

EDUCATION, THE EDUCATION REFORM ACT (1988) AND RACIAL EQUALITY

A Conference Report

by  
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## PREFACE

A national conference on 'Education, the Education Reform Act (1988) and Racial Equality', jointly organised by the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations (CRER) and the National Association of Race Equality Advisors (NAREA), was held at the University of Warwick on 22 and 23 September 1990.

The general aims of the conference were to provide a platform for analysis, debate and information on the implications of the Act as well as on wider issues surrounding the education of ethnic minority children and the struggle for racial equality in this area of their lives. The conference strove to bring together people from a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives in order to facilitate a positive exchange of views and experiences between those who are actively associated and/or especially concerned with issues relating to education and race. As the list of participants shows, we were successful in attracting academics, practitioners and policy makers, and the papers selected for this report therefore reflect this varied composition.

Indeed, the conference's aims and one of its outcomes (i.e. this report) are also closely related to CRER's national and international role in the field of race and ethnic relations. In addition to conducting research, CRER helps to stimulate discussion and debate in this field by organising (sometimes jointly) seminars, conferences and workshops, and by disseminating information through its publications.

On behalf of CRER and NAREA, I should like to thank everyone who attended the conference and made it a success. In particular, thanks are due to Dr C. L. Brundin, Vice-Chancellor, The University of Warwick, for opening the conference. I should also like to thank Mr Michael Day, Mr Carlton Duncan, Professor John Rex and Professor Sally Tomlinson for chairing the main sessions and all those who were kind enough to chair the workshops. Thanks are also due to all the speakers for their valuable contributions and I should particularly like to thank those who have allowed me to include their papers in this report.

I should like to thank my co-organisers from NAREA, especially Tejpal Samrai, Jim Thakoordin, Alexandra Seale and Ansley Rice. Penultimately, thanks are due to my colleagues at CRER, especially to Muhammed Anwar and Harry Goulbourne for their support and, finally, I should like to thank the secretaries - Rose Goodwin, Liz Doyle-Saul and Claudette Brennan - for typing this report.

Beatrice Drury, July 1991

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## INTRODUCTION

Beatrice Drury

The Education Reform Act (1988) represents a radical change in the provision of education and a major challenge to the educational system. In a speech at the Conservative Party conference in 1987, Kenneth Baker, the then Secretary of State for Education, claimed that the Act would 'open the doors of opportunity' to our children and a year later, in the Guardian, he declared that the National Curriculum was likely to be 'very useful in holding together a multi-racial and multi-cultural society' (Baker, the Guardian, 17 August 1988). References to multi-culturalism in subsequent policy documents issued by the Department of Education and Science seemed to confirm a commitment to multi-cultural education (DES 1989).

The implementation of the Education Reform Act (1988) raises several major questions relating to racial equality within education and has important implications for the education of ethnic minority children.

One major area of concern relates to the role and future of multi-cultural and anti-racist education. There is a continuing debate as to whether these approaches to education are being eroded, extended or neglected within the National Curriculum. Some educationalists have expressed optimism. For example, Beverley Anderson, a member of the National Curriculum Council in 1989, argued that the new curriculum would offer a means of spreading good multi-cultural practice in all schools because multi-cultural education has been officially awarded cross-curricular status (Anderson, 1989).

Other academics, however, have been much more critical of the Act and less optimistic about the future of multi-cultural and anti-racist education (e.g. Arnot, 1989; Hatcher, 1989; Troyna, 1990). Indeed, in this conference report, Verma and Eggleston largely support the latter view, that is, that the implementation of the Education Reform Act and the National Curriculum is likely to have a detrimental effect on multi-cultural and anti-racist education.

One of the main criticisms made against the National Curriculum is that it is predominantly Eurocentric, Anglocentric and monocultural and is consequently largely unrepresentative of a multi-cultural and multi-racial society. There are several examples of this bias. For instance, European languages such as French and German are now given precedence over Indic and other non-European ethnic minority languages within the National Curriculum. The Education Reform Act, moreover, requires that 'religious acts of worship' be 'predominantly Christian', a requirement which challenges established practices such as multi-faith assemblies in schools and is a regressive step towards a monocultural outlook.

