Trust in the summer of 1991 shows us some trend regarding turn-out. It found that Afro-Caribbean people were less likely to vote at the forthcoming general election than were Asians or white electors. It showed that 53 per cent Asians, 44 per cent Afro-Caribbeans and 53 per cent of whites were 'certain to vote'. Another 30 per cent of Asians, 23 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans and also 23 per cent of whites were 'very likely or fairly likely to vote' if there was a general election tomorrow (Amin and Richardson, 1992). The results from the 1987 and the 1991 surveys confirm the earlier patterns of reported turn-out for various ethnic groups.

Turning back to local elections we find a similar pattern to general elections. In 1969, in Bradford, it was found that the turn-out for Asians was 53.8 per cent compared with 31.4 per cent for non-Asians. At every subsequent local elections in Bradford, the Asian turn-out has been consistently higher than non-Asians (Le Lohe, 1975, 1982, 1990). A survey in two wards in Ealing in 1981 showed that Asian turn-out was 59.1 per cent almost double that of non-Asian voters in May that year. Similarly in Rochdale work in one ward, Central and Falinge, showed that Asian turn-out was 44.2 per cent compared with 28.8 per cent for non-Asians (Le Lohe, 1984; Anwar, 1986). Field work at the Greater London Council (GLC) election of 1981 in Hounslow and Walthamstow also showed higher turn-out rates for Asians but it also showed that in Paddington the turn-out of Afro-Caribbean was higher (45%) compared to whites (40%). It is relevant to mention here that a survey in the West Midlands also found higher turn-out among Asians compared with non-

Asians in both the 1979 general election and 1980 local elections (for details see Johnson, 1990).

At the 1990 local elections as part of our wider research on participation of ethnic minorities we checked the marked registers in Small Heath and Sparkbrook wards in Birmingham to calculate Asian turn-out compared with the overall official turn-out. We found that the Asian turn-out was higher than the overall turn-out in these wards as presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Asian Turn-out in Birmingham 1990

Ward	Asian Turn-out %	Total Turn-out %
Small Heath	52	40.7
Sparkbrook	44	37.4

It must be pointed out here that both the wards had Asian candidates in 1990 local elections which is generally an important factor to attract Asians to vote in elections. Marked registers were also used in three wards in Coventry to calculate the turn out of Asians compared with the total turn out of the 1990 local elections. The results showed that 51 per cent of Asians turned out to vote compared with 38 per cent of the official turn out at that election for those wards. All three wards were 'safe' Labour seats and in two of these Asian Labour candidates were elected. This trend was also confirmed in Rochdale and Bradford where Asian candidates helped to encourage more Asians to participate as voters.

Comprehensive analysis of Asian turn-out compared with non-Asians was undertaken in the London Borough of Waltham Forest by using the 1990 local election marked registers. The Borough has three parliamentary constituencies with various sized ethnic minority populations as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Waltham Forest: Parliamentary Constituencies and Ethnic Minority Population, 1991

Constituency	Total Popn. (Nos)	Whites %	Ethnic Minorities %	Asians %	Blacks %
Chingford	70462	91.5	8.5	2.8	4.2
Leyton	76921	62.0	38.0	15.3	17.9
Walthamstow	64604	70.7	29.3	13.0	11.1

Source: 1991 Census of Population

All three constituencies were covered for the analysis. First, we present the number of Asians and non-Asians on the register in various districts in the Borough, where research was undertaken (see Table 8 for details).

Table 8: Asian and Non-Asian Electors, 1990

Ward	Total Electors	No of Asians	No of Non-Asians
High Street	8133	1276	6957
St James St	9755	1799	8056
Hoe Street	9061	1584	7479
Cat Hall	7281	1318	5963
Grove Green	9369	1362	797
Forest	8077	1466	6791
Lea Bridge	8242	1310	6933
Chingford	8311	463	7848

Source: Electoral Register, Waltham Forest, 1990

The table shows that Asians are a significant proportion of the electors in the wards covered by our analysis. Chingford which has a relatively small Asian population was included in the analysis to see whether areas with

low concentrations of Asians and 'middle class' backgrounds had any different turn-out patterns compared with high Asian concentration areas. The results about turn-out are presented in Table 9 and also in Figs 1-4.

Table 9: Asian vs Non-Asian Turn-Out: Waltham Forest Select Areas (Per centages) 1990

Ward	Asian %	Non-Asian %
High Street	39	41
St James Street	38	44
Hoe Street	26	53
Cat Hall	35	42
Grove Green	47	45
Forest	40	48
Lea Bridge	36	46
Chingford	35	56

Although the table shows that except in one district, Grove Green, the Asian turn-out was lower than that of non-Asians the differences were not very significant in majority of the areas. For a local election the overall turn-out of Asians and non-Asians was quite high. Detailed analysis of figures from polling stations (as shown in Figs. 1-3) shows that in some polling stations the Asian turn-out was significantly higher than non-Asians. One factor which has contributed to Asian turn-out to vote in the 1990 local elections was the presence of several ethnic minority candidates. In fact 11 ethnic minority councillors were elected. It appears that in the 1994 local elections there will be more Asian candidates and political and community leaders in the area expect to mobilise Asians to come out to vote in greater numbers. However, research in other areas by the author has shown that even where there were no Asian or ethnic minority candidates the general pattern for Asians was to come out to vote in significant numbers. This political behaviour certainly makes Asians important voters for whichever political party they support.

HIGH STREET

Non Asian	Asian
%	%
52	42
44	51
29	23

ST JAMES STREET

Non Asian	Asian
%	%
42	43
45	33
46	41
42	37
58	42

HOE STREET

Non Asian	Asian
%	%
46	40
57	52
54	43
50	29

Figure 1: Asian vs Non-Asian Turnout, 1990 Local Elections. Three Wards in Walthamstow Constituency

CAT HALL

NonAsian	Asian
%	%
46	34
49	08
35	42
44	37

GROVE GREEN

NonAsian	Asian
%	%
54	50
35	44
49	45

FOREST

NonAsian	Asian
%	%
50	47
49	46
53	51
42	34

LEA BRIDGE

NonAsian	Asian
%	%
45	36
50	28
43	38
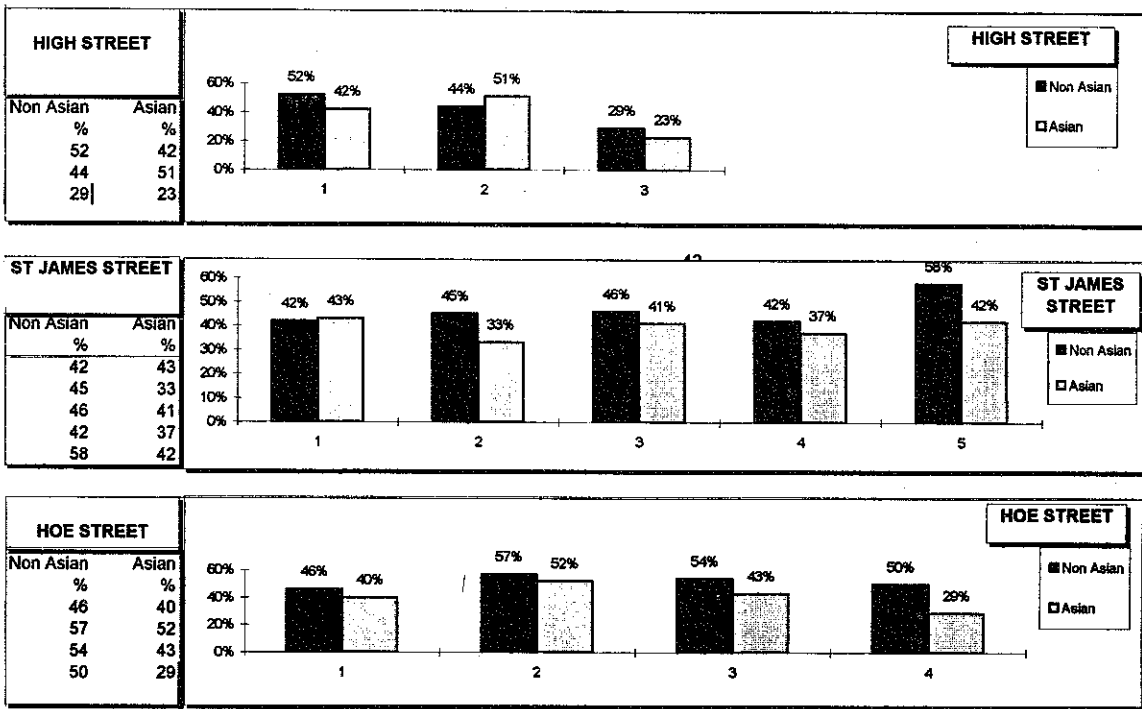
Figure 2: Asian vs Non-Asian Turnout, 1990 Local Elections. Four Wards in Leyton Constituency
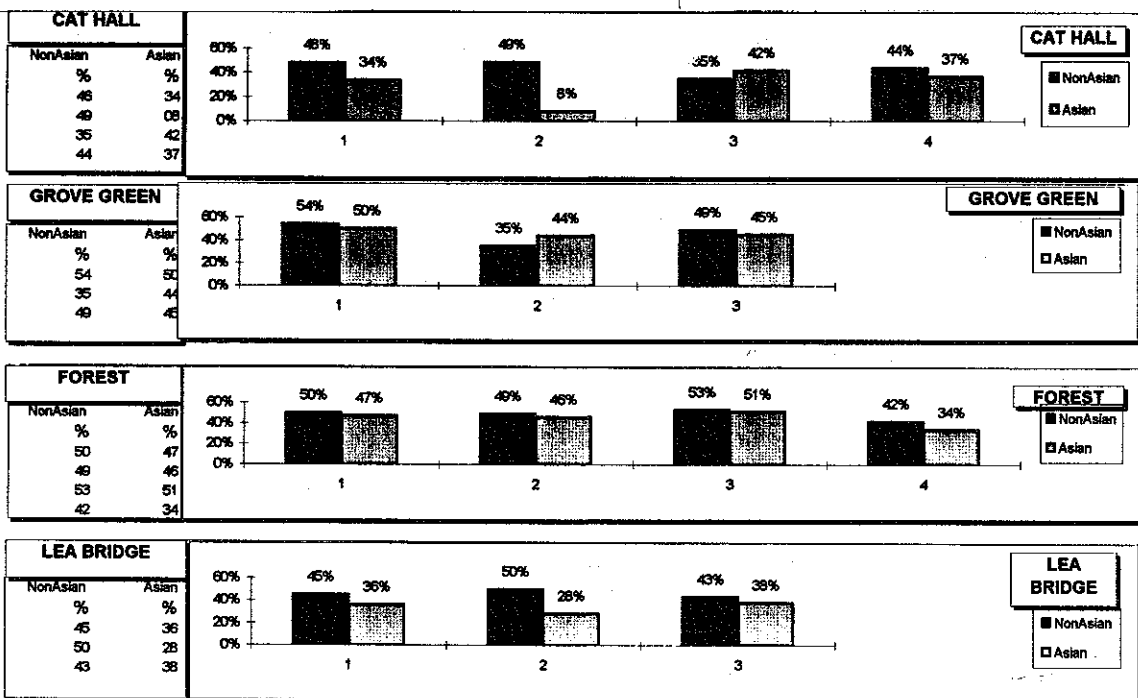
Figure 3: Asian vs Non-Asian Turnout, 1990 Local Elections. One Ward in Chingford Constituency

CHINGFORD	
NonAsian %	Asian %
48	25
58	70
57	36
59	38
55	33

FIGURE 4

Asian Vs Non Asian Turnout:: 1990 Local Elections
Waltham Forest: Eight Wards

Ward	Asian %	Asian %
High St	41	39
St James St	44	38
Hoe St	53	26
Cat Hall	42	35
Grove Green	45	47
Forest	48	40
Lea Bridge	46	36
Chingford	56	35
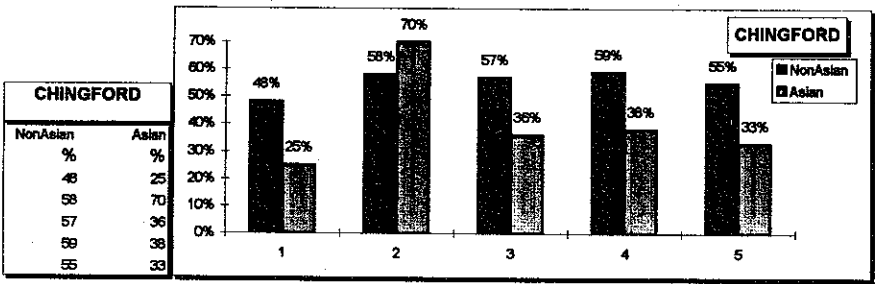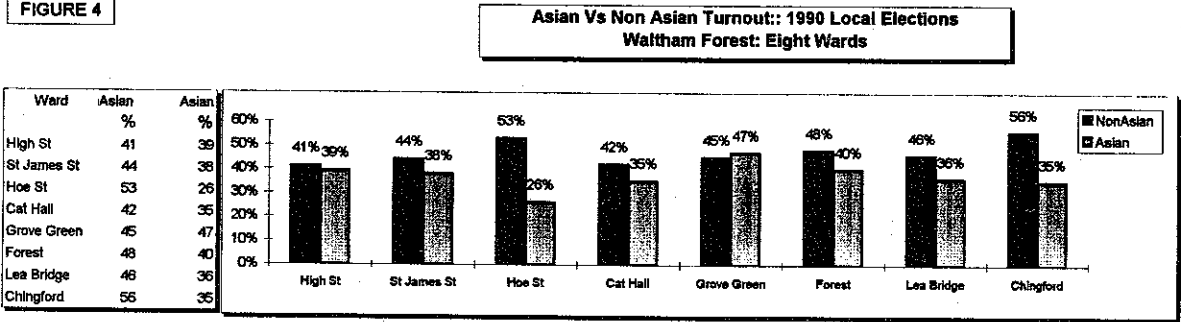
Membership of Political Parties and Other Organisations

It is a fact that overall membership of political parties among the general population is low. The latest figures about the political parties' membership obtained by the author confirm this. For example, the Labour Party's individual membership in 1993 was 266,276[2] and the Liberal Democrats 101,100. The Conservative Party does not collate membership figures at national levels but some recent research has shown that nationally its individual membership could be projected at 756,000 (Seyd, Whiteley and Richardson, 1993). No political party keeps records of ethnic minority membership although the Liberal Democrats are attempting some analysis to find out the proportion of membership from ethnic minorities. For ethnic minority groups in the early period of their settlement membership of political parties was lower. The first indication of ethnic minority membership of trade unions and political parties came from our surveys at the time of the October 1974 and 1979 general elections. In these surveys we found that the trade union membership was in fact higher among ethnic minorities: whites (22%) Afro-Caribbeans (28%) and Asians (27%) (see Anwar and Kohler, 1975). Political party membership for all three groups was very low. However, in the 1979 survey we wanted to know whether people belonged to any organisation which could include trade unions and political parties. We discovered that out of a sample of 1,138 respondents only 28 per cent belonged to any organisation. The figures for the three ethnic groups were as follows: 29 per cent of whites, 34 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans and 24 per cent of Asians belonged to some organisation. However, once again the majority of them belonged to a trade union (Anwar, 1980). In another survey in the West Midlands higher level of trade union membership among ethnic minorities compared with whites was also discovered (Johnson, 1990). This trend was also discovered by the third PSI survey which found that 56 per cent of Asian and West Indian employees were trade union members compared with 47 per cent of white employees (Brown, 1984).[3]

In the 1979 survey we were also interested to know whether our respondents had attended a party political meeting. It appeared that more

white people (26%) had done this compared with Afro-Caribbeans (10%) and Asians (7%). However, there were age differences between whites and Afro-Caribbeans of those attending such meetings. For example, among Afro-Caribbeans it was primarily those who were under 35 while among whites those who were older than 35 attended such meetings. For Asians there were no significant age differences. It appears that in the 1980s due to the 'Black Sections' in the Labour Party debate and the selection and election of ethnic minority candidates in both general and local elections the political party membership of ethnic minorities has increased significantly. In some areas like Bradford, Birmingham, Southall and Tower Hamlets, Asians are now dominating the local political party associations and in some cases are being accused of 'taking over'. This has led to problems of selecting candidates in some areas and in particular, the Labour Party had to intervene several times about selection of both white and ethnic minority candidates. The signs are that with the second generation of ethnic minorities taking increasing interest in the political process the membership of political parties and attendance at political party meetings is likely to increase, in the future.

Chapter Four: VOTING PATTERNS OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

The general election in April 1992 gave Conservatives a fourth successive victory with an overall majority of 21 and a majority of 64 over Labour. The Conservative majority was reduced substantially in 1992 compared with their majority of 146 over Labour in 1987. There were no doubt several factors which contributed to this reduced number of seats, but one factor which had contributed to Labour's marginal success was their strong support among ethnic minorities in several inner-city areas. In this section we analyse how voting patterns of ethnic minorities have changed since the October 1974 general election.

It was during the October 1974 general election campaign that the ethnic minority vote as a whole but particularly in some inner-city marginals became important for candidates in those areas but also for the political parties in general. The Community Relations Commission (CRC) decided to monitor the participation of the ethnic minorities in that election. However, voting intentions between June 1970 and October 1974 in 22 surveys by Harris Polls showed that while support amongst whites for Labour ranged between 40 and 51 per cent, amongst ethnic minorities it ranged between 63 and 80 per cent for Labour. On the other hand support for Labour amongst ethnic minorities ranged between 64 per cent in Croydon North to 83 per cent in Leicester South. The support for the Conservatives The support amongst ethnic minority respondents for the Conservative party ranged between 17 and 25 per cent (Anwar and Kohler, 1975). In seven constituencies where the fieldwork took place the Conservative Party amongst ethnic minorities ranged between 3 per cent in Birmingham Sparkbrook to 25 per cent in Bradford West. It must be pointed out that the majority of the constituencies were Labour - held at the time of the survey. In addition Liberals in Rochdale received 50 per cent support from Asian voters and in Croydon North East 25 per cent ethnic minorities claimed to have voted for the Liberal candidate (Anwar, 1975). At the 1979 general election the CRE undertook a survey of voters in 24 parliamentary constituencies. The results showed that a substantial

majority of ethnic minorities in those areas voted for the Labour Party as against other political parties. While 50 per cent of whites voted Labour, 90 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans and 86 per cent of Asians in the sample voted for the Labour Party. However, in 7 out of the 24 constituencies, over 15 per cent Asian voters cast their votes for the Conservative Party (Anwar 1980). It appeared in this election that the efforts of the Conservative Party to win Asian votes (see Chapter Five) were succeeding to some extent. The reasons for strong support amongst ethnic minorities for Labour are outlined elsewhere (Anwar, 1986).

The CRE continued the monitoring of ethnic minority political participation at the 1983 general election. It interviewed 4,240 voters in 25 constituencies which showed that 71 per cent Asians voted Labour, 5 per cent Conservative and 11 per cent for the Alliance candidates. It must be pointed out that most of the 25 constituencies were Labour - held at the time of the election. Overall 70 per cent of ethnic minorities voted Labour. This trend was confirmed by a national exit poll conducted by the Harris Research Centre for ITN. It showed that 57 per cent of ethnic minorities had voted Labour, but 24 per cent had voted Conservative and 16 per cent for Alliance candidates. The Gallup polls at the 1983 general election also showed 64 per cent of ethnic minorities supporting the Labour Party, 21 per cent and 15 per cent supporting the Conservative Party and Alliance respectively. Close examination of all these surveys shows that the Asian support for the Labour Party had decreased between the 1979 and 1983 general elections. The next opportunity to test this trend was the 1987 general election. A survey conducted by the Harris Research Centre for the Hansib group of papers during the election campaign (25-29 May, 1987) about voting intentions showed that 66.8 per cent of Asian respondents but 86.8 per cent of Afro-Caribbean respondents intended to vote for the Labour Party compared with 22.7 per cent and 5.7 per cent respectively for the Conservative Party. At the same time 10 per cent Asians and 7 per cent Afro-Caribbeans intended to vote for the Alliance. No white respondents were included in the survey (*The Asian Times* 5-11 June 1987). A poll also conducted by the Harris Research Centre in London between 8-9 June, 1987 showed that 64 per

cent ethnic minorities as against 32 per cent whites intended to vote Labour, but 23 per cent ethnic minorities and 45 per cent whites intended to vote for the Conservative Party, and 11 per cent ethnic minorities and 23 per cent whites intended to vote for the Alliance candidates (Quoted in Anwar, 1990). However, the indication of actual voting patterns of ethnic minorities and whites came from an ITN exit poll also conducted by the Harris Research Centre. It showed that 61 per cent Asians and 92 per cent Afro-Caribbeans had voted for the Labour Party compared with 31 per cent whites. On the other hand 20 per cent Asians, 6 per cent Afro-Caribbeans and 43 per cent whites had voted for the Conservative Party candidates. The Alliance received 17 per cent votes from Asians, 24 per cent from whites and none from Afro-Caribbeans in the sample (Anwar 1990). The results confirm the slow shift among Asians towards Conservative and the Alliance parties.

Nine months before the 1992 general election a survey was carried out by NOP in association with the Runnymede Trust, of whites and ethnic minorities to find out their opinions on various relevant issues and also to ask about their voting intentions at the forthcoming general election. The survey included 572 Afro-Caribbeans, 479 South Asians and 766 whites. It showed that out of those who were certain to vote 58 per cent Afro-Caribbeans , 55 per cent South Asians and 31 per cent whites intended to vote for the Labour Party. On the other hand 8 per cent Afro-Caribbeans, 12 per cent South Asians and 30 per cent whites intended to vote for the Conservative Party. However, a significant minority, about 16 per cent overall, were still undecided (Table 10).

A poll carried out by the Harris Research Centre in July 1991 for the BBC 2 Asian programme *East* found that out of 669 South Asians interviewed 76 per cent intended to vote Labour, 18 per cent Conservative and 4 per cent Liberal Democrats. Among Asians it appears that Indians are more likely to vote for the Conservatives (19%) compared with Pakistanis (8%) and Bangladeshis (11%) as shown by the NOP survey (Amin and Richardson 1992). This is partly explained by the relative economic and educational success of Indians compared with Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. The social class factor is relevant to all three ethnic

groups, Afro-Caribbeans, Asians and whites. The 1991 NOP survey confirmed that in all three groups those belonging to social class ABC1 were more likely to vote for the Conservative Party compared with those in the C2DE social class (Table 11).

Table 10: Political Preferences of those Intended to Vote (Per centages)

	Afro-Caribbean	South Asian	White
Conservative	8	12	30
Labour	58	55	31
Liberal Democrats	3	3	12
Other	10	2	4
Would not vote	5	4	2
Undecided	17	18	15
Refused	5	5	5
Not stated	1	1	1

Source: Amin and Richardson (1992).

Table 11: Voting Intentions by Class and Ethnic Group (Per centages)

Political Party	Afro-Caribbean		South Asian		White	
	ABC1	C2DE	ABC1	C2DE	ABC1	C2DE
Conservative	12	7	18	10	44	26
Labour	57	59	53	66	23	40
Liberal Democrats	5	2	4	3	15	13
Others	1	3	2	2	4	4
Would not vote	5	7	4	5	1	3
Undecided	8	10	11	8	6	8
Refused	3	5	6	4	6	4
Not stated	10	8	4	3	3	4

Source: Amin and Richardson (1992)

It is worth mentioning here the figures for those respondents who were unlikely to vote: 13 per cent South Asians, 11 per cent whites but 22 per cent Afro-Caribbeans. Those aged 18-34 were relatively more unlikely to vote compared with those over 34. For example, 16 per cent South Asians, 18 per cent whites and 28 per cent Afro-Caribbeans in the age group 18-34 stated that they were fairly or very unlikely to vote.

The above analysis shows that the majority of ethnic minorities still vote for the Labour Party but a significant minority, particularly South Asians also vote for the Conservative Party and for the Liberal Democrats. One reason for this trend is that Labour Party is perceived more sympathetic to ethnic minorities and 'supports the working class'. This pattern is not unique: the Democratic Party in the United States has been receiving the majority of black votes which supported it with a similar perception (Cavanagh, 1984). In addition the personal involvement with ethnic minorities and the popularity of the respective candidates from these parties was one of the key factors in attracting the ethnic minority vote as demonstrated by Cyril Smith in Rochdale (Anwar, 1973, 1975).

However, the efforts of the Conservative Party to win support particularly amongst South Asians and Chinese is having a significant impact. The values of the Asian communities, home ownership and emphasis on family life, and their occupational trends, are believed to be more relevant to the Conservative Party philosophy. These factors and efforts of the Conservative Central Office are bringing more Asians to join and support the Conservative Party. This trend is similar to the Jewish community in Britain which also shifted its majority support, over time, from the Labour Party to the Conservative Party (Alderman, 1983). The voting patterns in local elections depend on local issues (Anwar, 1974; Le Lohe, 1977). However, the policies of political parties their regular contacts with ethnic minorities, the membership of ethnic minorities of political parties, organisation and mobilization of ethnic minorities at local level, the candidates' personal contact and familiarity with ethnic minorities and presence of ethnic minority candidates in elections are important factors in attracting electoral support from ethnic minorities.

Chapter Five: POLITICAL PARTIES' INITIATIVES

The participation of ethnic minorities in the political process is affected by the policies and initiatives taken by the political parties. These include special arrangements to attract ethnic minority support, their manifesto commitments at elections and the number of ethnic minority candidates, and elected MPs and councillors. Therefore, in this chapter we review and analyse some of these initiatives of the political parties and show what progress has been made in the last few years.

Special Arrangements

Some political parties have set up special organisations to attract ethnic minority voters. The Conservative Party has had an ethnic minority unit in the Conservative Central Office's Department of Community Affairs since 1976. Its objective was to make party members aware of the growing importance of ethnic minority electors in their areas of concentration, and also to influence party policy so as to improve the image of the party among ethnic minorities. The unit helped form an Anglo-Asian Conservative Society through which it recruited Asians directly into the party. This was followed by the formation of the Anglo-West Indian Conservative Society with the same objective. More recently these societies have been replaced by a national organisation the 'One Nation Forum' with similar objectives but the Anglo-Asian and Anglo-West Indian societies at local level continue as before. It appears that there are about thirty such local societies.[4] These are particularly active at election times when meetings between Asian and West Indian groups and Conservative candidates are arranged. It is observed that several members of these societies now actively get involved in election campaigns as Conservative Party workers. It is worth mentioning here that Mr Major hosted a dinner for Asian multi-millionaires at 10 Downing Street at the first anniversary of his becoming the Conservative Party leader as part of a campaign to build bridges with the Asian community (*The Daily Telegraph* 2 December 1991). More recently he said to a meeting of 800

Asians 'we want you in the Conservative party - there must be no barriers' (*The Sunday Telegraph*) 18 April, 1993).

The Labour Party Race and Action Group (LPRAG) was set up in 1975 as a pressure group to educate and advise the party on relevant issues. Then there was a long campaign to set up Black Sections in the Labour Party (Shukra, 1990 and Jeffers, 1991). This issue was debated and defeated at several Labour Party conferences in the 1980s. Finally, as a result of these discussions more recently Labour Party's National Executive Committee (NEC) set up a Black and Asian Advisory Committee similar to the party's women and local government committees. The objective of this Committee is primarily to maintain and get ethnic minorities' support for the party. An officer is appointed at the Party's national headquarters to deal with ethnic minorities.[5]

The Liberal Party used to have a Community Relations Panel which included ethnic minority members. It met regularly to discuss relevant issues and formulated policies to attract ethnic minority members, as well as campaign strategies at elections specially directed at them. It appears that now the Liberal Democrats are following a similar arrangement but more recently the Liberal Democrats leader has personally taken interest in this connection. In June 1991 a special organisation with the name of 'Asian Liberal Democrats' was formed to attract Asian support for the party. An Asian is also a member of the Liberal Democrat National Executive.

One way to judge the seriousness of special initiatives of the political parties is to look at their public statements and what they publish in their manifestos (see Chapter Seven). There is no doubt that major political party leaders have openly sought ethnic minority voters' support in the last few years without the fear of losing white voters. This is partly a genuine desire to involve ethnic minorities in the political process and partly because of the statistical significance of ethnic minorities in a number of inner city constituencies. Some of the reasons for ethnic minority involvement in the political process are presented in Chapter Six based on a survey of local election candidates and interviews with party agents in six local authority areas in 1990.

Ethnic Minority Representation

Another way to examine the response of the political parties to the participation of ethnic minorities is to look at the number of ethnic minority candidates adopted by the political parties in the last two general elections and their success rate. We also look at the 1990 local elections which included London in this regard and compare the outcome with the 1986 local elections which included the same areas. But first we look briefly at the situation before the 1987 general election.

Before the post war migration of Asians to Britain and even before the partition of India in 1947, three MPs from the Indian-subcontinent were elected to the House of Commons from areas which had very few Indian electors. The first, Dadabhai Naoroji was elected over a century ago, in 1892, as a Liberal representing 'Finsbury Central. The second, Sir Mancherjee Bhownagree, was twice elected as a Conservative for Bethnal Green North East, in 1895 and 1900. The third, Shapurji Saklatvala, was also twice elected for Battersea North, first as a Labour candidate in 1922 and then as a Communist in 1924. In the House of Lords, before the Second World War there was one member from the Indian sub-continent, Lord Sinha of Raipur (1863-1928) (Anwar, 1986). There had been no MPs from ethnic minorities since the war until 1987, but there had been three members of the House of Lords, Lords Constantine, Pitt and Chitnis and recently they have been joined by two more: Lord Desai and Lady Flather, the first ethnic minority woman to join the House.

Since 1945 the first ethnic minority candidate put forward by a major political party for a general election was Sardar K.S.N. Ahluwala, who contested Willesden West for the Liberal Party in 1950. Dr David Pitt (now Lord Pitt) contested Hampstead in 1959 and Clapham in 1970 for the Labour Party. In addition in 1970 three ethnic minority candidates stood for the Liberal Party. At the general election in February 1974 the Labour Party put forward one ethnic minority candidate in East Fife in Scotland while the Liberal Party selected one to contest Coventry South-East. In October 1974 general election there was only one ethnic minority candidate representing the Liberal Party. Things improved at the 1979

general election when five ethnic minority candidates were put forward by the main political parties; two Conservatives, two Liberals and one Labour. This was also the first time since 1945 that the Conservative Party had nominated ethnic minority candidates. None of these candidates had any chance of winning as they were given unwinnable seats.

The 1983 general election had 18 ethnic minority candidates representing the main political parties. Except one seat with redrawn boundaries, Hemel Hempstead, which was a winnable Labour seat no ethnic minority candidate contested a safe or winnable seat. However, in 17 of the 18 seats where comparison was possible with the notional party position in 1979, the parties' position was unchanged (Anwar, 1984). This performance of ethnic minority candidates was the first indication for the political parties, after Dr Pitt's defeat in 1970, when he lost a safe Labour seat, that ethnic minority candidates were being accepted as party candidates and had a good chance of winning safe and winnable seats. This point was proved at the 1987 general election when out of the 27 ethnic minority candidates for the main political parties four were elected. The four, all Labour, were Paul Boateng (Brent South), Diane Abbott (Hackney North and Stoke Newington), Bernie Grant (Tottenham) and Keith Vaz (Leicester East). The three London MPs were all elected in safe Labour seats. However, Keith Vaz, the only Asian, won with a swing over 9 per cent from the Conservative candidate. All four elected MPs had a significant number of ethnic minority electors in their constituencies. One other Labour ethnic minority candidate in Nottingham East lost the seat only by 456 votes. This was partly due to the internal Labour Party differences in the constituency about the selection of the Labour candidate. This seat was won back by Labour, with a white candidate, at the 1992 general election with a Labour majority of 7,680. As far as the performance of ethnic minority candidates was concerned, in general terms, it was like that of other party candidates in the same regions. This election provided further evidence for the political parties that ethnic minority candidates were not vote losers any longer and in some cases they were improving the party position by attracting more ethnic minority voters in particular. One indication of the

acceptance of ethnic minority candidates by white electors came from the Langbaurgh parliamentary by-election in November 1991, in an area which has very few ethnic minorities, when Dr Ashok Kumar gained this seat for Labour from the Conservative Party with a swing of 3.6 per cent. This increased the number of ethnic minority MPs to five until the 1992 general election. It is clear from the table that majority of the ethnic minority candidates contested constituencies with a significant number of ethnic minorities. Out of the 22 constituencies where ethnic minority candidates contested six had very small ethnic minority populations, less than the national average of 5.5 per cent. This once again shows that political parties are now willing to put forward ethnic minority candidates in 'snow white' areas. On the other hand ethnic minority candidates now do not hesitate to contest against each other. In one constituency, Ealing Southall, in 1992 two ethnic minority candidates contested against each other, one for the Labour Party and the other for the Liberal Democrats.

There were 23 ethnic minority candidates contesting for the main political parties at the 1992 general election. They included nine Labour, eight Conservatives and six Liberal Democrats. Table 12 shows the details of their constituencies and their respective parties and ethnic minority population in their areas according to the 1991 census. It also shows the political parties majorities at the 1987 and 1992 general elections. In addition to the four sitting Labour ethnic minority MPs (elected in 1987) one Asian, Piara Khabra (Ealing Southall) joined them. At the same time for the first time Nirj Deva (Brentford and Isleworth) became the first Asian in recent times to represent the Conservative Party in the House of Commons. However, Dr Kumar (Langbaurgh) lost his seat, which he had won in a by-election, to the Conservative candidate, Michael Bates, who had also contested the by-election, by a small margin. The other upset for an ethnic minority candidate was in Cheltenham where John Taylor lost the safe Conservative seat, by a Conservative to Liberal Democrats swing of 5.2 per cent. John Taylor's controversial selection received a very wide media coverage and prompted John Major, the Prime Minister, to say that there was no place for racist sentiments in the Conservative Party.

Table 12: Ethnic Minority Candidates Representing Main Political Parties, 1992 General Election

Party	Candidate	Constituency	% EM Popn* 1991	Majority at 1987 %		Majority at 1992 %	
Lab	Diane Abbott	Hackney North & Stoke Newington	34.9	Lab	19.8	Lab	30.9
Lab	Kingsley Abrams	Wimbledon	12.5	Con	23.4	Con	29.7
Lab	Claude Moraes	Harrow West	22.5	Con	25.0	Con	32.7
Lib Dem	Mohammad Akhbar Ali	Liverpool Riverside	12.5	Lab	59.4	Lab	64.4
Lab	Paul Boateng	Brent South	55.4	Lab	19.5	Lab	27.0
Lab	Doreen Cameron	Ashford Kent	1.4	Con	29.2	Con	30.5
Con	Lurline Champagnie	Islington North	13.3	Lab	24.6	Lab	33.8
Con	Abdul Qayyum Chaudhary	B'ham Small Heath	55.0	Lab	35.2	Lab	39.3
Con	Nirj Joseph Deva	Brentford/Isleworth	18.4	Con	14.5	Con	3.9
Lib Dem	Zerbanoo Gifford	Hertsmere	4.6	Con	32.8	Con	33.1
Lab	Bernie Grant	Tottenham	38.3	Lab	8.2	Lab	26.7
Lab	Piara Khabra	Ealing Southall	51.2	Lab	15.3	Lab	13.9
Con	Mohammed Khamisa	B'ham Sparkbrook	49.0	Lab	45.2	Lab	40.2
Lab	Ashok Kumar**	Langbaurgh	0.7	Con	3.3	Con	2.4
Lib Dem	Pash Nandhra	Ealing Southall	51.2	Lab	15.3	Lab	13.9

Table 12 continued

Party	Candidate	Constituency	% EM Popn* 1991	Majority at 1987 %		Majority at 1992 %	
Con	Mohammed Riaz	Bradford North	20.7	Lab	3.3	Lab	15.7
Con	Mohammad Rizvi	Edinburgh Leith		Lab	26.5	Lab	12.4
Lib Dem	Vinod Sharma	Halesowen & Stourbridge	3.6	Con	22.3	Con	15.0
Con	John Taylor	Cheltenham	1.8	Con	7.8	LD	2.6
Lab	Keith Vaz	Leicester East	38.0	Lab	3.7	Lab	22.8
Lib Dem	Marcello Verma	Cynon Valley	0.7	Lab	56.7	Lab	56.2
Lib Dem	Peter Verma	Cardiff South & Penarth	6.4	Lab	10.2	Lab	21.9

* Ethnic minority populations are based on the 1991 Census
** In the 1991 by-election Dr Kumar's (Lab) majority was 3.8 per cent.
Sources: 1987 & 1992 General Elections Results; 1991 Census of Population, produced by NEMDA, January 1994.

This was a result of a local party member describing the Conservative candidate as a 'bloody nigger'. Cheltenham has a small ethnic minority population and it appears that some white Conservative voters defected for the Liberal Democrats candidate, Nigel Jones. Research during the final days of the election campaign on intended voting behaviour confirms this trend (Taylor, 1993).[6] Overall it appears that the performance of some ethnic minority candidates was better in some areas than in others: in 14 constituencies it amounted to an average of 2 per cent negative swing. A close examination of the results shows that the performance of some ethnic minority candidates for a particular political party was fairly similar to the other political party candidates in the negative swing for ethnic minority candidates in the regions. In one case against the regional trend one Asian Conservative candidate Qayyum Chaudhary (Birmingham Small Heath) produced a swing of 2.5 per cent to the Conservatives whereas generally in Birmingham the swing was on average 2.6 per cent to Labour. This constituency has a substantial Asian population (40%) and the controversial selection of a Labour white candidate could have contributed to this swing. The selection of the Labour candidate is documented by a research team (Back and Solomos, 1992) and the publication of their interpretation of the events also became controversial.

Among the independent and minor parties candidates the media showed a lot of interest in the newly formed Islamic Party of Great Britain. The impression given by the media was that the candidates of the Islamic Party, led by white converts, might receive a significant support from the Muslim electors. The party contested only four parliamentary seats, three in Bradford which has a significant number of Muslim electors, and one in London (Streatham). All four candidates did not muster much support among large Muslim groups in those areas or nationally and showed very poor performance. On average they received 0.6 per cent of the votes in the four constituencies. Their performance and the poor results of other independent or minor parties candidates support the author's earlier conclusions that such candidates, outside the main political parties, do not stand a chance of winning (Anwar, 1986).

In the London Borough elections in May 1974 only 12 ethnic minority

councillors were elected. Ten of them represented the Labour Party and two the Conservatives. In 1978, the number of ethnic minority councillors reached 35. They included 29 Labour, five Conservatives and one Independent. At the 1978 local elections in London, the number of ethnic minority elected councillors reached 79 out of a total of 1,914 councillors. Sixty nine of these were Labour, seven Conservatives, two Liberals and one Independent. Forty two were Asians and 37 Afro-Caribbeans. The overall per centage of ethnic minority councillors in the 32 London Boroughs was only 4 per cent while the ethnic minority population in these areas was estimated over 12 per cent (Anwar, 1986).

It appears from our evidence that compared with the parliamentary elections slow progress has been made at local level regarding ethnic minority representation, particularly in areas of ethnic minority concentrations. To analyse what progress has been made in the last few years we compare the results of 1986 and 1990 local elections. References to other local elections will also be made wherever relevant. At the 1986 local elections 142 ethnic minority councillors were elected in London Boroughs. The details of their party affiliation are shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Ethnic Minority Councillors in London Boroughs, 1986

Party	Asian	Afro-Caribbean	Others	Total
Labour	64	55	13	132
Conservative	2	4	1	7
Liberal/SDP	2	1	0	3
Total	68	60	14	142

Source: Author's Survey (1986)

Table 14: Ethnic Minority Councillors in London, 1986

Borough	Asian/Afro-Caribbean Councillors	Total Councillors	% Ethnic Minorities in 1981
Barking & Dagenham	1	48	4.1
Barnet	2	60	12.8
Bexley	1	62	4.2
Brent	21	66	33.5
Camden	3	59	10.8
Croydon	1	70	12.0
Ealing	10	70	25.4
Enfield	2	66	14.0
Greenwich	3	62	8.0
Hackney	10	60	28.0
Hammersmith & Fulham	5	50	15.3
Haringey	10	59	29.8
Harrow	3	63	15.3
Hounslow	6	60	17.1
Islington	5	52	16.9
Kensington & Chelsea	2	54	9.5
Lambeth	9	64	23.5
Lewisham	8	67	15.1
Merton	2	57	10.7
Newham	10	60	26.6
Redbridge	3	63	11.2
Southwark	5	64	16.5
Tower Hamlets	6	50	20.3
Waltham Forest	5	57	13.5
Wandsworth	4	61	18.8
Westminster	2	60	12.5

Source: Author's Survey (1986) and OPCS (1983)

As Table 13 shows, like the previous elections most of the ethnic minority councillors belonged to the Labour Party. Out of the 142 councillors 26 were women, once again most of them belonged to the Labour Party. The maximum number of ethnic minority councillors was in Brent which had 21 out of its 66 councillors (there were 13 ethnic minority councillors in 1982). Details of ethnic minority councillors in London Boroughs are shown in Table 14.

It is clear from the table that in relation to their numbers in some boroughs the overall ethnic minority representation in London was still modest. To see what progress has taken place since 1986 we look at the 1990 local election results in London. The next local elections in London are in May 1994. From the 1990 results it appears that the number of ethnic minority councillors has increased although their overall share is still under 10 per cent. There were in February 1993, 179 Asian and Afro-Caribbean councillors out of a total of 1914. There were two vacancies in Lambeth at that time. Brent still remains the leader with 17 ethnic minority councillors (21 in 1986) followed by Hackney and Newham (13 each). Good progress has been made in Tower Hamlets where the number of ethnic minority councillors has doubled from 6 to 12 between 1986 and 1990.

The number of Asians and Afro-Caribbean councillors in London boroughs is presented in Table 15. The table also shows the ethnic minority population according to the 1991 Census which is more relevant to the analysis of 1990 results than the figures based on the 1981 census of the total resident population. If we compare Table 15 with Table 14 it is clear that a steady progress has been made in Greater London where over 20 per cent of the total population now belongs to ethnic minorities. Furthermore their per centage population in some boroughs is as much as over 40 per cent. However, this is not reflected in their representation except in one London Borough, Greenwich, where the per centage of ethnic minority councillors is greater than the ethnic minority population in the Borough.

The situation outside London, in general has been worse than London. For example, in 1973 local elections only six ethnic minority councillors

were elected, one of them was Liberal and the rest were all Labour. In the 1977 County Council elections out of the 37 ethnic minority candidates four were elected (27 of them had contested 'poor seats'). At the 1981 County Council elections there were 54 ethnic minority candidates of whom 12 were elected. These included: 10 Labour, one Conservative and one Independent. Although the number of ethnic minority councillors had increased between 1977 and 1981 County Council elections, they still constituted only 0.3 per cent of the total number of almost 4,000 county councillors in England. The Greater London Council (GLC) had one ethnic minority councillor out of its 92 before it was abolished. Out of the six Metropolitan County Councils of about 600 councillors only one, West Midlands, had an ethnic minority councillor.

In the 1982 District Council elections outside London 81 ethnic minority candidates were identified. These included: 34 Labour, 9 Conservatives, 6 Liberals, 20 SDP and 12 who stood for minor parties or as independents. Only 12 were successful: 10 Labour and two SDP. It appeared from the analysis of these results that the Labour Party was putting forward more ethnic minority candidates for winnable and or safe seats compared with other main political parties. This is not surprising if we look at the substantial electoral support for Labour amongst ethnic minorities.