Yet another example involves the teaching of music. The National Curriculum Council's report on music scarcely mentions Asian and Afro-Caribbean forms of music. Instead, it gives prominence to Western classical composers and has a few references to popular music. The almost total exclusion of ethnic and world music in the National Curriculum Council's report suggests a bleak future for multi-culturalism in this subject.

Other examples of a Eurocentric and Anglocentric bias, can be found in the syllabi of most subjects, including history, geography, mathematics and English. In this report, Verma examines some of these subject areas and provides examples of a return to monoculturalism and an Anglocentric emphasis in the National Curriculum.

Another major question relating to the education of Asian and Afro-Caribbean children concerns the extent to which the Standardised Attainment Tests (SATs)

and proposed ethnic monitoring procedures are likely to raise or further impede the achievements of these children. While there are undoubtedly certain reservations regarding the 'culture blindness' of such tests, it would be unwise totally to condemn them without giving them a fair chance to prove their worth. In this conference report, Eggleston, for example, speculates that SATS, as 'objective' tests, could help Afro-Caribbean and Asian children to challenge the subjective evaluations of their teachers. Issues concerning the implementation of such tests are currently being examined by Kamala Hyder, a researcher at CRER, in a study on the effects of the Education Reform Act on the education of Afro-Caribbean children. We await her results with interest.

Other major areas of concern with regard to ERA, racial equality and the education of ethnic minority children relate to the implementation of Local Management of Schools (LMS), the increased powers of governing bodies, the question of parental choice and the opportunity for schools to 'opt-out'.

All of these features of ERA have significant implications for ethnic minorities. For example, because the 1988 Act has greatly increased the powers and duties of governors with regard to financial matters and curriculum assessment, it is imperative that Asian and Afro-Caribbean parents have an opportunity to become school governors. However, there are very few governors from these communities and, indeed, Asian and Afro-Caribbean parents face tremendous obstacles in becoming parent-governors.

Examples of some of these difficulties include: lack of confidence regarding their standards of spoken English; feelings of intimidation and alienation of the educational system; lack of ethnic minority role models and the problems involved in taking time off from work and child care in order to attend meetings.

The question of parental choice has important implications for ethnic minorities. Nowhere is this more evident than in the recent test cases in Dewsbury and Cleveland, in which white parents were supported by the High Court in their bid to exercise their right to remove their children from racially mixed schools and place them in schools of their choice. Parental choice, if exerted in this manner by white parents, could therefore result in racially segregated education.

Some ethnic minority parents, moreover, also wish to exercise their rights to choose by seeking to establish 'separate' schools. However, attempts by some Muslims, for example, to set up voluntary-aided Muslim schools have not met with much success. It is yet to be seen whether the 'opt-out' option available to schools and their governing bodies will be taken up by some schools and some ethnic minority parents as a way of setting up 'separate' religious schools in, for example, areas which have over 90 per cent Muslim pupil population.

In addition to the above dimensions of the Education Reform Act (1988), the conference focused on two wider issues relating to racial equality within education. The first involved questions about the recruitment and training of Afro-Caribbean and Asian teachers, and the second was concerned with racial harassment in educational establishments.

Many non-white teachers face tremendous obstacles gaining promotion and training and are, moreover, often marginalised in terms of funding, grading and numbers. Some also find that they are almost totally excluded from mainstream provision since they are usually funded under Section 11. The recruitment of ethnic minority teachers within an equal opportunities policy should be a major priority if Afro-Caribbean and Asian children are to benefit from having positive own-race role models. This is a challenge for the educational system which has so far largely failed to reflect a multi-racial and multi-ethnic society in its overall staffing arrangements in its schools.

The issue of racial harassment in schools is one which continues to be of major concern to everyone involved with race and education (CRE, 1988). The horrifying consequences of racial violence were once more brought to our attention by the Burnage murder. Racial harassment in its various forms, from physical violence to verbal insults, continues to exist in our schools and has deplorable consequences for its victims.

In a recent study on Bangladeshi school children in Tower Hamlets, East London, some parents whose children were denied their choice of a local school, decided to keep their children at home instead of sending them to schools outside their immediate area, mainly because they feared that they and their children would be exposed to racial harassment (Tomlinson and Hutchison, 1991).

The conference on 'Education, the Education Reform Act (1988) and Racial Equality' attempted to examine and debate all the above dimensions of ERA, race and education. In this report, Verma focuses on the future of religious and cultural diversity within the National Curriculum, Eggleston examines the implications of Local Management of Schools, opting out and parental choice, and Duncan argues a case for 'separate' religious and ethnic minority schools. Ogden gives us a relatively detailed account of Northamptonshire County Council's approach to racial equality within education and pays particular attention to her county's attempts at encouraging the recruitment and training of Asian and Afro-Caribbean parent-governors. She also discusses her county's multi-cultural practices and its attempt at monitoring the GCSE examination performance of its ethnic minority children.

The effects of ERA on post-16 education are considered by Field, while John discusses the possible implications of the Education Reform Act (1988) for the future of local education authorities. The Labour Party's plans for multi-cultural education and racial equality within education are summarised by Fatchett and, finally, three workshop summaries are included. The first, by Shukla and Rocha, focuses on the problems involved in the recruitment and training of Asian and Afro-Caribbean teachers, and a number of recommendations for improvement are made. The second, by Smith, examines the question of ethnic minority governors and offers some worthwhile suggestions for action, and the third, by Williams, attempts to identify the different forms of racial harassment and considers the responses of educational establishments in dealing with this serious problem.

The contributors to this report come from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences. This diversity is therefore reflected in the different perspectives, styles, contents and conclusions in the report. This, does not, however, detract from the importance of the conference or this report. Indeed, we strove to include such diversity in order to stimulate debate on the issues surrounding the Education Reform Act (1988) and racial equality. It is hoped that the conference and this publication have set the scene for continuing a constructive debate among all who are concerned about the future of multi-culturalism and racial equality within our educational system.

## CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY WITHIN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Gajendra K Verma

### Introduction

It is now over twenty-five years since substantial numbers of children whose parents were born in the New Commonwealth and Pakistan began to enter British schools. Post-war population mobility supplemented the numbers of these children with others from the continent of Europe - notably from Italy, Cyprus and Greece - as well as from other territories and dependencies, particularly Hong Kong.

### The Background

Early assumptions by the Department of Education and Science were that these children needed and should receive identical treatment to that received by indigenous white children. Local Education Authorities were encouraged, largely through section 11 funding, to make special provision to make these children competent in English and, once this was accomplished, to place them in mainstream schools as quickly as possible.

The unwritten objective of the Department of Education and Science appeared to be that they would then become indistinguishable from their white peers in all respects except that of the colour of their skins. The education of white children and the nature of English society was to remain unchanged. Social class was to remain the uniquely dominant force which shaped that society, and issues of race and ethnicity were to be submerged - one might almost say destroyed - to maintain the status quo. They were, in a word, to become integrated into British society, and the prime agent for achieving this aim was to be the country's schools.

It was assumed that syllabuses, the overt and hidden curricula, would remain unaltered and that the general process of social engineering would ensure that the children would grow to conform to the norms of British society in which they would take their places and, as it were, disappear.

There were various reasons why this did not occur. Not least was the growth of the civil rights movement in the United States - a movement that created a role for ethnic minorities across the world. Social statistics increasingly propounded views which suggested that integration was not only undesirable because it was morally indefensible, but stupid because it was unachievable. They developed alternative models of society which increasingly recognised the rights of minorities to have a distinctive place within society at large: one which gave them rights to enjoy their culture, intellectual, religious and social variations from white British norms. One among the more recent of these, cultural pluralism, implies, theoretically at least, a continuously negotiated settlement between dominant and minority groups which would protect the rights of all citizens of whatever ethnic descent to achieve their life ambitions according to their own cultural priorities.