Table 15: Asian and Afro-Caribbean Members of London Councils and Ethnic Minority Population, 1991

Borough	Total	Asian/ Afro-Caribbean	% of Total	% Ethnic Minorities in 1991
Barking/Dagenham	48	3	6.2	8.8
Barnet	60	2	3.3	18.4
Bexley	62	1	1.6	5.8
Brent	66	17	25.8	44.8
Bromley	60	0	0.0	4.7
Camden	59	3	5.1	17.8
Croydon	70	1	1.4	17.8
Ealing	70	11	15.7	32.3
Enfield	66	2	3.0	14.1
Greenwich	62	11	17.8	12.7
Hackney	60	13	21.7	33.6
Hammersmith/Fulham	50	3	6.0	17.5
Haringey	59	11	18.6	29.0
Harrow	63	3	4.8	26.2
Havering	63	0	0.0	3.2
Hillingdon	69	3	4.3	12.3
Hounslow	60	10	16.7	24.4
Islington	52	4	7.7	18.9
Kensington/Chelsea	54	2	3.7	15.6
Kingston	50	0	0.0	8.6
Lambeth (2 vacancies)	64	8	12.5	30.3
Lewisham	67	11	16.4	22.0
Merton	57	4	7.0	16.3
Newham	60	13	21.7	42.3
Redbridge	63	6	9.7	21.4
Richmond	52	0	0.0	5.5
Southwark	64	6	9.4	24.4
Sutton	56	1	1.8	5.9
Tower Hamlets	50	12	24.0	35.6
Waltham Forest	57	11	19.3	25.6
Wandsworth	61	5	8.2	20.0
Westminster	60	2	3.3	21.4
London	1914	179	9.4	20.2

Source:ALA (1993) and 1991 Census of Population

Looking at areas with substantial ethnic minority populations, (Birmingham, Leicester and Bradford), over time we see that slow progress is being made in these areas for ethnic minority local government elected representatives. For example, in 1982 in Birmingham out of the 375 local election candidates 23 were from ethnic minority

communities. Out of these only five Labour Party candidates were elected. However, more recently in 1990 and 1991 local elections in Birmingham the number of ethnic minority councillors increased to 18 and 21 respectively. They all belong to the Labour Party and it is now estimated that one fourth of Labour councillors in Birmingham belong to ethnic minorities, mainly Asians (16). In Leicester at the 1983 local elections out of 173 candidates, 33 were from ethnic minorities. Eight of the nine Labour Party ethnic minority candidates were elected, while no other ethnic minority candidate was elected because they were largely contesting unwinnable seats. In 1993 there were 12 ethnic minority councillors. Bradford Council has now 13 Asian councillors. For a long time it had only three.

However, more recently, ethnic minorities have made a good progress at the County level. In ten counties monitored at the 1993 County Council election 27 of the 33 Labour's ethnic minority candidates were elected but the 18 Conservatives, 4 Liberal Democrats and five 'others' all lost (Le Lohe, 1993). These included six ethnic minority county councillors out of 28 who were from the City of Leicester. The other county worth mentioning is Berkshire where 14 ethnic minority councillors were elected in 1993. It was also reported that 5 Muslims were elected in Nottinghamshire at the 1993 County Council elections. However, most of these councillors were elected from inner-city areas of shire counties with significant numbers of ethnic minority residents. However, a survey of the 1993 English County Councils of which 38 responded before the 1993 county elections revealed that there were 26 Asian and Afro-Caribbean councillors out of 2,849 (0.93 per cent). Out of these half were in three counties: Berkshire (five), Nottinghamshire (four) and Leicestershire (four) (Geddes 1993). As mentioned above this pattern was consistent with the 1993 results. In Wales, in 1992 only two ethnic minority county councillors, both Labour, were identified. Out of the 26 in England only 2 were women and the rest were Asian or Afro-Caribbean men. Twenty of them were Asians and only six Afro-Caribbeans which reflects the location of the Asians in Shire counties as well while the majority of Afro-Caribbeans are in London. As expected 21 of the 26 councillors of

Asian and Afro-Caribbean origin were representing the Labour Party. This trend was also confirmed by the results from District and Metropolitan Districts as part of the same survey (Geddes, 1993). The response from 273 District councils in England showed that 104 out of the 12,368 councillors were of Asian or Afro-Caribbean origin (0.5%) and in Wales 4 out of 1,422 were Asian or Afro-Caribbeans (0.28%). Table 16 shows the party affiliation and gender breakdown of these councillors in England.

Table 16: Asian and Afro-Caribbean District Councillors in England, 1992

Party	Asian		Afro-Carib.		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Labour	71	3	11	3	88
Conservative	5	2	1	0	8
Liberal Democrats	3	0	2	0	5
Independents	3	0	0	0	3
TOTAL	82	5	14	3	104

Source: Adapted from Geddes (1993)

It is evident that a vast majority of ethnic minority councillors are Asian men representing the Labour Party. A similar trend was found in Metropolitan Districts; out of the 2,079 councillors for 32 of the 36 Metropolitan Districts only 33 were identified as Asians or Afro-Caribbeans. This works out at 1.59 per cent of the total councillors in those Districts. Once again 24 Asian men were representing the Labour Party compared with only one Asian woman councillor. Out of the seven Afro-Caribbean councillors four were women which seems to be an exception. On the whole the survey concluded that out of the 21,065 local councillors surveyed in England and Wales 342 (1.6%) were of Asian and Afro-Caribbean origin and 85 per cent belonged to the Labour Party.

After the 1993 County Council elections the number of ethnic minority councillors has increased and including Cypriots and Turks in London it is now over 360. This is a substantial improvement on the over 200 councillors estimated by the author nine years ago (Anwar, 1986). One further point needs to be made here: that in local councils while over 70 per cent of the ethnic minority councillors are of Asian origin in the House of Commons only three out of the six ethnic minority MPs are of Asian origin. The reasons for this trend are complex, but it is absolutely clear from our evidence that political parties and ethnic minorities need to do more to achieve a fair representation of ethnic minorities both at national and local levels. However, we know that there are still several obstacles to the selection of ethnic minority candidates for 'safe' and 'winnable' seats. Racial discrimination is also a contributory factor as John Taylor's selection and defeat referred to above showed.

Chapter Six: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES : ATTITUDES OF CANDIDATES

The policies and initiatives taken by the political parties to encourage ethnic minority participation in the political process are important. Equally important are the attitudes of their selected candidates at elections towards this participation. We report on three surveys of candidates; two undertaken nationally at the 1979 and 1983 general elections and one at the 1990 local elections in six local authority areas, five in the Midlands and one local authority in London. These surveys, using postal questionnaires, covered election issues, their views on ethnic minority participation in politics and how candidates saw the state of race relations nationally and locally. The 1990 study also included interviews with party agents and the analysis of the media coverage of race-related issues in the six research areas.

In both the 1979 and 1983 surveys an overwhelming majority of candidates (89% and 94% respectively) felt that ethnic minorities ought to be encouraged to take a more active role in British politics (for details see Anwar 1986). We also asked candidates that if ethnic minorities should be encouraged to participate in politics, what form their participation should take? In the 1979 survey 77 per cent of candidates who participated in the survey were in favour of ethnic minorities becoming more involved in the existing political structures. In the 1983 survey 18 per cent responded in general way saying that they should take a full part in the democratic process and integrate with society generally. In addition 71 per cent mentioned that ethnic minorities should be encouraged to join and be active in political parties and other relevant organisations. Ten per cent thought that political parties should be sensitive to the needs of ethnic minorities and should talk to ethnic minority leaders. There were few differences in opinion between candidates of different parties. One difference worth mentioning is that 10 per cent of Alliance (Liberal/SDP) candidates mentioned that proportional representation would help ethnic minorities to achieve more representation. Candidates were also asked which of the two methods of increasing involvement of ethnic minorities

in politics they would favour: getting more involved in the present political parties or ethnic minorities having their own political party. As expected 92 per cent favoured ethnic minorities getting more involved in the existing political parties and no-one favoured the idea of ethnic minorities having their own party. When asked whether ethnic minority candidates should be given safe seats at elections, 35 per cent of the candidates supported this notion but an equal number of them (35%) were opposed to it. Conservative candidates were more likely to reject the suggestion (58%) compared with Labour (22%), Liberals (29%) and SDP (31%) candidates (Anwar, 1984).

In our survey of candidates in the 1990 local elections first we wanted to gauge the importance of gaining support of local ethnic minorities.(7) Ninety per cent of respondents said that the support of the ethnic minority communities was important in the elections. Only 10 per cent said that it was not important. The responses from various political party candidates are presented in Table 17.

Table 17: Importance of Ethnic Minority Support (Per centages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Yes	90	94	89	88	90	100
No	10	6	11	12	10	-
Base	159	19	54	50	28	8

Then we asked respondents why it was important to gain the support of local ethnic minority communities. It is interesting to see from Table 18 that almost half of the Conservative candidates (47%) said that ethnic minority groups were part of the community compared with only 18 per cent Labour candidates. On the other hand one third (33%) of the Labour candidates said that it was important to represent ethnic minority views or interests, but no Conservative candidate said this. This finding confirms the belief that the Labour Party is seen more sympathetic to represent the

views and interests of the ethnic minorities. It must be emphasised here that the views of Liberal and other minor party candidates are also interesting to note since they form more than half of the respondents in the survey.

Table 18: Why the Support of Local Ethnic Minority Communities Is Important (Per centages)

Yes Reasons	All	Con	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Democracy	5	5	5	6	3	12
To win seat	4	16	4	-	3	-
To represent ethnic minority interest/ views	26	-	33	20	11	37
To encourage ethnic minority participation	7	10	7	6	3	12
Ethnic minority groups are part of the community	48	47	18	32	21	62
Need support of all groups	27	15	22	30	28	12
Own party offer best support to ethnic minority groups	2	-	4	-	3	-

With the objective of comparing our results from the parliamentary candidates, reported above with those of the local election candidates, they were asked 'Do you think people from ethnic minority groups should be encouraged to take more active role in British politics?' The responses were very similar to the 1979 and 1983 surveys with 97 per cent of all respondents saying 'yes' to this question as shown in Table 19.

Table 19: Ethnic Minority Participation in Politics: Candidates' Views, 1990 Survey (Per centages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Yes should be encouraged	97	95	98	98	96	86
No should not	2	5	2	2	-	14
Don't know	1	-	-	-	4	-

There are very few party differences on this question. However, when asked about the reasons for encouraging ethnic minority groups to take more active role in British politics party differences appear. For example, while only 39 per cent Conservatives and 37 per cent Liberal candidates said that it was 'to represent ethnic minority views/interest/needs', almost two thirds (63%) of Labour local election candidates expressed this as a reason. Although the pattern of responses is fairly similar from all party candidates the majority of Conservative candidates (61%) gave the reason that everyone should be encouraged to participate more in British politics. Table 20 shows the reason given by respondents in this connection. (some respondents gave more than one reason and therefore the per centages do not add up to 100).

Like the previous surveys we wanted to know which method respondents preferred for the active involvement of ethnic minorities in politics:

a) getting involved with existing political parties,
b) getting involved with separate political party and
c) any other methods.

As shown in Table 21, 87 per cent of all respondents preferred the method of getting involved with the existing political parties and all Conservative candidates preferred this method. Like the parliamentary candidates there was a total rejection of the formation of a separate political party for ethnic minorities.

Table 20: Reasons for Encouraging Ethnic Minority Groups to Take Active Role in British Politics (Per centages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
To represent ethnic minority views/interests/needs	51	39	63	37	56	71
Everyone should be encouraged to participate more	48	61	41	54	48	28
Increased participation is democratic	33	22	31	39	32	28
Participation will reduce isolation/increase understanding	10	17	14	8	4	14
Ethnic minority people have same right to participate as any other	2	5	2	2	-	-

Table 21: Methods of Ethnic Minority Involvement in Politics (Per centages)

Methods	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
a) Getting involved with existing political parties	87	100	91	93	81	60
b) Getting involved with separate political party	4	-	2	4	12	-
c) Other methods	13	-	9	12	27	40

If respondents wanted ethnic minorities to get involved in the existing political parties then what about their representation at national and local levels? We explored this issue with the respondents who themselves were trying to represent their political parties in the 1990 local elections. It is very encouraging that 87 per cent of all respondents said that there should

be more elected representatives from ethnic minority groups. No doubt some of our respondents (just over 5 per cent) belonged to ethnic minorities but their views should not alter the general pattern of responses presented in Table 22.

Table 22: More Elected Representatives from Ethnic Minority Groups (Per centages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Yes	87	73	90	89	88	83
No	9	16	6	10	8	16
Not sure	3	10	4	-	4	-
% response	95	100	98	98	89	75

However, the reasons for wanting more elected representatives from ethnic minorities are interesting. Almost half (48%) of all respondents felt that this would help to represent ethnic minority interests, needs and views and 38 per cent saw this as providing proportional representation of ethnic minority groups. Some argued that ethnic minority elected representatives will help ethnic minorities' integration in political life and this would help democracy. Very few respondents gave negative reasons in this connection.

In the 1990 study we also interviewed party agents in some of the six research areas. Ten party representatives were interviewed out of 15 initially contacted.(8) Like the party candidates the political party representatives did not want ethnic minorities to have a separate political party but join the existing political structures. The Labour and Conservative party representatives felt that they were the best party to represent ethnic minority interests and both parties claimed that they had the support of most of the Asians in their areas.(9) Except in Birmingham, no other party representatives said that they had Afro-Caribbeans as members while all respondents stated that they had Asian party members

in their areas. The party agents did not see any particular difficulty in attracting ethnic minority members but accepted that due to general apathy among public about local government it was hard to attract new members. One respondent suggested the fear of rejection and or discrimination as a possible factor limiting the involvement of ethnic minorities. All interviewees claimed that their political party was more sympathetic, attractive and accessible to ethnic minorities. However, Labour Party representatives were in a better position to give examples for their ethnic minority members, ethnic minority elected councillors and candidates. They were also in a better position to demonstrate regular and established links with ethnic minorities generally but with Asians in particular. It must be pointed out here that in all six study areas the number of Asians certainly was larger than Afro-Caribbean and that is certainly reflected in the qualitative answers of the interviewees.

Chapter Seven: POLITICAL PARTIES' POSITION AND ELECTION ISSUES

In this chapter we look at the reactions of candidates to election issues and to specific aspects of race relations nationally and locally. However, before we look at these opinions it is relevant to present paragraphs from the manifestos of the three main political parties that directly relate to ethnic minorities.

The 1992 Labour Party manifesto stated:

The Black and Ethnic Minority Communities

We are determined to ensure that women and men from ethnic minority groups are full and equal members of the community. As well as strengthening the race discrimination laws and extending the powers of the Commission for Racial Equality, we will press for similar laws throughout the European Community. We will not tolerate the present level of racial harassment and attacks, and will ensure that more effective protection is given to vulnerable groups. Contract compliance laws will be the first step towards guaranteeing the black and Asian British their fair share of jobs.

A Fair Citizenship Law

We will introduce fair immigration and citizenship laws which restore the right to British citizenship for every child born in Britain. Our laws, which will not discriminate on grounds of sex or race, will respect the right to family life. A new act will guarantee sanctuary to genuine refugees but prevent bogus applications for asylum.

We are determined to see that equally fair laws apply throughout the European Community and will oppose any attempt to remove voting rights from Commonwealth citizens in European elections.
(Labour Party, 1992)

The Conservative Party's manifesto had more details about immigration, refugees and community relations. It had this to say on these issues:

Community Relations

Racial harmony demands restraint on all sides, and a tolerant understanding of the legitimate views of others. Everybody, regardless of ethnic background, religious or personal belief, has the right to go about his or her life free from the threat of intimidation and assault. We are determined that everyone lawfully settled in this country should enjoy the full range of opportunities in our society. That requires openness on the part of the majority, and, on the part of the ethnic minorities themselves, a determination to participate fully in the life of the wider community.

The Home Office invests £129 million in grants designed to encourage those running public services to ensure that people from ethnic minorities can enjoy the full range of public services - such as health, housing and social services. We believe that these grants would be more effective if responsibility was transferred to those departments which can make best use of the money.

Racial and sexual discrimination have no place in our society. We have given the police stronger powers to deal with racial hatred. We will continue to ensure that the full force of the law is used to deal with racial attacks.

We will transfer the education share of the Home Office's 'Section 11' money to the Department of Education, to focus help on those from ethnic minority backgrounds who need additional English language teaching.

Immigration and Refugees

Good community relations in this country depend upon a clear

structure of immigration controls which are fair, understandable and properly enforced. We are determined to maintain our present system of immigration controls unless we have evidence that other arrangements would be equally satisfactory and cost-effective. But an increasing number of would-be immigrants from Eastern Europe and other parts of the world seek to abuse our openness to genuine refugees. The number of people seeking refugee status has risen from 5,000 a year to 45,000 over the past four years. We will continue to honour our commitment to the 1951 UN Convention, and give refuge to those who reach our shores with a well-founded fear of persecution.

In the new parliament we must therefore reintroduce the Asylum Bill, opposed by Labour and the Liberal Democrats, to create a faster and more effective system of determining who are genuine political refugees and who are not.

We will provide a fair and expeditious system for examining claims for refugee status. This will include a workable appeal system for applicants under which those with manifestly unfounded claims will be returned quickly to their own country or to the country they came from.

Finger-printing will be introduced for asylum applicants, to prevent multiple applications and fraudulent benefit claims. (Conservative Party 1992)

It certainly repeated the now familiar view of the Conservative Party that there is a clear relationship between good race relations in this country and strict immigration controls. However, unlike previous manifestos of the Conservative Party the issue of refugees was highlighted with some details and the Asylum Bill which ran into difficulties before the general election was to be reintroduced in the new parliament after the election. It is interesting to note that the issues of refugees and asylum seekers were

not mentioned in such details in the manifestos of the other two main political parties.

The Liberal Democrats manifesto included a bill of rights like the Liberal Party's previous manifestos incorporating the European Convention on Human Rights and its protocols into UK law. The relevant sections from the Liberal Democrats manifesto are presented below:

Ensuring citizens' rights and opportunities

No citizen is truly free unless all are. Individual citizens and minority communities themselves need protection against the power of the state and against discrimination and unfair treatment. Citizens must have rights of access to information about decisions taken by public authorities in their name. We will:

- Introduce a freedom of information act, placing responsibility on government and other authorities to justify secrecy. We will reverse the present government's encroachments on freedom of speech and association, such as the banning of trade unions at GCHQ. We will legislate to give individuals the right of access to their personal files, except in matters relating to national security, whether held by public or private bodies. Security services and intelligence agencies should be accountable to a committee of senior privy councillors.

- Enact a bill of rights by immediately incorporating the European convention on human rights and its protocols into UK law. We will create a commission of human rights to help people bring proceedings under the bill and to recommend changes in existing law and practice. In due course we will add rights and freedoms not currently included in the convention, extending into a full UK bill of rights.

- Take tougher action against discrimination. Our bill of rights will guarantee effective protection against discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, age, disability, religion or sexual orientation. Our commission of human rights will help individuals take legal action in cases of discrimination.

- End the bias against women's participation in the present political system. The introduction of fair votes and of sensible parliamentary conditions will increase both the number of women candidates and the number of women MPs. In addition, we will use government's powers of appointment to ensure fair representation of women on public bodies.

- Improve the administration of the legal system with the establishment of a ministry of justice, separating responsibility for civil liberties and justice from that for order and security. We will establish a judicial services commission to appoint judges.

- Adopt a written constitution, of which the bill of rights will form the centrepiece. We will create a supreme court to entrench and defend these fundamental reforms to the relationship between the citizen and the state. (Liberal Democrats 1992)

How were these issues presented during the election campaign of the 1992 general election? It was assumed that this time race would not become an election issue. This assumption was partly based on the fact that the new Leader of the Conservative Party, John Major, was committed to a fairer society, free of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic background and religious beliefs. For example, in a speech in September 1991 John Major stated his position very clearly: 'I believe deeply that all men and women should be able to go as far as talent, ambition and effort can take them. There should be no barriers of background, no barriers of religion, no barriers of race.' He added 'let me say here and now that I regard any barriers built upon race as pernicious.' And he admitted that, 'yet still prejudice stretches out its tentacles and bars the way forward' (25 September 1991). This is certainly a better statement than any issued by Mrs Thatcher when she was Prime Minister. In fact during her eleven and a half years in office she never made a major speech on race relations. However she supported the activities of her party to attract ethnic minorities to join and support the Conservative Party and she attended the relevant functions whereever possible. Just before the 1992 general election the Labour Party published a

policy document entitled *Opportunities For All*. It states 'Black, Asian and ethnic minorities are a vital and integral part of British society. Racism, however, also has a long and unpleasant history in this country. All too often, low pay, poverty, poor housing and racial violence form part of the daily reality of Black, Asian and ethnic minorities living in Britain.' (Labour Party, 1992).

The Liberal Democrats demonstrate the positive contribution of ethnic minorities by including Jews and others. 'We believe that cultural and ethnic diversity is a positive asset. The country has benefited enormously from contributions that Jews, Afro-Caribbeans and others have made to British life'. They argue that the solution to racism is not in the promotion of bland uniformity but in the genuine celebration of diversity (Liberal Democrats, 1989). This argument and it must be emphasised the government's commitment to equality and cultural diversity is close to what Roy Jenkins (now Lord Jenkins) Home Secretary in 1968 called integration. How were some of these issues presented in the 1992 election campaign?