Local education authorities, particularly those with increasing numbers of ethnic minority children, with little help or guidance from the DES, struggled with the increasingly obvious needs to make changes which took into account the changing nature of society and the children in their schools. The history of their efforts is well-known and it is needless to recite them here. However, the process of change is a continuous one and it seems unlikely that the day will ever come when the need for change will disappear.

One of the most significant changes in the field of education since the Education Act of 1944 is the Education Reform Act (1988). This Act took away many of the powers hitherto exercised by LEAs and relocated them in schools. Among these was that of developing policies relating to multi-cultural and anti-



racist education. Whereas LEAs have, in the past, often taken the lead in developing policies for their schools and, through the local inspectorate, encouraged their effective adoption, schools are now expected to take that responsibility themselves.

In the last two decades or so, concern about the education of children and adolescents of Asian and West Indian origins has prompted debates and discussions as to how they have been integrated into the prevailing system and its expectations, and how the education system and the curriculum can best be modified to meet the particular needs of a changing multicultural, multi-ethnic society. Such debates have been wide in scope and have covered not only educational issues but other relevant areas, such as racial prejudice and discrimination in society at large.

It is now less than ten years to the twenty-first century and there is as yet no consensus within the British education system or the wider society as to how best to educate all children and young people growing up in a culturally plural, multi-racial Britain. The 'Select Committee on Race Relations' in 1977, the Rampton and Swann Committees (1981, 1985), several government and EEC reports over the last fifteen years acknowledge, by their very existence, that something is wrong between the attitudes of ethnic majority and minority groups in our society.

The political climate over the past quarter of a century has not been conducive to the development of changed educational policies and practices which will provide equal opportunities for minorities and create a climate of cultural tolerance among young people. To be sure, a political commitment is a prerequisite for any change in society and there is little evidence of such a commitment now.

However, compared to the 1960s and 1970s, there have been some positive developments in the 1980s. For example, the Swann Report, published in 1985, has moved the main thrust of the debate on cultural diversity and equal opportunity away from a debate which focused exclusively on ethnic minority pupils to one which is concerned with the education of all pupils in a plural society. It asserts that issues facing ethnic minority pupils are tied up closely with those of the majority group and therefore cannot be solved without changing the basic character of mainstream education.

The Swann Report recognises that biases in the educational system have contributed to the failure of ethnic minority pupils to achieve their full potential. It explicitly advocates that the educational system can best perform its task (initially) by replacing the present monocultural with multicultural and anti-racist education which aims to cultivate equal respect for, and a sensitive understanding of, all cultures.

It further argues that the danger of failing to address adequately the question of education for all would be a stimulus for certain ethnic groups to set up separate schools. In my view, such a radical analysis of the nature and role of the school cannot be dismissed, if British society is sincere about its core values. Unfortunately, the National Curriculum fails to take proper account of the needs of all children.

Turning to the political stance with regard to the education of ethnic minorities, government education policy documents since the publication of the Swann Report seem at least rhetorically committed to removing those obstacles which prevent ethnic minority children from achieving their full educational potential. These documents also advocate the elimination of racial prejudice both inside schools and in the wider society. In response to such policies, the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education - popularly known as CATE -

now requires that all student teachers should be adequately prepared to teach pupils whatever their social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

While this strategy may seem pedagogically sound, it has a serious flaw. It does not take account of the fact that its implementation is constantly frustrated by the social context in which any educational system exists and functions. Furthermore, education is not culturally neutral. Its intellectual content and orientation are permeated by the world-view characteristics of the dominant ideologies and values.

The British education system has a deep monocultural orientation. This is evident in the kind of curriculum we teach, the methods of assessment we use, the books we utilise and the way we present other societies in classrooms. Consequently, the education system over the past thirty years has failed to offer children and young people of former colonial immigrants (the majority of whom arrived in Britain during the 1950s and 1960s) a fair and equal education alongside their white peers. It has also failed to provide an appropriate education to white pupils which would equip them to understand Britain's changed post-imperial position in the world and would enable them to function effectively in a multicultural society.