In the early part of the election campaign race did not feature in any significant way nationally, although in areas where the National Front (NF) and the British National Party (BNP) candidates were contesting, race and immigration were highlighted. There were 14 NF and 13 BNP candidates in the 1992 general election (see Chapter Nine for details). Because of the failure of the Asylum Bill just before the election to become law there appeared to be a danger that this would be used to raise immigration as an election issue. *The Guardian* quoted the Home Secretary, Kenneth Baker, (who lost his job after the election) saying 'If we had been able to get these laws through, immigration would not have been an issue. Now we have no choice but to make it one' (15 February, 1992). Another report a week later suggested that 'the Tories will be able to use it (Asylum Bill) as an election issue against Labour (*The Independent*, 22 February 1992). Then there were several negative press reports about the 14 Indians who tried to enter Britain illegally. However, it was two weeks before the election that a senior Conservative mentioned the issue of asylum. Mr Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, was quoted

as saying 'The abuse of asylum is a matter of sheer numbers not race, but Labour are more interested in postponing than facing realities'. He added that mass migration was one of the most serious problems facing Britain and that there was no sign that the Labour Party understood it or could be trusted to deal with it (*Daily Express* and *Daily Mail*, 26 March, 1992).

Some sections of the media continued their campaign to show that the Labour Party was 'pro' immigration and some of the headlines and leading articles appeared a few days before the polling day to highlight this. A few examples include: 'Kinnock won't curb flood of bogus refugees' (*The Daily Mail*, 26 March 1992), 'Illegal immigrants invading Britain' (*The Sun*, 26 March, 1992), 'Enough is Enough' (*The Evening Standard*, 26 March, 1992). 'Labour's madness on migrants' (*The Daily Mail*, 2 April, 1992). 'Human tide Labour would let in' (*The Sun*, 4 April, 1992). Some of these articles referred to the Home Secretary's statements 'if Labour takes power, it will be soft on immigration'. An article in *The Daily Mail* (27 March 1992) continued 'The fact is that Labour is totally hostile to our efforts to prevent the rising tide of asylum applicants'. *The Daily Express* had a front page headline 'BAKER'S MIGRANT FLOOD WARNING' (7 April, 1992) followed by an argument that Labour Party would open the floodgates and it also feared that this would 'ignite a revival of fascism in Britain'. In some articles references were also made to Germany and Italy where fascist right had recently received increasing support.

After the 'Red Wednesday' when most opinion polls put Labour ahead of Conservatives, there was some panic. In this context the final event which kept the immigration issue alive in the last few days of the campaign was a remark by Sir Nicholas Fairbairn[10] that under Labour 'this country would be swamped by immigrants of every colour and race'. Although Mr Major disassociated the Conservative Party from Sir Nicholas' remarks and Lord Whitelaw was quoted as withdrawing his support for him, the damage was done. Also on the final day of the campaign Mr Major was reported as supporting Mr Baker's statements on immigration. One paper reported 'Mr John Major yesterday strongly backed Mr Kenneth Baker's efforts to put immigration on the electoral agenda in spite of charges that

the Conservatives were "scaremongering" and playing the race card' (*The Financial Times*, 8 April, 1992). It is worth mentioning that the final ICM opinion poll on the 8 April for *The Guardian* put both the Conservatives and Labour on 38 per cent each and the Liberal Democrats on 20 per cent.

It is clear from the above analysis that the 'immigration card' (implied as race card) was played by the Conservative Party in desperation when it was behind in the opinion polls. It also appears that this might have helped them to get some extra white votes, with a close-run fight and possibly lost a few ethnic minority votes. However, we know that proportionately there are a lot more white electors who would have made the difference on the immigration issue in some areas, and finally to the outcome of the election. Since more seats were won with small majorities than usual, this seems to have benefitted the Conservative Party.

1990 Local Elections

The election addresses of candidates in the six research areas concentrated on local issues and were in particular dominated by the issue of community charge or poll tax. However, during the election campaign one statement made by Norman Tebbit MP, ex-Chairman of the Conservative Party, known as the 'cricket test' angered many Asians and became a subject of discussion in some local areas during the local election campaign. He said that Asians failed to pass the cricket test: 'which side do they cheer for?' It is an interesting test. Are you still harking back to where you came from or where you are? I think we've got real problems in that regard.' However, he went on to say 'where you have a clash of history, a clash of religion, a clash of race, then its all too easy for there to be an actual clash of violence.' He also said, 'If we were not to see social upheaval arising from religious, cultural and ethnic differences we have then enough to do to integrate existing communities into British society without adding to the burden.' His comments related to the 50,000 families from Hong Kong to be given UK passports as a result of the new legislation (British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act 1990). Mr Tebbit (now Lord) also linked his remarks with the Rushdie affair and said there was a

culture clash. 'Some who have lived here for years and hold British passports showed clearly their contempt for our society and our laws.' These remarks received an extensive coverage in the media and a debate about the 'integration' of ethnic minorities, particularly Asians continued for several days. The Asian press included interviews with community leaders and several statements appeared in Asian and English language papers condemning Mr Tebbit's remarks. One Asian councillor from Leicestershire said 'many people who support his party (Conservative) are deeply hurt and insulted. He should not use Asian people as a scapegoat to support his political end' (*New Life*, 27 April, 1990). The author found during the monitoring of the election campaign that this topic was discussed widely and those Asians who were either standing as Conservative Party candidates or were active members of the Conservative Party were put in a difficult position during the election campaign by the negative remarks of a senior Tory politician. Some Labour Party candidates exploited this situation to seek support from their Asian electors. It appeared that as far as white electors were concerned Mr Tebbit's remarks did not make much difference.

Local Issues

Candidates were asked to rate issues from a list of nine listed in the questionnaire as 'extremely important', 'quite important' 'not very important' and 'not important'. As expected reducing the community charge (poll tax) was the most important issue in local areas, more than three quarters of the respondents expressing this as 'extremely important' and another 16 per cent felt it as 'quite important' issue. The next extremely important issues were providing better education (59%) building more houses and tackling racial disadvantage and discrimination (both 40%). Equal rights for ethnic minorities (71%) and improving race relations (70%) were seen as important issues in their areas. Details are presented in Table 23. The high priority given to race related issues shows their awareness of the importance of such issues in their local areas.

Table 23: Important Issues in Local Area (Per centages)

Issue	Extremely Important	Quite Important	Not Very Important	Not Important	No Reply
Reducing unemployment	33	41	17	4	4
Reducing community charge (poll tax)	78	16	3	1	1
Providing better education	59	30	6	1	3
Building more houses	40	28	16	12	2
Equal rights for ethnic minorities	38	33	17	9	2
Improving race relations	32	38	18	8	3
Protecting freedom of speech	39	26	21	9	3
Law and order	33	48	14	2	2
Tackling racial disadvantage/ discrimination	40	33	17	7	2

Candidates were asked 'What are the major issues on which you will be campaigning in the forthcoming local elections?' Again the community charge (poll tax) was seen as one of the major issues by almost two thirds (64%) of all candidates. However, as shown in Table 24 there were clear party differences with 83 per cent Labour Party candidates expressing this as a major election issue compared with just over half (52%) of the Conservative Party candidates and the Liberal Democrats and Green Party candidates in the middle (68% each).

Considering that the majority of our respondents were contesting wards with very small or no ethnic minority populations it is interesting to note that 15 per cent of Labour, 7 per cent of Green Party, 6 per cent of Liberal Democrats and 5 per cent of Conservative Party candidates mentioned 'equal rights' or 'equal opportunities' as major election campaign issues. One other interesting major issue to note is 'accountability of local

council' mentioned by 26 per cent of Conservative candidates but no Labour Party candidate. The accountability of local council was stated in various ways in the local Conservative Party election addresses. One document issued by the Birmingham Conservative Party election leader, Councillor Reg Hales was entitled 'You can't get rid of the community charge by voting Labour but you can reduce it by voting Conservative' (Conservative Association, 1990). It blames the Birmingham Labour Group for the increase of the community charge and for wasting money on extra staff and overspending on some projects like the Convention Centre and the National Exhibition Centre, incompetence and 'an unbelievable degree of mismanagement.' The document also has a paragraph on city council's Race Relations Unit and Woman's Unit as follows:

It is not the governments fault (Conservative government) that Labour spends 1.5 million on a Race Relations Unit and a Women's Unit which has produced not a single piece of evidence to show that they have been any benefit whatever to either good race relations or women. But they have added another £2 on our bill (Birmingham Conservative Association 1990).

This statement certainly shows that in Birmingham race relations was an election issue between the two major political parties. However, to win the ethnic minority support the Conservative Party put forward three Asians as its candidates and their election addresses were translated into relevant Asian languages. This applied to some white and other ethnic minority candidates as well, seeking to overcome the language difficulty with some first generation Asians and also to show them that their support was valued.

Table 24: Major Election Campaign Issues by Political Party (Per centages)

Issue	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Community Charge (Poll tax)	64	52	83	68	68	50
Local environmental issues	37	10	26	38	61	50
Accountability of local council	12	26	-	20	3	-
Equal rights/opportunities	8	5	15	6	7	-
Local education provision	8	5	35	22	7	12
Local democracy	22	5	2	30	12	37
Local housing issues	14	16	24	6	25	-
Misc. local issues	5	-	5	4	3	12

Table 25: Satisfaction with the Equal Opportunity Policy of Local Authority (Per centages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Yes	46	68	39	48	44	37
No	44	32	51	46	32	50
Don't Know	10	-	9	6	24	12

Table 26: What Changes Should be Made to Equal Opportunity Policies in Your Area (Per centages)

Proposed Changes	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Replace with effective policy	55	17	68	56	50	60
Increase recruitment of ethnic minority people	17	17	13	24	14	-
Don't know enough to comment	15	-	9	8	43	20
Positive action strategies encourage white hostility	6	33	-	8	-	20
Increase awareness of issues	6	-	9	8	-	-
Reduce strategies to encourage release of resources for other initiatives	2	33	-	-	-	-
Ethnic minority groups should help themselves more	1	-	-	4	-	-
* % Response	96	100	97	92	100	100
Number response	(81)	(10)	(31)	(25)	(14)	(5)

(* of those responding 'no' to original question)

One other major issue worth noting is local environmental issues, which was mentioned by 37 per cent of all respondents but 61 per cent of candidates of the Green Party. However, it appears that because of the presence of the Green Party candidates other party candidates were also forced to respond to environmental issues, particularly the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats candidates.

Candidates were asked about their satisfaction with the way in which equal opportunity policies were implemented in their Local Authority. The respondents were equally divided between those responded that they were satisfied (46%) and those who were not satisfied (44%). Conservative candidates were most satisfied (68%) and Labour candidates were least satisfied (39%), the other respondents falling between those two points as shown in Table 25.

Those who were not satisfied with the council's equal opportunity policy were asked what changes should be made. A variety of suggestions were made as to how equal opportunity policies could be improved, the most common suggestion was to replace the existing policies with more effective ones. Table 26 provides a breakdown of changes suggested by the respondents of various political parties.

In addition to the statistical breakdown some qualitative responses from the questionnaires are presented here which illustrate further various suggestions.

Less bureaucracy and window-dressing, more effort to consult and carry community with us (Lib)

Lip service paid to equal opportunity for disabled, women and ethnics - not properly investigated and ineffective, the outcome of policies therefore discrediting the policies (Green)

They are written but not implemented - in the main women and members of ethnic minorities hold the more menial positions (Lib)

Too much fuss. It will happen naturally but any rushing will cause problems (Cons)

Currently too dictatorial. Changes are only going to last with the support of the whole community. More education needed particularly among whites (Lib)

Funds should be spent on better education for all to give better opportunities to the minorities and reduce bigotry in the majority (not trendy gimmicks which cause antagonism) (Lib)

The authority's policies of 'positive discrimination' are merely a form

of racism and stir up racism in the community at large. All members of a community should be treated equally (Cons).

It is clear from the quantitative and qualitative responses that several candidates wanted to improve equal opportunities for ethnic minorities. However, to put the whole issue of equal opportunities in a broader context we wanted to know if candidates thought that ethnic minorities in their areas shared the same concerns as whites. Over half of the candidates (54%) thought that ethnic minorities and whites shared the same concerns in their area, with 63 per cent of the Conservative Party candidates expressing this view compared with 43 per cent of Labour Party candidates.

Table 27: Ethnic Minorities and White People Share the Same Concerns in the Area (Per centages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Yes	54	63	43	61	59	50
No	27	26	24	28	29	25
Don't Know	2	5	4	2	-	-

* Not all respondents answered this question

When we asked what concerns were different (57 respondents) the majority (52%) mentioned racial discrimination, 35 per cent cultural issues, 14 per cent equal opportunities, with 33 per cent mentioning unemployment (perhaps with a view of higher unemployment among ethnic minorities) and equal numbers mentioned poverty (33%) as a concern which affected ethnic minorities differently.

Generally it appears that candidates with a significant number of ethnic minorities in their wards or local authority areas showed more awareness of the issues facing ethnic minorities in particular. They were also more articulate about the solutions of such issues. No doubt the approach

between the two major political parties at national level as shown above is reflected at local levels. The views of minor party and Independent candidates are more vocal and interesting but they are not in a position to either formulate or defend their policies as parties in power are expected to do.

Chapter Eight: RACE RELATIONS IN THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

Attitudes and beliefs are as important as facts, particularly in the field of race relations. Therefore, in this chapter we look at the trends in the last two decades using various surveys and opinion polls which used similar questions. We also examine the attitudes of candidates in parliamentary and local elections towards race relations. Wherever possible the attitudes of ordinary white people are compared with the attitudes of ethnic minority people.

In a survey in 1975 it was revealed that 44 per cent of ethnic minorities felt that race relations were getting better, as did 32 per cent of whites. On the other hand only 13 per cent of ethnic minority respondents and 20 per cent of white respondents thought race relations were getting worse in the country as a whole, and 37 per cent of whites and 31 per cent of ethnic minority respondents said that race relations in the country as a whole were remaining the same (CRC, 1976). These questions were repeated in a follow-up survey in 1981 (Anwar, 1981). This survey showed a dramatically different picture from that revealed in the 1975 survey. In the 1981 survey almost half of the ethnic minority respondents and one third of the whites thought that race relations were getting worse. On the other hand only 18 per cent of ethnic minorities and 25 per cent of whites thought they were getting better. The comparison of views presented in Table 28 shows a noticeable change in the opinions of ethnic minority people between 1975 and 1981 when fewer of them compared with white people thought race relations had improved. There was not a significant difference between ethnic minorities and whites and between 1975 and 1981 of those who felt that 'race relations in this country as a whole were remaining the same'.

Table 28: Race Relations in the Country as a Whole

	Ethnic Minorities		Whites	
	1975	1981	1975	1981
	(966)	(1057)	(1050)	(1073)
Better	44	18	32	25
Same	31	28	37	35
Worse	13	47	20	33
Don't Know	12	7	10	7

Sources: CRC (1976) Anwar (1981)

In the 1981 survey respondents were also asked how they saw race relations in the future, ie the next five years. Over half (53%) of the ethnic minority respondents thought race relations would get worse, as did 43 per cent of the whites. Among the ethnic minority respondents, it was the young, those born in Britain, educated, fluent in English, who were most pessimistic about race relations in the future (Anwar, 1981). Two other findings of the 1981 survey are also relevant to the political context. For example, 69 per cent of ethnic minority respondents and 58 per cent whites felt that the overall status of the ethnic minorities in British society was worse than white people. However, 67 per cent of whites felt that they had never minded ethnic minority people being in Britain.

The third Policy Studies Institute (PSI) survey of racial minorities also included questions about trends in race relations (Brown, 1984). When asked whether life in Britain for people of Asian and West Indian origin had improved over the last five years, 15 per cent of Asians and 25 per cent of West Indians thought it had. A similar proportion thought that there had been no change (Asian: 17%, West Indians: 19%). But just over half of Asians (51%) and West Indians (53%) thought that life had become worse for ethnic minorities in the last five years. The pattern of

responses in this survey is fairly similar to the 1981 survey referred to above, although the wording of the questions was slightly different.

The white informants in the PS1 1982 survey were asked about racial discrimination, 'would you say there is about the same amount of racial discrimination in Britain as there was five years ago, less discrimination or more discrimination today?' A third of white respondents said that there was less discrimination than there was five years ago. However, 39 per cent felt that there was more discrimination with 18 per cent saying that it was the same (10% did not know). On the other hand, it is interesting to note that 43 per cent of West Indians and 45 per cent of Asian respondents also felt that there was more discrimination in 1982 compared with 1977. However, one difference between West Indians and Asians is worth noting; while only 7 per cent of the Asian respondents felt that there was less racial discrimination, 21 per cent West Indian respondents expressed this opinion. One explanation for this difference could be a relatively large number of (24%) Asian respondents who did not give their views compared with 13 per cent of West Indians in this category.

A more recent survey asked a different type of question but the meaning of the question was not much different than the PS1 survey nine years earlier. The question was 'some people say Britain is a racist society, in which Afro Caribbean and Asian people have fewer opportunities than white people; others say Britain is a non racist society in which people have equal opportunities regardless of race and ethnic background. Do you think Britain is 1) a very racist society 2) fairly racist, 3) fairly non racist, or 4) a completely non racist society?' More Afro Caribbean respondents (26%) compared with whites (10%) and Asians (6%) felt that Britain was a very racist society. However, as shown in Table 29 there was almost a unanimous view among all these groups that Britain is a fairly racist society. It is interesting to note that relatively more white people (57%) accept this compared with Afro Caribbean (53%) and Asians (50%) respondents' perception of the changes compared with ten years ago. (Amin and Richardson, 1992). Close examination of all these surveys shows that people believe that 'racism' and racial discrimination

in Britain are widespread. This was confirmed recently through the same survey conducted by the National Opinion Polls (NOP) for the *Independent On Sunday* and the Runnymede Trust in Summer 1991. It also found that 67 per cent of the Afro Caribbeans, 42 per cent of the South Asians and also 39 per cent of the whites in the sample believed that non-whites were treated worse than whites by employers.

Table 29: Racism in Britain

	White	Afro-Caribbean	Asian
	(Percentages)		
Very racist	10	26	6
Fairly racist	57	53	50
Fairly non-racist	26	14	28
Completely non-racist	4	3	6
Compared with ten years ago, do you think Britain today is:			
Much more racist	11	9	9
A little more racist	17	10	18
About the same	28	25	20
A little less racist	33	39	28
Much less racist	6	9	8

Source: Amin and Richardson (1992)

On race relations a more recent opinion poll confirmed that the situation was getting worse (Gallup, 1993). It used the questions similar to the 1975 and 1981 surveys referred to above. The poll was for a Channel 4 programme *'Bloody Foreigners'* (an unfortunate title). It showed that race relations in Britain had worsened compared with similar polls in 1964 and 1978. Asked whether feeling between whites and non-whites were getting better, worse or remaining the same, 51 per cent said worse, 13 per cent better and 31 per cent the same. In a similar poll in 1978 those who

thought 'getting worse' the figure was 46 per cent and in 1964 it was only 26 per cent. On the other hand were those who thought the race relations were improving: in 1978 a similar proportion (14%) to the 1993 poll but the figure for 1964 was 24 per cent. It appears that the perception of British people regarding race relations has not changed dramatically between 1978 and 1993.

Let us now turn to the attitudes of parliamentary and local election candidates to race relations. Because candidates when elected are responsible for making relevant policies about issues to society, nationally and locally their views in this respect are important. Two surveys of candidates were undertaken at the 1979 and 1983 general elections in which they were asked whether they felt that the relationships between ethnic minorities and white people were getting better, getting worse, or remaining the same in the country as a whole. It is interesting to note that in the 1983 survey more candidates (33%) felt that race relations were getting worse than those who felt they were getting better (21%). As shown in Table 30 for those who felt they remained the same, there was not much difference between the 1979 (35%) and the 1983 surveys (37%).

Table 30: Race Relations: The views of candidates

	1979 (573) %	1983 (662) %
Getting better	26	21
Remaining the same	35	37
Getting worse	19	33
Don't know/no answer	20	9

Source: Adapted from Anwar (1980 and 1984).

There were also party differences. In the 1979 survey, when the Labour Party was in power, more Labour Party candidates (43%) compared with other party candidates (16% Conservative, 29% Liberal and 16% SDP) felt that the situation was improving. In the 1983 survey, when the Conservative Party was in power, relatively more (27%) Conservative candidates felt that race relations were improving compared with 19 per cent Labour, 23 per cent Liberal and 16 per cent SDP candidates. However, at the other end only 16 per cent of the Conservative Party candidates said that race relations were getting worse compared with a high 46 per cent among Labour candidates and 36 and 38 per cent Liberal and SDP candidates respectively, indirectly criticising the Conservative Party for making things worse. Candidates were also asked in the 1979 survey for their views on race relations policies and how they could be improved. Candidates mainly followed their party line (for details see Anwar,1980).

Now we present more recent views of local election candidates on race relations policies. Candidates were asked several questions about race relations nationally and locally and also how they saw race relations in the future, in the next five years (see Appendix 3). We discovered that just over one third of the respondents felt that race relations were getting better, 41 per cent felt that race relations remained the same and only 17 per cent believed that race relations were getting worse in the country as a whole (Table 31).

Table 31: Race Relations: The views of local election candidates

	(Per centages)	
	In 1990	Next Five Years
Getting better	36	42
Remaining the same	41	30
Getting worse	17	20
Don't know/not sure	3	5

There were party differences: 63 per cent of the Conservative Party candidates saw race relations getting better and only 5 per cent felt them getting worse. On the other hand only 33 per cent Labour candidates felt that race relations were getting better with 54 per cent saying that race relations were remaining the same.