There is evidence to show that Asian and West Indian children and adolescents suffer from multiple disadvantage and encounter prejudice and discrimination. Spencer (1987), reporting on a survey of 500 pupils in the London Borough of Barnet, found that racist name-calling was common, increased with the age of the pupils, and was more frequent than abuse on the basis of the sex or other attributes. The study found that some pupils saw teachers as 'condoning the racism which many of them experience daily' (Spencer, 1987).

The C.R.E. (1988) undertook a survey of racial harassment in schools and colleges, which provided copious evidence for poor inter-ethnic relationships in inner-city multi-racial schools and colleges - ranging from relatively mild expression of prejudice to physical violence. Its report criticises the failure of the appropriate agencies to respond adequately to the problem. The report notes that out of 108 LEAs, only 13 had published clear and detailed guidelines on dealing with cases of racial harassment in schools. Well over half had not given systematic consideration to the issue.

#### Cultural Diversity and the National Curriculum

Ethnic minority learners are almost entirely overlooked in the process of the 1988 Education Reform Act. The question is not one of access to the curriculum but of the responses of the school as a whole to the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of its pupils. The advent of the National Curriculum may have reduced the freedom on the part of schools to determine the content of lessons, but assumptions remain unchanged as to their duty to inculcate standards of behaviour based on justice and mutual respect. Of course, such lessons are learnt, not only through formal studies, but are implicit in the way the schools are organised and conduct their affairs, and explicit in the policies and priorities which each school adopts.

One of the controversial aspects of the National Curriculum is the legislative imposition of testing and assessment for all pupils in maintained schools at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16. At the heart of this process will be nationally prescribed tests to be taken by all pupils. These will be administered and monitored by teachers, but moderated externally.

Many arguments have been put forward in support of testing and the fact that the bulk of the testing will be conducted with what are known as 'criterion-referenced' tests. Such a strategy is based on the myth of 'objectivity'. As we all know, there is no such thing as 'objectivity' or 'objective knowledge', and any delusion that there is becomes more and more pronounced as the knowledge

and skills being tested become more sophisticated. Moreover, since the results of the tests are to be one of the bases on which parents are to judge the effectiveness of the schools in selecting one for their children, it appears that we shall have the results of criterion-referenced tests used normatively. Some would argue that this is scarcely an improvement on previous practice. It is also understood that the efficiency of LEAs in discharging their responsibilities will be similarly graded and judged.

Given the history of testing, few would disagree that testing is elitist, monocultural, classist and sexist. It is disappointing that SEAC (School Examination and Assessment Council) specifications on assessment do not make any reference to the needs of ethnic, cultural and linguistic groups. Tests and assessment techniques often contain culturally embedded assumptions which unreliably estimate or discriminate against cultural and ethnic minorities. If educational policies are to be informed by test results, then in a democratic society, it must be demonstrated that the instruments and techniques are fair to all those being assessed. On the basis of research evidence, it seems likely that ethnic minority children, particularly bilingual ones, will be further disadvantaged.

The National Curriculum does not seem to be truly national. The culture and ethos reflected in it is that of the white middle-class Anglo-Saxon. It contains a Eurocentric concept of a static Anglo-Saxon culture which no longer exists and ignores the contributions by non-Western countries to Maths, History, Geography, Science, Music, Art and Literature that have helped to shape today's world.

The National Curriculum appears to most commentators as a product of a remote, managerially-inclined bureaucracy without any understanding of what 'education' means. Education should be concerned with the development of human abilities and skills and, thereby, the acquisition of knowledge - not merely absorption of 'facts' as required in various subjects (e.g. History) in the National Curriculum. It is unfortunate that the terms such as 'motivation', 'identity', 'self-concept', 'culture' and 'ethnicity' are absent from the National Curriculum document.