Respondents were also asked 'Do you think race relations in your area are getting better, getting worse or remaining the same'? This was followed by a question about the future 'Looking to the future again do you think that the feeling between white and ethnic minorities would get better, worse, or remain the same in your area over the next five years'? The responses to both the questions are fairly similar when respondents are presented as a group. However, there are party differences. For example, while 37 per cent of Conservative Party candidates said that race relations were getting better in their areas no candidate admitted that race relations were getting worse (63% remaining the same). Table 32 shows the details about the 1990 perceived situation and Table 33 presents the details of how race relations are seen over the next five years:-

Table 32: Race Relations in Local Areas, 1990

	(Per centages)					
	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Getting better	37	37	41	39	33	37
Remaining the same	51	63	52	52	52	25
Getting worse	7	-	5	6	7	37
Don't know/not sure	2	-	2	2	8	-

It is worth noting that there were only 6 independents in the survey who responded, therefore the per centage breakdown should be interpreted cautiously. This also applies to some other tables from the 1990 survey of candidates.

Table 33: Race Relations in Local Areas over the Next Five Years

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
			(Per centages)			
Getting better	38	42	42	34	37	37
Remaining the same	42	58	41	47	37	12
Getting worse	11	-	9	13	15	37
Don't know/unsure	6	-	5	4	11	12

Table 34: Ways for Improving Race Relations Locally (Per centages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Better education of and understanding between different people	49	30	45	51	57	66
Better understanding of issues	22	-	20	24	24	50
Increase involvement of ethnic minority people in cultural and social activities	21	30	20	24	14	17
Increase effective equal opportunities	16	10	20	21	5	-
There are no problems in this area	6	10	9	-	5	17
Reduce in-fighting between different ethnic groups	2	-	2	3	-	-
Reduce emphasis on 'race'	2	20	-	-	-	-
Increase ethnic minority populations in 'white' areas	2	-	4	-	-	-
Time will make things better	2	-	4	-	-	-
More responsible media	1	-	2	-	5	-
Don't know	3	-	4	-	4	-

114 candidates responded to this question

Attitudes about the future and the party trend seemed similar in both the tables. For example, no Conservative candidate felt that race relations would get worse. Even the per centages of the Labour (9%) and Liberal party (13%) candidates who felt that feeling between white and ethnic minorities would get worse is relatively small. One explanation for this optimistic view is that local candidates feel that things are better in their own areas regarding race relations compared with other areas. It is also possible that their knowledge about other areas or nationally is fairly limited.

We were interested to know how the local election candidates would like to see race relations improved in their areas. A variety of interesting answers were given with the main emphasis on education, understanding between different people (49%) and involvement of ethnic minority people in social and cultural activities. Suggestions made by the respondents are presented in Table 34.

Because the responses were so interesting we also present a selection of verbatim answers representing various political parties candidates. These answers help to illustrate the quantitative responses presented in Table 34.

Establishment of white/ethnic forum for discussion of problems etc. (Green)

By encouraging ethnic minorities to participate more (Lib)

Clamp down on any signs of racism eg. expel racist tenants, fast removal of graffiti (Lab)

Discrimination of any sort only strengthens basic hostilities between groups of people and highlights their differences, rather than what they share in common. I would therefore like to see all

discriminatory policies ended whether they go under the name of 'positive discrimination' or not (Cons).

Much of the racism that exists is not open. It is this that needs to be tackled. This can only be done by changing attitudes via education (Green)

Council services supplied on a more local neighbourhood basis and change in editorial stances of local newspaper (Green)

I think you have to ask the victims of racism - a first step must be to get ethnic minorities to meet and discuss it (Lab)

Abolish Labour's positive discrimination and racist committees (Cons)

The slow process of people getting used to each other and even slower process of the species becoming more rational needs an insertion of radical education policies (from the creche) (Lib)

Participation within a party. Sharing views. Being seen by the community's people that they are being represented being seen to work together by all (Lib)

Growing involvement of ethnic minorities in mainstream politics. Good employer practice by local authorities and better monitoring of policies and actions. More prosecutions of offenders (Lib)

Treat them as normal citizens and stop accentuating the differences, the Irish I've known have all had a touch of the 'blarney' (Cons)

I'm a woman serving a Muslim population - dialogue had to get going (Lab)

Motivation for involvement in activities after leaving workplace in off duty and weekend periods (Lab)

Encouraging training for unemployed. Teaching English to under fives if it is not their mother tongue. Positive discrimination for Asians and blacks (Lab)

Increase awareness opportunities for all races. Encourage communities to communicate with each other (Lab)

Immigration controls - fair, firm and non-racist. The thing that stirs up racialism is not ethnic people **here** but fears of 'floods of immigrants' that may yet arrive (Green)

Improvement of general facilities and of education; use of inter-religious activities as a vehicle for unity (Lib)

Some of the above responses clearly reinforce party policies at local level. The Conservative candidate who said 'abolish Labour's positive discrimination and racist committees', was evidently unaware that positive discrimination is not allowed under the Race Relations Act 1976. Some other responses also show respondents' lack of awareness of the legislation and Government's race relations policies. Several of them confused race relations policies with immigration policies. However, several useful suggestions have been made for improving race relations locally. Some answers also highlight local concerns in this connection. Candidates were asked 'what is your opinion of the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Government's present race relations policies in this country?'. Overall the proportion of those satisfied (45%) and those not satisfied (45%) was equal but there was a big difference between candidates representing Labour and Conservative parties as shown in Table 35.

Table 35: Opinion of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Per centages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Satisfied	45	79	24	63	40	14
Not satisfied	45	21	68	32	32	71
Partly satisfied	-	2	-	-	-	1
Don't know	-	5	4	28	14	9
% Response	94	100	98	94	89	87

While three quarters of the Conservative candidates were satisfied with the Race Relations Act, two thirds of the Labour Party candidates were not satisfied. However, those who were not satisfied were asked to make suggestions for its improvement. Almost half of them (48%) believed that the Act should be strengthened and 17 per cent suggested that it should be replaced with a more effective policy.(11) A selection of verbatim responses illustrates some of the reasons behind these suggestions:-

Monitoring needs to be stricter to obtain a fairer deal in employment. I believe employment is the key way forward. It has a tremendous affect on white as well as black when blacks are seen to be doing well and being popular (SDP)

CRE needs greater powers. Still too cumbersome prosecuting clubs with colour bars (Lib)

Greater powers for the CRE; increased sanctions against those who discriminate; new powers to order changes to prevent a recurrence when a case has been proved (Lab)

There is a need for positive discrimination. Secondary immigration could be made easier. However given the general climate of opinion I do not believe that any party could advocate or implement such improvements and hope to retain or gain office (Lib)

Needs more teeth and the teeth to be used. There needs to be more explicit recognition that there is a problem to be addressed (Ind)

Until all men are treated equally I will never be satisfied. The Act makes it illegal to discriminate on the grounds of colour or race but way have been found around this by employers in particular (Lab)

Simplified for people to understand the consequences of its breach / CRE and the CRCs should be empowered to take to court any authority who may be in breach of the Act / should be directives rather than a framework as it is at present / positive action must be part of the Act (Lab)

Too much special treatment. They came here of choice wanting to be British (Cons)

Discrimination still too difficult to prove, as with rape, it often appears that it is the victim who is 'on trial' (Lab)

It is consistently undermined by Government action eg allowing school transfers for reasons of race. Equal rights must not be undermined or shoved to one side by expediency. New legislation must take account of this, and proper monitoring funds be provided (Lib)

I believe that attempts to enforce modes of behaviour on individuals by the State are almost invariably doomed to failure. The correct way to promote good relations between groups of people is by education, encouragement and example (Cons)

It is essentially unenforceable. You cannot end oppression through legislation (Lab)

It is worth pointing out here that not a single Conservative Party candidate made a suggestion to improve the Race Relations Act and the two verbatim responses quoted above from Conservative candidates are in fact not suggestions to improve but are negative responses. It is also interesting to note that 15 per cent of those who were not satisfied with the Act admitted that they did not know enough to comment and another 7 per cent believed that you could not legislate for white hostility. The responses show a pattern of pessimistic attitudes regarding race relations legislation.

It appeared that very few (19%) were satisfied with the Government's race relations policies as against those who were not satisfied (73%). The pattern of responses was similar to the question about the race relations legislation with 84 per cent Conservative Party candidates satisfied with the Government's policies in this connection but 92 per cent Labour Party candidates were not satisfied. The views of other candidates are presented in Table 36 along with those of the Conservative and Labour candidates.

Table 36: Opinion of the Government's Race Relations Policies (Percentages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Satisfied	19	84	3	15	11	14
Not Satisfied	73	16	92	79	69	71
Partly Satisfied	*	-	2	-	-	-
Don't Know	6	-	2	6	19	14

Those who suggested improvement to the Government's race relations policies wanted these to be replaced with a fairer policy (52%) and 17 per cent wanted (no Conservative) the replacement of the Government. A few verbatim responses on improvements to the existing race relations policies are worth noting:-

You can't improve. This is racism at Government level. Need different strategy to uproot this evil (Lib)

Current immigration policies are humiliating (Lab)

Fairer immigration policy (Green)

A tougher stand should be taken against racist groups. Immigration policies should not be racist (Green)

Sharp rejection of racist remarks/policies (eg Tebbit). Change in immigration laws, including Hong Kong (Ind)

The majority of these responses also reinforce the point made above that several respondents conflated the immigration policies with race relations policies. This is not surprising because the Conservative Party in its manifesto highlights the relationship between strict immigration policy and good race relations in Britain. A further point relevant here is that while the issues relevant to immigration of non-whites into Britain receive a wide media coverage the race relations policies do not receive such publicity. Therefore, very few had the full knowledge of the details of these policies. Overall, it appears that our respondents were aware of the inferior position of ethnic minorities in Britain and the discrimination they face in their daily lives as shown by the responses to relevant questions in this regard. Responses about status or position in British society are presented in Table 37.

It is interesting to note that 6 per cent of the Conservative candidates said that ethnic minorities had better position or status than whites while most other parties' candidates believed that the status of ethnic minorities compared with whites was worse. Some interesting statements were made in this connection which are presented below Table 37.

Table 37: Ethnic Minorities Better or Worse Status/Position Than Whites (Per centages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Better	1	6	-	-	-	-
Worse	82	41	94	84	86	66
Same	15	53	5	14	11	33
Don't Know/Unsure	2	-	-	2	3	-

Lack of educational opportunity. Institutional racism, eg unions and council preventing career/personal development. Lack of perceived status. Stereotyped portrayal of ethnic minorities in media (Lib)

Position of power and authority are dominated by white people resulting in a lack of positive role models and reinforcing negative stereotypes (Green)

Ethnic minorities are seen as 'foreigners' and seen as not meriting the same rights as 'natives' (Lib)

Ethnic minorities tend to isolate themselves, form 'ghettos' and don't mix as much as they should. This leads to mistrust by other communities. Only by mixing and talking with each other can the barriers be brought down (Lab)

The indigenous population has always been racist - it just depends on how it has been manipulated (Lab)

Basic statistics and observation - relative to "whites" they are under-employed, more poorly housed and over represented in jail etc. (Lib)

These minorities must work to improve their status, by working within the system. Participation is better than segregation (Lib)

The minorities suffer from prejudices built up in the indigenous population over centuries. Until contact changes attitudes on both sides of the racial divide, that will continue (Ind)

Too few in exalted position in politics and Government (Lib)

The ethnic minorities are generally poorer and under represented at all positions of influence and power (Green)

I can't name a single institution (excluding CRE) which does not practise hidden racism. Even in our borough Black people are against Asians (Lib)

Patronising attitudes of the establishment; immigration policy; institutional discrimination (Green).

Some of the responses show a good awareness among the candidates of the difficulties ethnic minorities encounter. This is also shown in Table 38 which presents the reasons for their answers in different categories. All these responses show that most of the respondents are aware of the reasons for the inferior status of ethnic minorities compared with white people. The implication of their answers is clear: they would like appropriate action to be taken to remove the hurdles and difficulties which ethnic minorities face and which result in their worse status and position in society. This brings us back to the question we asked about election issues in the 1990 local election campaign. It was clear from the answers to the three relevant issues, 'equal rights' for ethnic minorities, 'improving race relations' and 'tackling racial disadvantage and discrimination' that these issues were seen as extremely or quite important by candidates. The answers are summarised in Table 39.

undertaken. Once again the message is clear from the candidates who responded in the survey, that action was needed to remove racial disadvantage and discrimination, and to provide equal rights for ethnic minorities which should lead to improving race relations in local areas.

Table 38: Reasons For The Perceived Status Of Ethnic Minorities (Per centages)

	All	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind
Better						
No contrary evidence	1	9	-	3	-	-
Same						
Depends on individual	9	36	2	6	11	25
Positive action strategies	1	9	-	-	-	-
White people don't discriminate	2	-	2	3	-	-
Worse						
Discrimination	57	36	67	54	50	75
Discrimination in employment/ institutional racism	18	18	19	23	11	-
Lower social-economic position as perceived by white people	24	9	24	23	38	-

Table 39: Importance of Issues (Per centages)

	Equal Rights	Race Relations	Racial Disadvantage & Discrimination
Extremely important	38	32	40
Quite important	33	38	33
Not very important	17	18	17
Not important	9	8	7
No response	2	3	2

It is clear from the table that although all three issues were important in the respondents areas, tackling racial disadvantage and discrimination seemed to be relatively more important in 1990 when the survey was

Chapter Nine: SMETHWICK TO MILLWALL: SUPPORT FOR ANTI-ETHNIC MINORITY CAMPAIGNS

It is argued elsewhere (Anwar, 1986) that the activities of the anti-ethnic minority organisations have made ethnic minorities aware of the dangers of these organisations and as a consequence made them determined to participate in the political process to counter the impact of their activities. Therefore, in this chapter we analyse the electoral performance of the main anti-ethnic minority organisation, the National Front (NF) in the last two decades. However, references will be made to other such organisations where relevant. Several publications about the NF and other extreme right anti-ethnic minority organisations have appeared during this period (Berwick, 1972; Hanna, 1974; Scott, 1975; Husbands, 1975 and 1983; Nugent and King, 1977; Walker, 1977; Billing, 1978; Fielding, 1981; Taylor, 1982). Therefore, very little background information about the organisation and other activities of the NF and other such groups is given here, except to mention that the NF was founded in 1966.

Immigration and race emerged for the first time as major issues at the 1964 general election, and particularly in Smethwick parliamentary constituency. In Smethwick, Peter Griffiths, the Conservative Party candidate supported slogans such as 'if you want a nigger neighbour, vote Labour' (*The Times*, 9 March 1964). In July 1964 Peter Griffiths (who had also become an Alderman in May that year) wrote in the *Smethwick Telephone* that Smethwick 'rejects the idea of being a multi-racial society. The Government must be told of this' (quoted in Hartley-Brewer, 1965). There was no doubt that immigration had become a crucial issue in Smethwick by the time the 1964 general election campaign started in September. Peter Griffiths was presented as a local man and an anti-immigration candidate and his campaign literature reflected this. As a result of this anti-immigration campaign Patrick Gordon Walker, the Labour Shadow Foreign Secretary lost the seat to Peter Griffiths. The Labour candidate was presented by the Conservatives as somebody supporting immigration of Commonwealth citizens. Although he lost his seat in 1966, Peter Griffiths was never repudiated by the Conservative

Party leadership. In fact he returned to Parliament in 1979 as the member for Portsmouth North (Layton-Henry, 1992).

After 1966 the National Front became an active anti-immigrant organisation and in the 1970 general election it put up 10 candidates. After all the effort and publicity it only received on average 3.6 per cent of the vote. Butler and Pinto-Duschinsky (1971) concluded that the National Front activities in the 1970 election were negligible except in their local press. In local elections in 1973 and in parliamentary by-elections such as West Bromwich in May 1973 their performance showed that they might do well at the next general election. For example, in the West Bromwich by-election the NF candidate received 16.2 per cent of the vote. However, at the February 1974 general election the 54 NF candidates received on average 3.2 per cent of the vote. There were some areas such as Leicester East, where in the previous local elections they had received 20 per cent of the votes, they received only 7.4 per cent at the general election. At Newham South the NF candidate received 6.7 per cent of the votes. On the whole it was a disappointing result for the NF but it received a lot of media coverage. Encouraged by this, at the October 1974 general election the NF increased its number of candidates to 90. Between the two 1974 general elections there were some signs that the Front might make progress at the October general election. These signs included a local by-election in Bolton in April 1974 where the NF candidate got 14.6 per cent of the votes and a parliamentary by-election in Newham South where the NF candidate received 11.5 per cent of the votes and beat the Conservative Party candidate. However, at the general election in October 1974 the NF's expectations were not realised. The average share of the NF candidates was down to 3.1 per cent compared with the February 1974 general election (3.2 per cent). Even in areas of good performance in the two by-elections mentioned above their vote was down. In Bolton their candidates got 2.4 and 2.7 per cent and in Newham South their vote fell back to 7.8 per cent. The total number of votes received by the NF increased from 76,828 in February to 113,344 in the October general election, but this was a consequence of having more candidates (54 in February and 90 in October). The Front's leadership was

quite satisfied with the money spent on deposits and the publicity it received by having a larger number of candidates. Martin Webster, the Front's national activities organiser at the time, suggested that it was money well spent for the publicity. He said ' where else could you buy five minutes on both television channels for thirteen and a half grand?' (The Times, 12 October, 1974). As a result of this publicity the Front further increased the number of its candidates at the 1979 general election.

The NF contested 303 seats at the 1979 general election. It received a lot of publicity and air time as a result of spending £45,300 in lost deposits. Its electoral support on average fell from 3.1 per cent in October 1974 to only 1.4 per cent at the 1979 general election. Its share in parliamentary by-elections was relatively better i.e. 4.4 per cent in 1975-78, but this was also down compared with the previous periods when it had been 5.5 per cent in 1968-70 and 6.8 per cent in 1970-73. In the 1979 general election the best result for the NF was in Newham South where it received more than 2,000 votes. Its second highest poll was in Hackney South and Shoreditch with 1,958 votes. The Front had contested 88 (96% of the seats) out of the 92 Greater London seats but its performance was poor compared with the 1974 general elections. It received only 2 per cent of the votes in London. In the South East and the Midlands after contesting 60 per cent of the seats the NF achieved less than one per cent of the average share of the votes. It received its lowest level of support in the north of England (0.72%). The Front candidates were beaten in several areas by other minor party candidates. For example, the Ecology Party was ahead of the Front in 17 areas and behind only in seven constituencies. There were also 11 other candidates, including two Communists and one Christian Stop Abortion candidate who gained more votes than candidates of the NF. This demonstrates that the NF was not the political force in Britain that its propaganda claimed.

It is worth pointing out that there were five constituencies in England, all in the East End of London (Boroughs of Newham, Hackney and Tower Hamlets) where the NF received more than 5 per cent of the vote. There were a further 13 London constituencies where their share of the vote

exceeded 3 per cent and these were all in the vicinity of that area. This larger area included the remainder of Newham and Hackney, the whole of Barking, and parts of Islington, Waltham Forest and parts of Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark. All these areas have a large ethnic minority presence. The 16 constituencies with relatively high NF support were all won by Labour and the 16 with relatively low support for the Front, plus the four not entered by the NF were all won by the Conservatives. These geographical and political patterns were themselves associated with social class distribution of populations and the concentrations of ethnic minorities. However, these explanations for the NF support are not adequate. We also need to look at the history of anti-ethnic minority feelings and the regular activities of the NF in those areas where it received more support. To examine the pattern of the NF support over time, we analysed a selection of constituencies including some of the strongholds of the NF. It was clear that in every constituency in 1979 the NF share of the vote had gone down.[12]

The NF put forward 60 candidates at the 1983 general election and all of them lost their deposits. The Front polled on average 1 per cent of votes per candidate compared with its 1.4 per cent at the 1979 general election. Its highest vote was only 3.7 per cent, once again at Newham South. Overall it received only 0.1 per cent of the total votes cast in this election compared with the 0.6 per cent it received at the 1979 general election with 303 candidates. The type of constituencies the NF contested and the regional pattern did not differ greatly compared with the 1979 general election except that far fewer candidates stood.

It was clear that the reason that the NF contested 60 constituencies was once again to get free publicity through the broadcasting time that political parties are entitled to once their candidates number 50 or more. The deposit was increased from £150 to £500 for the next general election in 1987. The Ecology Party with its 107 candidates and other smaller parties on average received more votes than the NF at the 1983 general election. The electoral performance of the NF at this election was on the whole disastrous. It appears that partly for this reason and partly because of the increased deposit, the NF did not contest the 1987 general election

except that there were two candidates holding similar views to the NF. However, the NF contested the 1992 general election and put up 14 candidates. The British National Party (BNP) also contested 13 seats. It appears that their come-back was due to the recent good performance of racist parties in France and other West European countries which we examine very briefly.

The more successful of these parties has been the Front National (FN) in France. It was formed in 1972 and is led by Jean-Marie Le Pen. Its objectives are fairly similar to the British NF and include repatriation of ethnic minorities. There are now 10 FN members of European Parliament (MEPs), because of the proportional representation voting system. After the 1992 local elections the FN has had 239 councillors in the country as a whole. Because of change in the voting system, at the 1993 general election it did not win any seats in the French Parliament although it received 12.5 per cent of the total votes cast. Compared with the record of the British NF this share is no doubt substantial and the overall trend very worrying.

In Germany, where there has recently been overt hostility towards ethnic minorities there are at least two extreme right wing parties which are worth mentioning here; the Republikaner formed in 1983 and the Deutsche Volksunion founded more recently, in 1987. As a result of the 1992 state elections the Republikaner won 15 seats in state parliaments and there is one member of the Bundestag (National Parliament) who in fact has defected from the Christian Democrats. In the 1993 local elections the party won 9.3 per cent of the votes in Frankfurt and has as a result 10 city council seats. The second party the Deutsche Volksunion has not been so successful. For example, it received only 0.2 per cent of the votes in the 1993 local elections. However, the activities of these two political parties and some other smaller neo-Nazi groups resulted in 22 deaths of mainly Turks, and other ethnic minorities in 1992.[13]

Although extreme right wing activities are now found in all West and East European countries in various degrees Italy is worth looking at because of the recent elections and its past history linked with Mussolini. Two organisations in this context are worth commenting on. The

Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI) which is anti-immigration and anti-Communist and was formed after the Second World War in 1946 has had 34 seats in Parliament since April 1992. The Lega Nord has a short history (started in 1982) and is a regional party. It is also anti-immigrant and in the 1992 general election won 55 seats and received 17.5 per cent of the vote in the North. However, in the 1992 local elections the party received a massive vote, up to 46 per cent, in the North and in June 1993 it gained control of all the major city councils in the North, except Turin. In addition to those more successful extreme right parties there are also small groups with similar aims and are very dangerous. It was reported recently that the Milan right-winger Signor Silvio Berlusconi had signed an election pact with the MSI to defeat the socialists (*Daily Telegraph*, 9 February 1994).

In brief there are extreme right political parties or groups in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, Spain, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands[14] and several of these have anti-immigration and anti-ethnic minorities objectives. Some are now using fairly effectively the electoral system to achieve their objectives and certainly to get publicity. Therefore, it was not surprising that the British NF and the BNP received encouragement from these recent developments in Europe and started contesting the general and local elections more actively. The BNP in the 1992 general election campaigned for repatriation of ethnic minorities, the execution of drug smugglers and fewer black faces in sport teams.

The 14 NF candidates' average share of the vote was 0.9 per cent in the 1992 general election. Their maximum share was 3.6 per cent in Bethnal Green. The NF and BNP votes together in Southwark (where both parties contested) was 1.9 per cent. In only seven constituencies was their vote share more than 1 per cent. Le Lohe (1992) compared the constituencies contested in the 1992 general election with those contested in the 1983 election and found that their choice of constituencies suggests a lack of persistence, because it included only 11 constituencies which had been fought in 1983. They contested the two Tower Hamlets seats on that occasion but they did not contest Newham South where the NF achieved its best result in 1983 (3.7%) and also they did not contest seats in

Hackney, Islington and other Newham seats which they had contested in 1983. On the whole the result was very disappointing for the NF and BNP and they lost all their deposits. This time because neither the NF nor the BNP had fifty or more candidates they did not get free radio and television time for their political broadcasts as the NF had done in 1974, 1979 and 1983 general elections. Table 40 shows the average votes received by the NF candidates at four general elections.

Table 40: Average Votes Received by the National Front Candidates at General Elections

General Election	No of Candidates	Average Votes Received %
October 1974	90	3.1
October 1979	303	1.4
October 1983	60	1.0
October 1992	14	0.9

Source: Election Results

Despite the disappointing general election results for the NF and the BNP the local level anti-ethnic minority activities of these parties have recently increased. In particular, after the victory of a BNP candidate in a by-election in September 1993 in Millwall in East London they gained their first ever council seat in Britain. The result has led to various marches against the openly anti-ethnic minority activities of the BNP and other extreme right groups in the area. It has also alarmed the main political parties of the danger of playing a 'race card' in elections.

Both the Labour and Liberal Democrats have accused each other of using the presence of a large number of ethnic minorities in the area for electoral advantage. In particular, a leaflet issued by the local Liberal Democrats became subject of an inquiry set up by the Liberal Democrat Leader Paddy Ashdown. This episode was followed by another

controversial leaflet issued by the Tower Hamlets Liberal Democrats in November, 1993 as part of their campaign in the area, which was condemned by the Liberal Democrats Leader as racist (*The Daily Telegraph*, 11 November 1993). As a result of the report of this inquiry relating to both the leaflets, three local Liberal Democrats were asked to be suspended from the party. However, at the time of writing five Liberal Democrat Councillors have resigned as a protest from the party because of the inquiry and six others could follow (*The Guardian*, 18 December, 1993). On the other hand because of the Labour Party's intervention the Attorney-General had asked the police to see whether the controversial leaflet issued by the local Liberal Democrats included material which could lead to incitement to racial hatred. It appears that the Liberal Democrats are accusing the Labour Party of not setting up a similar inquiry to investigate the role of its members in Tower Hamlets. This feud is likely to continue. However, both the parties need to be careful about their campaign strategies at the next May elections when the chances are that the BNP would lose the seat either to Labour or the Liberal Democrats.

In brief although the activities of the NF and the BNP are very dangerous and need to be countered their electoral performance at national level is very poor and the view that these parties enjoy a widespread support is a myth, because the British public has rejected them totally at the ballot box.

Chapter Ten: CONCLUSIONS

It is clear from our analysis that the concentration of ethnic minorities in some areas of Britain, as described in Chapter Two, has maximised their statistical importance in the political process. Their registration as electors has improved over time and their higher turn-out rates at both parliamentary and local elections make them important voters as presented in Chapter Three. The Asian turn-out sometimes is double that of the white voters in some areas like Bradford and Rochdale. In other areas such as Waltham Forest, Birmingham and Coventry a significant number of Asian electors turned out to vote in local elections in 1990 when the average turn-out was generally lower compared with parliamentary elections. If this trend of turn-out among ethnic minorities continued in the future then any political parties which receive ethnic minority support are likely to benefit disproportionately from those important voters.

The voting patterns of ethnic minorities show that a significant majority still vote for the Labour Party. However, where efforts have been made by the Conservative Party and by the Liberal Democrats their candidates have received an important share of the ethnic minority votes as in Rochdale, Birmingham Small Heath and Brentford and Isleworth. There are several methods for getting ethnic minority support (Chapter Four) but an important one is the presence of ethnic minority candidates for particular political parties contesting elections. The others are the ongoing efforts of the political parties at a national level and the personal contacts of candidates with ethnic minority groups in their own areas.

There is no doubt that since the 1987 general election the representation of ethnic minorities in the House of Commons has increased as examined in Chapter Five. There are now six MPs from the ethnic minorities and five of them are representing the Labour Party. The Conservative Party managed to get one Asian elected as an MP (N. Deva) at the 1992 general election. The other ethnic minority person, John Taylor, who was given a safe Conservative Party seat, lost it to the Liberal Democrats due to divided support among Cheltenham Conservatives because of his colour.

John Taylor's defeat shows that political parties and in particular the Conservative Party, need to do more to make sure that their ethnic minority candidates are accepted as 'party candidates' by their supporters and no discrimination takes place. However, overall the performance of ethnic minority candidates shows that if they are given 'safe' and 'winnable' seats they can win those with full party support. This was best illustrated by the election of Dr Ashok Kumar (Labour) in Langbaurgh by-election in 1991 when he gained this seat for Labour in a 'snow white' area with only 0.7 per cent ethnic minority population. Although he lost the seat at the 1992 general election to the Conservative candidate by a small margin, he in fact increased the Labour Party vote by 4.7 per cent compared with its share in the 1987 general election. It is worth pointing out here that the four ethnic minority Labour MPs, elected at the 1987 all improved their share of the vote between 5.6 per cent to 12.9 per cent at the 1992 general election. On the other hand the newly elected Labour MP in Ealing Southall, P Khabra, lost 3.3 per cent of the vote compared with the Labour Party share in the 1987 general election. This happened due to special circumstances in which S. Bidwell (Labour MP 1974-92) who was deselected by the constituency Labour Party decided to contest the 1992 general election as 'True Labour' candidate and received 7.7 per cent of the vote. The other relevant point to mention regarding Ealing Southall is that all three main political party candidates in fact received fewer votes at the 1992 general election ranging between 1.9 per cent (Conservative) to 5.7 per cent (Liberal Democrat) compared with the 1987 result.

Another controversial selection of a Labour candidate for the 1992 general election was in Birmingham, Small Heath, where a white candidate competed with several Asian candidates for the ticket. Due to this factor, it is assumed, the Labour Party candidate R. Godsiff reduced the Labour Party share of the vote by 1.1 per cent. On the other hand the Conservative Party candidate, Q. Chaudhary (Asian) in fact improved the Conservative Party share of the vote by 3.8 per cent. Therefore, we can conclude that if ethnic minorities are given 'safe' and 'winnable' seats their performance should not be any different compared with white candidates.

and could even be better in some cases. Detailed analysis of the relevant data also shows that ethnic minorities now increasingly vote on party lines than on ethnic lines as shown in Birmingham Small Heath which has an ethnic minority population of 55 per cent but still elected a white Labour candidate against an Asian Conservative candidate. The same applies to Birmingham Sparkbrook (ethnic minority population 49%) which elected a white candidate with a 39.5 per cent majority against an Asian candidate in the same constituency who received 24.8 per cent of the vote. Bradford North with an ethnic minority population of 20.7 per cent also elected a white Labour candidate against an Asian Conservative candidate at the 1992 general election. White candidates in these areas also had good personal contacts with the ethnic minorities.

The representation of ethnic minorities has improved at national level but it is still very low compared with their numbers. To reflect the multi-ethnic composition of Britain according to the ethnic minority population there should be at least 35 MPs from ethnic minorities. The situation at local levels is a little better as analysed in Chapter Five. The analysis shows that overall a significant improvement has taken place since 1986 in relation to ethnic minority candidates and elected councillors particularly in Greater London. Nevertheless, overall in London, compared with the ethnic minority population of 20.2 per cent the percentage of ethnic minority councillors is still only 9.4 per cent. Except in Greenwich (17.8%), representation of ethnic minorities in all other boroughs is lower than their representation in the population. There are now several hundred wards with more than 10 per cent of ethnic minority population, over 100 local government wards have over 43 per cent ethnic minority population. Nevertheless only around 360 of almost 23,000 local councillors in England and Wales are of ethnic minority origin (i.e. 1.57%). To reflect the ethnic minority numbers in the population (6%) there should be 1,380. Most of the 360 ethnic minority councillors belong to the Labour Party. This means that other political parties need to do more to increase the representation of ethnic minorities at both local and national levels. The Labour Party, which receives substantial support from ethnic minority electorate, also needs to take steps to increase the

ethnic minority representation. The political parties cannot afford to ignore the concentrations of ethnic minorities and their statistical significance in elections any longer and rely on ethnic minority support without giving something in return.

It appears that even the Labour Party is being accused of deselecting several 'Black' councillors in the Greater London area in the run up to the next May's Borough elections. It was reported that Camden, Haringey, Greenwich, Islington and Waltham Forest have deselected 30 'Black' councillors, 'many with considerable experience and achievement' (The Evening Standard, 15 December 1993). However, it also appears that in several cases those deselected have been replaced by other ethnic minority Labour candidates. It is too early at the time of writing to draw a conclusion about the 1994 forthcoming local elections regarding the number of ethnic minority candidates and elected councillors. However, looking at the recent trends (Table 41) we expect the ethnic minority representation at local level to improve as a result of the next May's elections. The political parties no doubt would like to attract the support of ethnic minorities in the areas of their concentrations.

Table 41: Percentage Share of Political Parties in Local Elections

Year	Cons	Lab	LD	Others
1982	30	42	26	2
1986	34	37	27	2
1990	32	40	18	10

Source: Local Election Results

The May elections in 1994 will include all London councils, and one third of the seats of 36 Metropolitan councils in England with large concentrations of ethnic minorities. These will also include the Regional councils in Scotland and one third of the seats in four of Wales 37 councils. These elections will be the largest set of elections in the four years cycle. They will provide an opportunity for the two main political

parties to maximise their support. But also the Liberal Democrats will be trying to have more successes as they did in the 1993 local elections, in some regions. In these circumstances the competition to attract ethnic minority support would be crucial. The same would apply to the June, 1994 European Parliament elections and next general election when a very close contest is expected.

Equal representation for women in the House of Commons has recently become an issue within the Labour Party. As a result of various discussions the NEC has approved an affirmative action plan to correct the imbalance between Labour men and women in the House of Commons. This includes all women short lists in half of marginal seats and half of seats with retiring Labour MPs. It is expected that this policy would produce 80 women Labour MPs at the next election. Some people felt that such a plan could be illegal but the Labour Party claims that it had taken legal advice and was confident that there was no problem.[15] This is a positive policy to increase the number of women MPs in the House of Commons. However, no such arrangements have been proposed by the Labour Party to increase the representation of ethnic minorities in the House of Commons. Some affirmative action in this context would also help. In fact, pursuit solely of a progressive policy on access to the Commons for Labour women could actually slow or even further reduce the chances of ethnic minority Labour supporters becoming MPs.

Overall all the major political parties are failing to fully integrate ethnic minorities into the political process. On the other hand it must be pointed out that Jews in Britain present a good example of integration in the political process. The current estimated number of Jews in Britain is 300,000, but there are at present 19 MPs of Jewish origin and several Jews are members of the House of Lords and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). It is a great achievement for a small community. Geoffrey Alderman (1983) has described in detail the struggle of Jews to get into British Parliament. The highest number of Jewish MPs (46) was elected in 1974. There have been several Jewish members of cabinet. At one time in Mrs Thatcher's government there were five Jewish cabinet members. As far as their voting patterns are concerned, recently more

Jewish electors have been voting for the Conservative Party candidates than for Labour and Liberal Democrats. Alderman (1993) discovered in a survey in Finchley that 63 per cent ABC1 social class Jews had voted for the Conservative candidate and 18 per cent each for the Labour and Liberal Democrats candidates at the 1992 general election.

It appears from our detailed monitoring that Asians in Britain are also following the Jewish community not only in occupational trends but also in other ways, such as home ownership, strong religious affiliation, and emphasis on family life. These values are more relevant, it is argued by the Conservative Party, to the Conservative Party philosophy. Therefore, Asians are seen as natural Conservatives and in the long run like the Jews the majority are expected to support the Conservative Party. The Conservative Central Office efforts in this connection mentioned in Chapter Five are slowly being successful.

The candidates' surveys analysed in Chapter Six show that an overwhelming majority (up to 92%) of them would like ethnic minorities to join the existing major political parties and no one favoured the idea of ethnic minorities having their own political party. The idea of separate political parties for ethnic minorities such as the Islamic Party of Britain is not in their interest and must be rejected. Candidates in the survey also believed that support of ethnic minorities was important in elections. Ninety per cent of respondents in the 1990 survey of candidates expressed this view. At the same time 97 per cent felt that ethnic minorities should be encouraged to participate in politics and only 2 per cent said they should not. They wanted them to join the existing political system. In fact our monitoring of the 1990 local elections and the 1992 general election confirms earlier conclusions that independent and fringe party, such as the Islamic Party, candidates perform badly in terms of receiving voters support. This also applies to extreme right wing organisations as shown in Chapter Nine, except the Millwall by election result which took place under special circumstances. The chances are that the BNP would lose this seat either to Labour or Liberal Democrats at the next local elections in May. However, the main political parties need to be careful not to use the 'race card' in elections which could benefit the BNP and other extreme

right organisations. They need to be more vigilant and positive to fight racism and anti-ethnic minority activities in the East End of London and elsewhere.

As far election issues are concerned it appears that in the 1990 local elections, except in a few areas, 'race' and race relations did not become election issues, although significant support was found among candidates for equal opportunity policies in their areas and suggestions were made to improve those to make them more effective. More people felt that either 'race relations nationally' were remaining the same (41%) or getting worse (17%) than those who said they were getting better (36%). The pattern for 'race relations in local areas' was similar to the national scene. No doubt answers to these questions reflected political party differences; 63 per cent of Conservative Party candidates felt that race relations nationally were remaining the same and only 5 per cent felt they were getting worse. Similarly Conservative candidates were relatively more optimistic regarding the future of race relations than other candidates.

At the 1992 general election all three major political parties included statements concerning 'immigration' and 'race relations' in their party manifestos as described in Chapter Seven. No doubt they used different terminology and put different emphasis on various issues in this context. It was assumed that in 1992 'immigration' would not become an election issue. However, as shown in Chapter Seven it was made an election issue by the Conservative Party towards the end of the election campaign when they felt that they were behind in opinion polls. It appears that this move won them some white votes which perhaps made some difference in the outcome of a very close election contest. As shown in Chapter one, the facts of immigration did not justify the rhetoric of the Home Secretary or Sir Nicholas Fairbairn. Equally, the attack on the Labour Party was also baseless because in practice the record of both administrations cannot be distinguished. However, the issue of immigration during the election campaign also revived the debate about the numbers and presence of ethnic minorities in Britain. Before the 1992 election it was renewed by the speeches of another Conservative MP Winston Churchill who made non-white immigration an issue. All these debates no doubt helped the

victory of the BNP candidate in the Millwall by election where immigration and ethnic minorities were seen as the main election issues. At the same time these developments have contributed to an increasing number of racial attacks and racial harassment cases in recent months particularly in the East End in London.[16]

It appears that in addition to the wide spread disadvantage and discrimination which ethnic minorities suffer in almost all walks of life they are being blamed for higher unemployment, bad housing or lack of it and inadequate and poor quality schools. They are being used as scapegoats for the ills of society while they themselves are in fact the victims of these ills. It is also ironic that after more than four decades of a significant presence of ethnic minorities and after all the economic and other contributions they have made to society, ethnic minorities are still seen as 'outsiders'. However, their increased participation in the political process and the encouragement and positive policies of political parties in this connection should help the integration of ethnic minorities. This process should help them feel that they are being accepted as full citizens of this country. Therefore, equality of opportunity in every field including the political process is important to reflect truly multi-racial and multi-cultural Britain. Because of their bad experiences there is now an increasing ethnic awakening among ethnic minorities (Goulbourne, 1991). With an overall low level of political parties' membership there is a great potential for them to recruit new ethnic minority members and to provide opportunities for ethnic minorities to become party candidates and get elected. Their progress should be monitored by political parties through ethnic monitoring and record keeping.

It must also be pointed out that in addition to the electoral involvement of ethnic minorities they are also taking political action through a large number of ethnic minority and multi-ethnic organisations. In fact the number of such organisations is very large and ethnic mobilisation takes place on a variety of issues at local, national and now even at European levels. Some of the voluntary activities of ethnic minorities have provided them with necessary contacts with the establishment and given them training for the formal political process. Some recent events have made

ethnic minorities more determined to mobilise. For example, the Rushdie affair has made Muslims in Britain more politicised and they have been mobilised by community leaders on other issues as a result. Many Muslims have actually realised that they are not being treated equally as a religious community. As a result some young Muslims recently have become more ardent supporters of the genuine demands of the Muslims in Britain. John Rex has reviewed the structure of ethnic mobilisation in Britain and Europe (Rex, 1991, 1992). He concludes that 'these processes go on primarily at a national level, but both ethnics and their associations on the one hand and nation states, on the other, are caught up in wider networks' (1991). Overall ethnic minorities are likely to have an increasing influence in British politics in the future as participants rather than as subjects for debate and controversy.

Notes

1. The term 'coloured' was commonly used in the early period in official documents and also by some researchers. I prefer to use 'non-white' and 'ethnic minorities' for people whose origin is mainly from the New Commonwealth except where official and other sources are quoted with the original terms.

2. In the last 40 years Labour Party individual membership has declined significantly particularly since 1980. In 1952 it was 1,014,524; in 1962 it came down to 767,459 and in 1972 to 730,030 but in 1982 it declined to 273,803 (for details see Seyd and Whiteley 1992).

3. Overall the TUC membership is normally higher than the membership of political parties. It is estimated that Trade Union membership was over 7 million in 1994. However, it has also declined from over 12 million in 1979.

4. It appears that in some local areas branches of 'One Nation Forum' are also being set up with similar objectives.

5. I was told by an official of the Labour Party that 'Red Rose Week' in March 1994 should also help to recruit more ethnic minorities to the Party.

6. Since Stan Taylor's paper is not yet published it is relevant to quote here some of his provisional conclusions: 'the saga of John Taylor's selection and candidature in Cheltenham is clearly depressing in its revelations of racism, overt or covert, within the local Conservative association and of the lengths which some members were prepared to go to ensure a "white" candidate; after the election a number of party members allegedly even celebrated Mr Taylor's defeat and earlier ... two of his supporters were forced out of office in the local association. ...in our view the Cheltenham parliamentary election should not be simply written off to racism either in the local party or among the voters but should also be seen as having potentially more positive implications (Taylor 1993).

7. Here it is important to present the ethnic minority population in the six survey areas according to the 1991 Census: Birmingham (21.5%)

Coventry (11.8%) Solihull (2.9%) Rugby (5%) Nuneaton and Bedworth (3.9%) and Waltham Forest (25.6%).

8. These interviews were conducted by Dr Karen Ross and a summary is presented in Appendix 5.

9. It appeared that in Birmingham, Coventry and Waltham Forest Asian organisations and leaders were more active in local party associations than other ethnic minority groups. This was reflected in the number of Asian candidates standing for the main political parties.

10. Sir Nicholas Fairbairn was a Conservative candidate in Perth and Kinross (Scotland) and was defending his seat. Although he won the seat his majority was reduced from 5,676 in 1987 to 2,094 in 1992.

11. This view was consistent with the Labour Party commitment in its manifesto of 1992 general election which included: strengthening the race discrimination laws and extending the powers of the CRE.

12. I believe that one of the reasons for NF's poor performance was that after Mrs Thatcher's 'swamping' remarks in 1978 a lot of those people against non-white immigration supported the Conservative Party rather than the NF. This pattern of decline in the NF support has continued since 1979.

13. In Germany recently the unemployment figures reached 4.3 million, the highest in 50 years. It is feared that this might encourage more neo-Nazi troubles and attacks on foreigners in the country (*Daily Express* 9 February, 1994). On the other hand Chancellor Kohl urged Germans to win the world's respect by rejecting racism at a rally of 2,000 Christian Democratic Party supporters (in early March 1994).

14. It was reported recently that the Dutch extreme right Centrum-Democratic (CD) may be able to increase its presence in the second chamber of Parliament from one seat to six or seven. This notion is based on recent opinion polls. The CD was formed 14 years ago (*The European*, 18 February 1994).

15. Recently a backbench bill sponsored by Teresa Gorman MP (Conservative) designed to boost the number of women MPs failed at its first hurdle in the Commons. The Government had indicated that it was against the proposal. The bill was to ensure an equal number

of men and women candidates in each constituency at elections. It also called for election deposits currently at £500 to be cut to £150 for women candidates. The bill ran out of Parliamentary time (House of Commons Debates, 4 March, 1994).

16. A Home Office study showed that there were 130,000 racially motivated criminal incidents every year. Of these 32,500 were assaults, 52,000 were threats and 26,000 involved vandalism. It also showed that one in five Asians living in inner-city areas felt that racial attacks are a 'very big' or 'fairly big' problem (*The Guardian*, 11 February 1994).

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Appendix 1:

Parliamentary Constituencies with Ethnic Minority Population of Between 15-25 per cent of the Total Population, 1991

Constituency	Total Pop.	Ethnic Min. Pop.	% E.M. Pop.	% Black	% South Asians	% Oth. E.M.
Warley East	68613	17350	25.3	5.6	18.4	1.3
Westminster North	99977	25162	25.2	10.3	5.5	9.4
Stretford	72408	17983	24.8	12.0	9.5	3.3
Newham South	69783	17154	24.6	12.5	7.7	4.4
B'ham, Perry Barr	96246	22548	23.4	8.3	13.2	2.0
Ealing North	91557	21293	23.3	7.1	10.4	5.8
Wolverhampton S.East	73401	16968	23.1	5.2	16.9	1.0
Hendon South	72593	16645	22.9	4.9	9.6	8.5
Luton South	100786	22840	22.7	4.1	16.9	1.7
Harrow West	95361	21502	22.5	3.3	14.2	5.1
Islington North	86337	19114	22.1	13.3	3.8	5.1
Hammersmith	72140	15872	22.0	13.5	3.6	4.9
Dulwich	67479	14842	22.0	15.6	2.7	3.7
Wolverhampton S.West	85182	18116	21.3	5.1	14.8	1.4
Hayes & Harlington	77027	16369	21.3	2.7	15.0	3.5
Battersea	86351	18231	21.1	14.3	3.3	3.6
Bradford North	91762	18975	20.7	1.5	17.6	1.5
Ealing, Acton	86391	17714	20.5	7.2	5.7	7.6
Finchley	73084	14928	20.4	2.8	10.7	6.9
Walsall South	87615	17698	20.2	2.2	17.0	1.0
Blackburn	101565	20505	20.2	0.5	18.2	1.5
Holborn & St. Pancras	85407	17219	20.2	6.0	7.9	6.2
Edmonton	84896	17106	20.1	11.3	4.6	4.2
Manchester, Gorton	76372	15325	20.1	5.4	11.6	3.1
Hornsey & Wood Green	102719	20568	20.0	9.7	5.0	5.3
Mitcham & Morden	84926	16888	19.9	9.5	5.5	4.9
Hendon North	72141	14263	19.8	5.1	9.2	5.5
Derby South	90721	17818	19.6	3.9	14.2	1.6

Coventry North East	87970	16847	19.2	2.2	15.5	1.4
Croydon North East	83562	15791	18.9	10.0	4.6	4.3
Lewisham West	78554	14679	18.7	13.7	1.9	3.1
Kensington	69699	12975	18.6	8.5	2.2	8.0
Brentford & Isleworth	93669	17228	18.4	3.2	10.4	4.7
Southwark & Bermondsey	74883	13291	17.7	11.4	3.0	3.3
Woolwich	77503	13681	17.7	7.1	7.1	3.5
Huddersfield	84096	14329	17.0	5.8	9.4	1.9
B'ham, Hodge Hill	77021	13071	17.0	3.7	11.8	1.5
City of London and Westminster	79043	12607	15.9	4.1	4.0	7.8
Nottingham East	87023	13647	15.7	6.6	7.0	2.1
Manchester, Central	76480	11911	15.6	6.6	5.3	3.7
Hampstead & Highgate	84984	13184	15.5	4.9	3.5	7.2
Leicester West	89653	13745	15.3	1.9	11.7	1.7
Leeds North East	84424	12930	15.3	5.6	7.2	2.5
Ilford North	76833	11733	15.3	3.5	9.0	2.8
Islington Sth & Finsbury	78350	11950	15.3	7.6	3.1	4.5
Rochdale	94425	14390	15.2	0.5	13.7	1.0

Source: 1991 Census (Crown Copyright), Produced by NEMDA, (1993).

Appendix 2

Local Election Wards with More than 50 Per cent Ethnic Minority Population, 1991

District	Ward	Numbers		Percentage			
		Population	Ethnic Minorities	Ethnic Minorities	Black	South Asian	Chinese & other
Ealing	Northcote	11177	10083	90.21	5.93	78.76	5.52
Leicester	Spinney Hill	10035	8281	82.52	4.95	70.67	6.90
Ealing	Glebe	12858	10424	81.07	7.56	68.55	4.96
Blackburn	Brookhouse	8121	6339	78.06	0.58	74.66	2.82
Leicester	Crown Hills	9585	7261	75.75	2.96	69.42	3.37
Newham	Kensington	7902	5910	74.79	9.43	56.82	8.54
Bradford	University	18898	13970	73.92	2.80	66.67	4.45
Newham	Monega	8060	5910	73.33	14.70	53.68	4.94
Tower Hamlets	Spitalfields	8861	6448	72.77	4.15	65.17	3.44
Newham	Upton	10209	7325	71.75	16.64	50.71	4.40
Leicester	Latimer	7952	5630	70.80	1.66	67.14	2.00
Newham	St.Stephens	7412	5162	69.64	11.58	51.52	6.54
B'ham	Handsworth	24783	17176	69.31	20.58	43.73	5.00
B'ham	Soho	28096	18782	66.85	19.69	42.88	4.27
Brent	Wembley Central	7851	5242	66.77	16.14	41.94	8.69
B'ham	Sparkbrook	25896	17245	66.59	13.20	46.46	6.93
Leicester	Rushey Mead	11479	7498	65.32	1.67	61.15	2.50
Brent	Tokyngton	10552	6575	62.31	20.64	34.71	6.96
B'ham	Sparkhill	26251	16353	62.29	6.51	51.56	4.22
Luton	Biscot	11662	7044	60.40	5.39	52.18	2.83
B'ham	Small Heath	31617	18856	59.64	6.60	48.84	4.20
Leicester	Charnwood	9290	5538	59.61	4.00	50.66	4.95
Newham	Central	7699	4570	59.36	10.96	39.73	8.66
Brent	Alperton	8433	4996	59.24	14.32	32.79	12.13
Brent	Roundwood	6783	3911	57.66	42.78	9.89	4.98

Brent	Barham	11092	6317	56.95	11.58	36.82	8.55
Redbridge	Loxford	12454	7084	56.88	10.96	39.67	6.25
Wolver-hampton	Blakenhall	11806	6688	56.65	8.36	46.56	1.73
Southwark	Liddle	10984	6222	56.65	46.57	1.35	8.73
B'ham	Sandwell	27206	15380	56.53	14.83	38.68	3.02
Brent	St.Raphael's	10667	6005	56.30	40.85	9.83	5.61
Ealing	Dormer Wells	12642	6994	55.32	9.44	40.84	5.04
B'ham	Aston	26817	14670	54.71	19.75	31.23	3.73
Peter-borough	Central	7600	4152	54.63	2.93	49.22	2.47
Newham	Manor Park	11289	6142	54.41	14.96	35.73	3.72
Slough	Central	8004	4316	53.92	3.51	47.33	3.09
Slough	Baylis	7387	3940	53.34	4.16	46.49	2.69
Bradford	Toller	17585	9330	53.06	2.33	48.91	1.83
Luton	Dallow	10419	5499	52.78	6.09	44.22	2.48
Bradford	Bradford Moor	16394	8646	52.74	1.90	47.71	3.13
Brent	St. Andrew's	6676	3503	52.47	29.37	17.65	5.45
Pendle	Whitefield	4746	2462	51.88	0.59	50.55	0.74
Coventry	Foleshill	17934	9294	51.82	3.27	45.72	2.83
Wolver-hampton	St. Peter's	13433	6941	51.67	14.36	34.65	2.67-
Tower Hamlets	St. Mary's	5659	2924	51.67	3.18	45.04	3.45
Sandwell	St. Pauls	12356	6369	51.55	8.72	41.32	1.51
Ealing	Waxlow	11936	6134	51.39	7.46	38.51	5.42
Leicester	Belgrave	10661	5466	51.27	1.43	48.09	1.75
Newham	Plashet	10805	5534	51.22	16.11	30.89	4.22
Brent	Stonebridge	5746	2930	50.99	35.57	7.14	8.28
Leicester	Abbey	8537	4334	50.77	1.70	47.58	1.49
Brent	Church End	6381	3230	50.62	19.95	22.66	8.01
Leicester	Wycliffe	11504	5811	50.51	8.87	35.83	5.82
Newham	Park	9563	4803	50.22	21.22	24.17	4.84
Hounslow	Hounslow Heath	11054	5551	50.21	2.81	41.94	5.46

Source: 1991 Census, Produced by NEMDA (1994)

Appendix 3

Questionnaire For Candidates in the May 1990 Local Elections

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH
IN ETHNIC RELATIONS
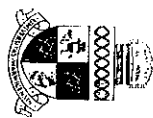
UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
COVENTRY CV4 7AL

TELEPHONE COVENTRY (0203) 523523
FAX (0203) 524324

Dear Candidate,

RACE AND LOCAL POLITICS RESEARCH PROJECT

The Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations* is currently undertaking a study of the extent to which the 'race' dimension plays a part in local politics, particularly in the forthcoming local elections in May. We are interested in finding out what you, as a prospective local councillor, think about the state of race relations both nationally and locally, and also about the involvement of ethnic minority people in the local political process.

It is crucial to the Centre's work that we identify what the beliefs and attitudes are of people interested and active in local politics and we would therefore be grateful if you would kindly complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us in the enclosed pre-paid envelope. We would be pleased if you could return your form by at least 23 April to enable us to analyse the information as soon as possible.

Although we have asked for your name, your responses will be completely confidential and will be used for statistical analysis and known only to our research team. The reason that we have asked your name is to enable us to compare responses between successful and unsuccessful candidates.

Thank you for your cooperation.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Dr Muhammad Anwar
Director

* Enclosed is a leaflet about the Centre for your information.

CONFIDENTIAL

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN ETHNIC RELATIONS
University of Warwick
Coventry CV4 7AL

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES IN THE MAY 1990 LOCAL ELECTIONS

GENERAL

1. Female ☐   Male ☐   (Please tick as appropriate)

2. How would you describe your ethnic origin?

White ☐	Indian ☐		
Black-Caribbean ☐	Pakistani ☐		
Black-African ☐	Bangladeshi ☐		
Black-Other ☐	Chinese ☐		
(Please describe)	Any other ethnic group ☐		
....	(Please describe)		
....	....		

3. To what political party do you belong?
   ....
   ....

4. How long have you been a member?
   ....

5. Why did you join this political party. (Give main reasons)
   ....
   ....
   ....

6. Have you been a local councillor in previous years?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   If yes, for how many years? ....

   Which years? ....

7. Are you a retiring councillor this year?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

ELECTION ISSUES

8. How important would you say are the following issues in your area at the moment?

	Extremely Important	Quite Important	Not Very Important	Not Important
Reducing Unemployment				
Reducing Community Charge/Poll Tax				
Providing Better Education				
Building More Houses				
Equal Rights for Ethnic Minorities				
Improving Race Relations				
Protecting Freedom of Speech				
Law and Order				
Tackling Racial Disadvantage & Discrimination				
Any Other (Please specify)				
....				

9. What are the major issues on which you will be campaigning in the forthcoming local elections?

....

....

10. Are there any other issues of local concern which you have not indicated above and if so, what?

....

    Yes ☐   No ☐

    ....

ETHNIC MINORITY PARTICIPATION

11. How many ethnic minorities live in your ward (approximately)?

    -1% ☐   1-5% ☐   6-10% ☐   11-20% ☐   21-30% ☐

    31-50% ☐   51%+ ☐

12. Do you think that it is important to gain the support of the local Afro-Caribbeans, Asians and other ethnic minority groups?

    Yes ☐   No ☐

    Please given reasons for your answer

    ....

13. Are there any active members of your ward/group who are from ethnic minority communities

    Yes ☐   No ☐

    If yes what are their duties? ....

    ....

    ....

14. Do you think Afro-Caribbeans, Asians and members of other ethnic minority groups should be encouraged to take a more active role in British political process?

    Yes ☐

    No ☐

    What are the reasons for your answer?

    ....

    ....

15. If you believe that ethnic minority people should be more active in politics which of these methods would you favour?

    (i)   Getting involved in the present political parties ☐

    (ii) Having their own political party ☐

    (iii) Any other methods (please specify) ☐

    What are the reasons for your answer?

    ....

    ....

16. Do you think there should be more elected representatives from ethnic minorities?

    Yes ☐   No ☐

    ....

    Please give reasons for your answer

    ....

    ....

    ....

17. Are you satisfied with the way in which equal opportunity policies are implemented in your Local Authority?

   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

   If you are not satisfied what changes should be made?

   ....

   ....

18. Do you think that ethnic minorities in your area share the same concerns as whites?

   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

   If no, what issues are different?

   ....

   ....

19. Do you think that ethnic minorities should have their own separate political voice such as 'Black Sections' in the Labour Party?

   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

   Please give reasons for your answer ....

   ....

20. In your local area, do ethnic minorities suffer any particular problems as a result of their colour/ethnic origin, religion or culture?

   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

   If yes, please give details..........................

   ....

   ....

RACE RELATIONS

21. Do you think that race relations in the <u>country</u> as a whole are getting better, getting worse or remaining the same?

   Better [ ]   Same [ ]   Worse [ ]

22. Looking to the future do you think that the feeling between white and ethnic minorities would get better, worse or stay the same <u>nationally</u> over the next five years?

   Better [ ]   Same [ ]   Worse [ ]

23. Do you think that race relations in <u>your area</u> are getting better, getting worse or remaining the same?

   Better [ ]   Same [ ]   Worse [ ]

24. Looking to the future again do you think that the feeling between white and ethnic minorities would get better, worse or stay the same in <u>your area</u> over the next five years?

   Better [ ]   Same [ ]   Worse [ ]

25. Can you suggest any ways in which race relations in <u>your area</u> could be improved?

   ....

   ....

26. What is your opinion of the <u>Race Relations Act 1976</u> and the Government's present race relations policies in this country?

Race Relations Act		Govt's Race Relations Policies	
Satisfied	[ ]	Satisfied	[ ]
Not Satisfied	[ ]	Not Satisfied	[ ]

   If you are not satisfied how do you think these should be improved?

   <u>Race Relations Act</u> ....

   ....

Race Relations Policies ....

27. Do you think that ethnic minorities have better or worse
     status/position in British society than whites?

     Better ☐   Same ☐   Worse ☐

     Please give reasons for your answer?..............
     ....
     ....

Name: ....
Ward Contesting ....
Local Authority ....

Appendix 4

Sample Characteristics and Additional Analysis of the
1990 Survey of Candidates

By *Karen Ross*

The Survey

A total of 547 postal questionnaires were sent out to candidates in six
research areas. They included five areas in the Midlands (Birmingham,
Coventry, Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby and Solihull) where one third
of the seats were contested and the London Borough of Waltham Forest
where all seats were contested. Some of these areas include a significant
presence of ethnic minority population according to the 1991 Census as
follows:-

Table 1

Area	Ethnic Min. Population %	African-Caribbean %	South Asian %	Other E. Mins. %
Birmingham	21.5	5.9	14.1	1.5
Coventry	11.8	1.6	9.3	0.8
Nuneaton & Bedworth	3.9	0.3	3.2	0.3
Rugby	5.0	1.4	3.0	0.6
Solihull	2.9	1.0	1.2	0.7
Waltham Forest	25.6	11.3	12.1	2.2

It was expected that ethnic minorities would be represented in the
political process both as candidates and as part of the electorate.

In the six research areas, ethnic minority candidates comprised 6.7 per cent of the total number of candidates standing. Waltham Forest had the largest proportion of ethnic minority candidates (10%) but still significantly lower compared with the ethnic minority population in the Borough of 25.6 per cent (in 1991). A breakdown of ethnic minority candidates in five areas is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Ethnic Minority Candidates and Area

Area	Total Candidates	Ethnic Minority Candidates
Waltham Forest	195	19
Birmingham	158	12
Coventry	61	2
Rugby	44	2
Solihull	49	1

Out of the 547 questionnaires 159 (29%) were returned by the deadline given in the covering letter. Labour Party candidates returned the largest number of completed questionnaires (34%), with Liberal Democrats (31%) and Green Party candidates (17%). Conservative Party candidates responded badly (only 12% of the total response) although their candidates constituted 29 per cent of the total candidates approached.

Characteristics of the Sample

Out of the total 159 respondents, 24 per cent were from women and 5 per cent from ethnic minorities. Thus the vast majority of our sample were white men, although a proportion of all white respondents preferred to describe themselves in terms other than the one provided in the questionnaire i.e. white. Alternative descriptions included 'English' (4%), 'Irish' (2%) 'British' (1%) 'Anglo-Saxon' (1%) and 'Welsh' (1%). Several candidates suggested that they did not consider the category 'white' as a

legitimate ethnic group. The ethnic minority candidates described themselves as 'Black-Caribbean' (2%) 'Pakistani' (2%) and 'Indian' (25%).

A majority of candidates had been members of their respective parties for a number of years with only a quarter having been members for less than five years. Table 3 provides a breakdown of candidates by party and years' membership.

Table 3: Number of Years in Party

Years	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
<1	10	-	6	18	35	7
1-2	-	2	10	28	12	9
3-5	-	37	10	18	-	9
6-10	21	29	34	25	-	30
11-20	21	22	18	11	-	20
21+	47	22	22	-	12	21
N/A	-	-	-	-	50	2
% Response	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number	(19)	(54)	(50)	(28)	(8)	(159)

Respondents gave a variety of reasons for joining their particular parties but the most popular reason was ideological compatibility. More than three-quarters of the sample stated that they agreed with the policies of the party joined and 9% stated that they joined because of disenchantment with other parties. A minority of candidates stated that they joined their party in order to participate more actively in local/community politics and others stated that they had always believed in the ideals of their party and simply wanted to put the empathy on a more formal basis. Just over a quarter of candidates had previously held office as a councillor (48% of Conservatives, 44% of Labour and 23% Liberal Democrats) and over one-fifth had been councillors for more than 20 years (mostly Conservative

candidates). Just under half the candidates who had been councillors before had held office within the past four years.

Additional Analysis

In this section additional tables are presented with an overall summary at the end and which also covers the tables from the 1990 survey used in the main body of the book.

Table 4: Rating of issues by party

	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Unemployment						
Extremely Important	31	39	28	32	25	33
Quite Important	21	35	44	53	75	41
Not Very Important	31	18	20	7	-	17
Not Important	5	2	8	3	-	4
No Response	10	5	5	-	3	4
Poll Tax						
Extremely Important	79	79	56	61	62	70
Quite Important	16	13	22	14	12	16
Not Very Important	5	-	2	7	12	3
Not Important	-	-	4	-	-	1
Abolish Poll Tax	-	-	14	11	-	8
No Response	-	7	-	7	12	1
Education						
Extremely Important	52	57	64	61	50	59
Quite Important	26	31	28	36	25	30
Not Very Important	16	5	4	-	25	6
Not Important	-	2	2	-	-	1
No Response	5	3	2	3	-	3
Housing						
Extremely Important	31	53	32	39	25	40
Quite Important	16	26	34	25	50	28
Not Very Important	26	9	20	18	12	16
Not Important	26	7	12	12	12	12
No Response	-	3	2	-	-	2
Equal Rights						
Extremely Important	16	39	34	57	50	38
Quite Important	37	31	32	36	25	33
Not Very Important	26	18	20	7	12	17
Not Important	21	5	12	-	12	9
No Response	-	5	2	3	-	2
Race Relations						
Extremely Important	10	35	28	43	50	32
Quite Important	47	37	34	46	25	38
Not Very Important	21	16	26	7	12	18
Not Important	21	5	10	-	12	8
No Response	-	5	2	3	-	3
Freedom of Speech						
Extremely Important	31	28	38	61	75	39
Quite Important	26	22	34	25	-	26
Not Very Important	26	31	12	14	25	21
Not Important	10	11	14	-	25	9
No Response	5	5	2	-	-	3
Law and Order						
Extremely Important	63	30	30	28	25	33
Quite Important	37	48	50	64	37	48

	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
Not Very Important	-	15	14	18	37	14
Not Important	-	2	4	-	2	2
No Response	-	5	2	-	-	2

Racial Discrimination	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
Extremely Important	21	42	38	50	50	40
Quite Important	42	28	32	43	25	33
Not Very Important	21	20	20	3	12	17
Not Important	16	4	8	3	12	7
No Response	-	5	2	-	-	2

Table 5: What other issues are important in your area and which have not been mentioned above?

Issue	Cons	Lab	Lib %	Green	Ind	All
Encourage integration	20	4	-	-	-	3
Environmental concerns	20	22	62	70	-	44
Improving local services	40	37	28	6	14	26
Economy/interest rates	20	18	5	-	-	12
Local democracy	-	11	28	23	-	16
Housing	-	7	-	12	28	8
Transport	-	7	9	6	-	7
Miscellaneous local issues	-	-	5	-	14	4
Equal rights for all	-	-	-	6	14	3
Racial discrimination	-	3	-	-	-	1
% Response	26	50	43	89	62	46
Number	(5)	(27)	(21)	(17)	(5)	(73)

Table 6: Are there any other issues of local concern not mentioned above?

	Cons	Lab	Lib %	Green	Ind	All
Yes	52	50	44	46	75	49
No	48	50	56	54	25	51
% Response	100	93	100	96	90	95
Number	(19)	(26)	(8)	(52)	(45)	(151)

Table 7: What issues?

Issues	Cons	Lab	Lib %	Green	Ind	All*
Poll tax	10	-	5	11	-	6
Development/roads	60	26	28	15	80	28
Local services/amenities	30	29	28	23	-	26
Housing	-	7	9	-	-	5
Miscellaneous local issues	-	11	19	30	-	14
Unemployment	-	11	-	-	-	5
Local democracy	-	7	5	-	-	4
Education	-	7	5	-	20	5
Health services	-	4	-	-	20	1
* % Response	100	100	91	100	83	96
Number	(10)	(27)	(21)	(13)	(5)	(76)

[* of those responding 'yes' to question 6 above]

Table 8: What per centage of your ward population are from ethnic minority communities?

Per centage	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
<1	16	26	18	4	25	19
1-5	47	41	41	42	25	41
6-10	16	17	14	11	12	15
11-20	10	6	16	4	12	10
21-30	5	6	2	4	-	4
31-50	5	2	4	19	12	6
51+	-	-	2	7	12	2
Don't Know	-	2	2	7	-	2
% Response	100	98	98	93	100	97
Number	(19)	(53)	(49)	(26)	(8)	(155)

Table 9: Are there any active members of your ward/group who are from ethnic minority groups?

	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Yes	63	52	44	21	50	44
No	37	46	56	75	50	55
Don't Know	-	2	-	3	-	1
% Response	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number	(19)	(54)	(50)	(28)	(8)	(159)

Table 10: If there are active members, what are their duties?

Duties	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Committee member	45	55	40	33	33	43
Active member	36	33	47	50	33	39
Community liaison officer	-	-	6	-	-	1
Local election candidate	9	29	6	-	33	30
Councillor	9	29	50	33	-	16
% Response	92	96	77	67	100	88
Number	(11)	(27)	(17)	(4)	(3)	(62)

[Of those responding 'yes' to question 9 above]

Table 11: Why do you think that there should/should not be more elected representatives from ethnic minority groups?

	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Yes Reasons						
To provide proportional representation of ethnic minority groups	28	48	32	36	50	38
To represent ethnic minority interests/needs/views	44	40	56	56	33	48
To participate in political life/ encourage democracy	22	22	32	12	-	23
To provide role models to others	5	-	2	-	16	3

No Reasons

	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
Ethnic minority people should put themselves forward	17	2	-	-	16	3
No special encouragement - meritocratic and representative system only	11	12	13	16	-	12
% Response	95	94	94	100	100	97
Number	(18)	(50)	(46)	(25)	(6)	(148)

[These are amplified responses by individuals who answered a yes/no question previously]

Table 12: If ethnic minority groups have different concerns to white people, what are they?

Concerns	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Racial discrimination	-	54	53	50	50	52
Unemployment	-	40	5	12	-	33
Poverty	-	5	12	12	-	33
Cultural issues	80	36	33	12	50	35
Immigration issues	-	5	-	12	25	5
Equal opportunities	20	23	13	-	25	14
Don't know	-	-	6	12	25	5
% Response	83	78	88	73	100	86
Number	(5)	(22)	(15)	(8)	(4)	(57)

[Of those responding 'yes' or 'yes and no' to a previous question asking about whether or not there are different concerns]

Table 13: Do you think that ethnic minority groups should have their own separate political voice?

	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Yes	5	26	14	22	29	19
No	95	72	84	78	71	79
Don't know	-	2	2	-	-	1
% Response	100	100	100	96	87	99
Number	(10)	(54)	(50)	(27)	(7)	(157)

Table 14: Why do you think that ethnic minority groups should/should not have their own separate political voice?

	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Yes Reasons						
Better support provision	6	23	6	23	17	16
Better able to represent ethnic minority interests/needs	6	21	13	19	17	16
Ethnic minority groups to choose own method	-	4	6	-	-	3
No Reasons						
Encourages ghetto mentality/racist	17	8	22	31	17	18
Increases hostility	6	2	6	4	-	4
Everyone should work together	47	19	17	7	17	20
All share same problems	-	-	2	7	-	1
Separate groups/parties are divisive	23	43	30	34	50	36
*% Responses	89	94	92	96	86	92
Number	(17)	(51)	(46)	(26)	(6)	(146)

[* of those responding to question in Table 13]

Table 15: In your local area, do ethnic minority people suffer any particular problems as a result of their colour/ethnic origin, religion or culture?

	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Yes	42	68	44	54	25	54
No	58	24	48	38	50	40
Don't know	-	7	8	8	25	6
% Response	100	100	96	93	100	95
Number	(19)	(54)	(48)	(26)	(8)	(155)

Table 16: If ethnic minority people do suffer problems as a result of their colour/ethnic origin, religion or culture, what type of problems?

Problems	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Typical discrimination suffered everywhere else	43	69	82	73	66	73
Language problems	14	5	4	7	-	7
Discrimination in employment	23	28	14	32	33	-
Lack of support for cultural beliefs/practices	14	17	9	-	33	12
Service provision/access	14	5	27	-	-	13
Don't know	-	3	-	-	-	1
*% Response	87	90	88	94	75	88
Number	(7)	(36)	(22)	(15)	(3)	(83)

[* Of those responding 'yes' in Table 15]

Table 17: If you are not satisfied with the Race Relations Act 1976, how could it be improved?

Improvement	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Strengthen power of Act	-	58	57	36	25	48
Replace with effective policy-	25	-	7	-	25	17
Don't know enough to comment	15	8	7	-	43	25
Can't legislate for white hostility	7	-	8	21	7	-
Anti-discriminatory strategies encourage white hostility	66	-	7	-	25	5
Increase consultation with ethnic minority groups	33	-	-	7	-	3
% Response	75	92	82	93	67	89
Number	(3)	(36)	(14)	(14)	(4)	(72)

Table 18: If you are not satisfied with the Government's race relations policies, how could they be improved?

Improvements	Cons	Lab	Lib	Green	Ind	All
			%			
Replace with fairer policy*	-	57	61	33	20	52
Replace Government	-	17	14	22	20	17
Must be more than lip service-	-	3	11	11	-	3
Replace with effective policy-	-	6	3	11	20	6
Don't know enough to comment	-	3	3	11	20	7
Increase understanding between different groups	6	0	8	-	-	3
Increase consultation with ethnic minority groups	100	-	5	-	-	2

Encourage more integration	-	-	7	-	5	-	2
Can't legislate for white hostility	1	-	-	-	5	-	-
Allow free entry to Britain for all*	1	-	-	-	5	-	-
Restrict entry to Britain*	-	3	-	-	-	20	1
Don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
** % Response	33	71	78	100	100	77
Number	(1)	(35)	(28)	(18)	(5)	(87)

[* respondent interprets question to mean immigration policies
** of those responding 'not satisfied' and 'partly satisfied' to previous question about satisfaction levels]

SUMMARY

On the face of it, the findings of the study appear to suggest that, as issues of local concern, ethnic-related themes qualify as reasonably important on an index of possible local worries. Whilst poll tax was, not surprisingly, the major local concern and the issue on which all candidates would be campaigning, 'race' issues such as discrimination, equality and race relations nonetheless scored as highly as housing and better than law and order or unemployment as significant local concerns. However, it should be carefully borne in mind that the primacy of these themes as significant issues are more likely to reflect the beliefs and views of the participating candidates than their constituents. When considering the findings it is also important to remember that despite the political composition of the questionnaire recipients, the actual respondents showed a marked absence of concentrated Conservative reaction. This in itself is revealing and perhaps reflects the importance which Conservative candidates attach to ethnic and race-related issues. The political skew of the respondent sample thus needs to be considered when evaluating the findings in their entirety.

It will also be clear, at least from the verbatim comments generated by the questionnaire that Conservative candidates tend to regard discussion of race issues as inflammatory in themselves, encouraging a hostile reaction in the indigenous white population because of perceived exclusion and favoured treatment of ethnic groups. Most Conservative candidates have underplayed the importance of ethnic groups. Most Conservative the divisiveness of accentuating differences. Whilst this attitude shows a marked difference to the attitudes of most of the other party candidates on the question of race-related issues, the constant exhortations of the centre and right parties for increased understanding between people is similarly simplistic and belies a comprehensive grasp of what the issues actually are.

There was an overridingly positive reaction to the suggestion of more elected representatives from ethnic minority groups and an acknowledgement of the importance of gaining their political support. Whilst there was a strong view that more ethnic minority individuals should become politically active, the findings demonstrate that such involvement should be properly 'confined' to the existing political party structure. There was very little support for political activity outside the mainstream system for fear of division and hostility both within and without.

Whilst race-related themes were regarded as needing improvement, less than half the respondents are dissatisfied with the way in which equal opportunity policies are implemented in their local authority area. This indicates perhaps a less than complete understanding of what the policies are, how they operate and their 'success' in actually providing equality of opportunity to all. It would appear that for a significant number of party members, the initiation of an equal opportunity policy is seen almost as an end in itself and that once in place it must, necessarily, work effectively. A rather disturbing 9 per cent of those participating in the study stated that they did not know enough about their authority's policy to be able to express satisfaction or otherwise.

That more than half the respondents believe that ethnic minority and white people share the same concerns again suggests a lack of

understanding of the fundamental problems of discrimination for ethnic minority groups in Britain. It is possible that by arguing for a similarity of outlook, respondents were attempting to highlight the essential sameness of people rather than difference, but it is still debatable whether or not concerns are regarded in the same way by different groups or even different individuals. It is interesting that although more than half the respondents believe that local ethnic minority groups suffer racial discrimination, the majority also believe that race relations are not getting worse and do not anticipate any change in the future. Such ambivalence seems to imply a state of equilibrium which does not necessitate any change in policy or other positive initiative. It is the relatively unsophisticated political arguments which pervade many of the respondents' statements which provide one of the most worrying aspects of the study. Aspiring councillors from across the political spectrum suggest education and integration as providing the thrust for change - discrimination is thus regarded as a wholly personal and individual pathology. Only a small minority of respondents refer to institutional racism - in employment and elsewhere - as constituting the more serious threat to racial equality.

Similarly, a little less than half of all respondents expressed themselves satisfied with the Race Relations Act 1976, despite accepting the existence of widespread discrimination. It thus appears that for many, the enactment of legislation or putting into place of policy implies its successful outcome irrespective of whether or not it is ultimately able to fulfil its promise of reform. Although rather fewer candidates were satisfied with the Government's race relations policies, there was little constructive comment made on possible improvements to such policies.

That discrimination is a significant aspect of social life in Britain is evidenced by the fact that the great majority of respondents believe that ethnic minority groups occupy inferior social positions and have a lower status in British society than white people. The reasons provided for such differential positioning are perceptions of inferiority by white people and discrimination of various types. It is clear that whilst the practice of discrimination is accepted as fact, it is not regarded as a serious local

problem. The study findings present a rather gloomy picture of the extent of understanding of ethnic issues amongst local party members of all political parties and indicate that much work is still needed to be done on raising awareness and encouraging understanding.

Appendix 5

Views of Political Party Representatives About the Political Participation of Ethnic Minorities and Election issues

By Karen Ross

General

In the 1990 local elections study, political party agents and formal representatives were also contacted in order to obtain general and particular information on party policies, ethnic minority candidates and related issues. Of the fifteen representatives initially contacted, interviews were arranged with 11, although one interviewee did not in fact keep his appointment. Interviews were refused by one Labour representative and two Conservative representatives and another Labour representative did not make contact, despite repeated messages, both written and oral. Of the interviews which eventually took place, 4 were with Labour representatives (Coventry, Birmingham and Nuneaton); 3 were with Conservative representatives (Coventry and Rugby); 1 was with the Green Party representative in Birmingham; 1 was with the SDP representative in Birmingham and 1 with the Liberal Democrat representative in Coventry. Two of the interviews were held with the representatives of the Indian Democratic Socialist Party (IDSP) and the Anglo-Asian Conservative Association (ACA) respectively. Interviews took place before the election day, 3 May, 1990.

Election Issues

For all parties, the community charge 'poll tax' was the dominant issue on which they said they would be campaigning; all other issues were secondary to this central theme. Specific local issues such as development and planning schemes were also part of the election campaign but no interviewee regarded race-related themes as significant election issues. Although all interviewees accepted the existence of racial discrimination in society generally, none of them believed that ethnic minority people in their own areas suffered particularly from

discriminatory practices. Most interviewees believe that race relations are the same now as they ever were, if not a little better, apart from the disruptions 'caused by 'Muslim fundamentalists' in the wake of the Rushdie affair. Several interviewees mentioned this as an example of the Asian community's unwillingness to conform to a British way of life or become more integrated into British society, thereby encouraging further friction and hostility amongst the indigenous white population.

Ethnic Minority Support for Political Parties

Both the main political parties considered that they were the best party to represent ethnic minority interests and both parties in all areas believed that they had the support of most of the Asian community. None of the interviewees believed that ethnic minority people should have a separate political voice, although the representatives of the IDSP and ACA believed that their organisations served a valuable function in providing bridges between ethnic minority communities and formal political party activity. They both believed that the cultural and social support structure which they provide encourages political education in a sympathetic environment and prepares members to progress to political activity within their respective mainstream parties. Also they would like to see a time when their organisations are redundant, that is, when ethnic minority people have no fear or anxiety about joining the two main parties directly.

Ethnic Minority Involvement in Local Party Politics

Although all interviewees stated that their party included Asian members, none of the interviewees felt that African-Caribbean people were attracted to local politics except for the Labour Party in Birmingham which had put up two African-Caribbean candidates (who both won). None of the party representatives believed that they had particular difficulty in attracting ethnic minority members, but stated that it was very difficult to attract any new members. Reasons for this lack of enthusiasm related to general apathy amongst the general public, a reluctance to commit a lot of time to political pursuits, a general disenchantment with the decimation of local government powers and a sense of powerlessness to effect change. Only one respondent suggested fear of discrimination and/or rejection as a

possible inhibiting factor to greater ethnic minority involvement. However, several others alluded to in-fighting amongst different 'factions' of the Asian community which resulted in some Asian people being reluctant to publicly align themselves with particular political parties. There was also a sentiment that the Asian community had traditionally supported the Labour Party and any dissent from this position would be frowned upon within the community itself. This pressure then militates against possible overt support for the Conservative Party from Asian sympathisers.

As far as the smaller parties were concerned, there was a strong view that although there may be support for the policies of the Green Party or Liberal Democrats, anyone who was politically ambitious would join one of the two main parties and if such a person was from an ethnic minority, then they would most likely join the Labour Party. Although all parties believed that they were accessible and attractive to ethnic minority people, it was undoubtedly the Labour Party which had the largest proportion of ethnic minority members and in fact the party fielded 70 per cent of all ethnic minority candidates in the May 1990 elections in the five Midlands areas of the study. Labour Party representatives suggested that it was only in the past few years that there had been a significant level of involvement from ethnic minority members, mainly as a result of increasing political awareness amongst young members of ethnic communities. There was a strong belief amongst all interviewees that young British-born Asian people were much more willing to become politically active and have a voice in the political process than previous generations.

There was a clear sentiment amongst party representatives that although they included ethnic minority people amongst their members, such people seldom put themselves up for selection as prospective councillors. None of them were able to account for this reticence but all were adamant that the perception of discrimination and/or rejection was not a factor in such decision-making process. Although the idea of overt discrimination within political parties was resisted, it was acknowledged by several representatives that problems could arise as a result of an ethnic minority candidate being chosen to stand as a prospective councillor. There could

be problems of conscience on the part of the candidate, whereby s/he wanted to focus exclusively on the concerns of the ethnic minority community rather than the ward constituents as a whole, leading to isolation of some ward constituents. There could also be problems with a predominantly white electorate ward rejecting an ethnic minority candidate, resulting in a lost seat. Such issues were recognised but dismissed as being easily resolved or else unlikely to arise.

Links with Ethnic Minority Communities

No party representative said that their parties had formal policies on the establishment of links with ethnic minority communities, but Labour Party representatives appeared to have stronger and more regularly maintained contacts than other party representatives. However, whilst established links with community groups did exist, at least amongst the two main party representatives, there seemed to be a rather cynical approach adopted towards gaining ethnic minority support at election time. There was a suggestion from some representatives that in the period prior to elections, community leaders would be visited to renew old contacts and promote the party to elicit a pledge of support. If this support was gained, then so was the support of the community as a whole, since the community leaders would 'direct' the community to vote for a particular party. When challenged as to the democracy of such 'support' it was suggested that it was the most sensible way to gain support since resources were insufficient to canvas all the potential electorate effectively, notwithstanding language difficulties.

The Conservative Party representatives stated that establishing and maintaining links with ethnic minority communities was a matter for the discretion of individual candidates and councillors, although any such contact would be welcomed. Most of the representatives stated that their parties would not be putting out election material in languages other than English, although messages in Asian languages would be included in the election addresses of some Coventry, Birmingham and Nuneaton candidates in those wards which included significant Asian populations.

Summary

There was a general view that although it was important to attract ethnic minority support for political parties and a greater level of active involvement on the part of ethnic minority members, such aspirations were not priorities. Of much more pressing concern amongst all party representatives was their standing with the local community generally, how they were going to encourage greater support from all constituents and how to ensure that their particular party was put into power at both the local and national level. Issues of race and ethnicity were not on the political agenda except when ethnic minority communities themselves, through actions such as Muslim demonstrations, forced their views to be heard and taken into account.

No party believed they had any particular difficulties in attracting ethnic minority members and each party appeared to believe that they best represented the interests of ethnic minority groups. Very few agents believed that discrimination in the political process actually existed still less constituted a significant problem. It would seem therefore that very little effort had been or intends to be made to encourage higher levels of involvement and participation of ethnic minority people. As in other areas of social and political life, it was up to interested individuals to become involved in the political process through their own initiatives since encouragement was not forthcoming from the party political apparatus itself. But how is such motivation to be fostered given the perception if not overt reality of discrimination in political life as elsewhere? It would seem that local party offices are neglecting their responsibilities to involve more local people in the political process, thereby discouraging democracy and increasing a sense of powerlessness.

Appendix 6

Election Issues and the Local Press

By Karen Ross

Local papers were monitored in the five Midlands research areas for their coverage of the May 1990 elections in the period prior and immediately after the election day on 3 May, that is between 26 March and 11 May 1990. Six newspapers were monitored which covered the five Midlands areas. They were:

Coventry Evening Telegraph (daily)
Nuneaton Evening Tribune (daily)
Birmingham Post (daily)
West Midlands Evening Mail (daily)
Rugby Advertiser (weekly)
Nuneaton Citizen Observer (daily)

A total of 29 items which related directly to the local elections in the five targeted areas were counted with a majority (65%) mentioning the poll tax as an election issue. More than one-third of items included direct quotations from political party spokespersons issuing election promises and just under one-third of items included inter-party critiques and allegations of mismanagement and/or profligate spending patterns. Two items covered more general issues of national concern but both included references to the poll tax as the dominant election issue.

No items included any mention of ethnic or racial themes except one item which focused on the de-selection of a moderate and long-standing Labour Party candidate in favour of an alleged 'militant' Asian candidate. A breakdown of item content, newspaper and date is presented in the tables below:

Type of Item and Frequency

Item	Number of times mentioned
Local	
Poll tax concerns	13 (45%)
Criticisms of other parties' performance/policies	9 (31%)
Political party election promises	8 (27%)
Intra-party conflict	3 (10%)
Voting predictions	2 (7%)
Voting turnout discussion	2 (7%)
Discussion of results (including lists)	2 (7%)
Labour Party disputes with Conservative Party election material/ allegations of misrepresentation	5 (17%)
Editorial - discussion of policy merits	2 (7%)
General discussion on balance of power	1 (4%)
List of candidates	1 (4%)
	2 (7%)
National	
Effect of poll tax on voting patterns	2 (7%)

Item Content, Area, Newspaper and Date

Area	Story Content	Press	Date 1990
Coventry	De-selection of long-standing labour moderate candidate in favour of alleged 'militant' Asian candidate	CET	29.3
Coventry	All-party propaganda	CET	30.3
Rugby	Intra-party conflict - Conservative member to stand as an independent candidate because of poll tax disenchantment	RA	5.4
Rugby	Discussion of balance of council power	RA	5.4
Rugby	List of candidates	RA	5.4
B'ham	Conservative party propaganda /criticisms	BP	11.4
Coventry	Election promises	CET	13.4
Coventry	Labour party warns candidate not to campaign on non-payment of poll tax	CET	13.4
National	Urge from County Landowners Association for rural voters to use vote	CET	13.4
Coventry	Inter-party criticisms	CET	14.4
Coventry	Green party pledges	CET	16.4
Solihull	Party propaganda	CET	18.4
Midlands	List of candidates	BP	25.4
Nuneaton	All-party propaganda	BP	30.4
Nuneaton	Conservative allegations over Labour spending	NET	2.5
Nuneaton	Labour accuse Conservatives of misinformation regarding poll tax figures	NET	2.5
B'ham	Voting Predictions	NET	2.5
B'ham	Labour council to take down 'illegal' Cons election posters	BP	2.5
National	Effect of poll tax on voting patterns	BP	2.5
Rugby	Editorial - policy discussion	BP	3.5
Nuneaton	All-party propaganda - urge to vote	RA	3.5
Midlands	Voting turnout discussion	NCO	3.5
Nuneaton	Voting turnout discussion	WMEM	3.5
Midlands	Voting predictions	NET	3.5
Midlands	Discussion of election results including list of results	BP	4.5
Midlands		WMEM	4.5

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Nuneaton	Discussion of election results	NCO	4.5
	(as above)		
Coventry	Discussion of election results	CET	4.5
	(as above)		
Midlands	Discussion of election results	BP	5.5
	(as above)		
Rugby	Discussion of election results	RA	10.5
	(as above)		

Key:

BP	=	Birmingham Post
CET	=	Coventry Evening Telegraph
NCO	=	Nuneaton Citizen Observer
NET	=	Nuneaton Evening Tribune
RA	=	Rugby Advertise
WMEM	=	West Midlands Evening Mail