Education in an ethnically complex society should attempt to meet the cultural, cognitive and self-concept needs of groups and individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds. In addition, education should aim to promote equality of educational achievement between groups and between individuals, mutuality of respect and tolerance between different ethnic groups and, ultimately, equality of status, resource access and economic power between different ethnic groups of society. But the National Curriculum seems to adopt an assimilationist approach:

All pupils, regardless of sex, ethnic origin and geographical location will have access to broadly the same good and relevant curriculum.

The question arises as to who determines what is the 'good and relevant curriculum'. A close analysis of the National Curriculum and its associated testing system suggests that the dominant ideologies (i.e. white middle-class Anglo-Saxon) have succeeded in securing divisions, hierarchies and inequalities within the education system. For many ethnic minority children and young people, this means access to a curriculum which is not only alien and exclusive but obliterates the reality of their cultural identity and life experience.

It is also clear that the aims, the content and the evaluation in the National Curriculum are not only monocultural and Anglocentric but assimilationist in orientation. Furthermore, there is as yet no formal mechanism for cross-curricular permeation of subjects with multicultural, anti-racist or pluralist orientation. So far, reports from various subject working parties confirm our

analysis that very little, if any, account has been taken of ethnic and cultural diversity and the importance of the curriculum in promoting equal opportunity for all pupils regardless of their backgrounds.

A recent report published by Wallen and Dowd (1990) shows that Asian and West Indian authors are largely ignored by A-level exam boards when they select writers for English syllabuses. According to this study, five boards offered no texts by Asian, West Indian and other non-white authors, while the other four offered a total of 18. This was based on an analysis of 378 literary choices offered in 1990 to all students in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Analysis of choices offered over four decades revealed that little has changed despite efforts to promote equal opportunity.

Many Geography teachers have expressed their concern that the syllabus will make it difficult to relate class work to fast-changing world events. The curriculum heavily concentrates on Britain and ignores the rest of the world. Concern has also been expressed that requirements to teach the names of specific places in the Geography syllabus would reinforce stereotypes, particularly about the so-called Third World countries. It is quite disturbing that the working party report puts forward a world which is white, middle-class and European. Yet teachers are expected to teach pupils of varying ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Such a narrow, Eurocentric view will not reflect the reality of a multi-racial, multi-ethnic Britain.

The new History curriculum starts with five to seven-year-olds, but there is no mention of historical personalities outside Britain. In secondary schools, history topics cover primarily Britain and, to some extent, parts of Europe. It is only in the final years of compulsory schooling (i.e. 14 to 16 years) that some attention is given to the Indian subcontinent between 1930 and 1964. The history syllabus is designed to proclaim the glory of Britain and ignores the great non-western civilizations. It does not encourage cultural diversity.

#### Religious Diversity and the National Curriculum

Religious Education is a contentious issue within the educational system. In the National Curriculum, most schools in England and Wales are required to make Christianity the basis of religious education and give pupils a 'broadly Christian' act of daily worship. It is unfortunate that the Act has set teachers and minority religious communities on a collision course.

In June, 1989, The Times Educational Supplement carried out a survey of secondary head teachers to find out their views on the new religious requirements. The result showed that 'hundreds of secondary schools are likely to disobey or turn a blind eye to the law on the daily act of collective worship' (Lodge, 1989). The survey did provide evidence that many headteachers are already working out their own ways of 'modifying' this particular requirement of the Act.

The Education Acts of 1980 and 1988 incorporate clauses on parental choice of schools. No one would deny the importance of such provision. However, recent test cases in Dewsbury and Cleveland have upheld parental rights of choice in a manner contrary to the spirit of the Race Relations Act (1976). Under the Act, it is unlawful for local authorities to act in any way that constitutes racial discrimination.

The Dewsbury dispute, which resulted in a High Court ruling that white parents were entitled to send their children to a school of their choice rather than a school attended predominantly by Asian children, set a precedent for parents in other areas wishing to remove their children from racially-mixed schools. The Dewsbury case gave wide publicity to white parental claims that school standards were lowered by a focus on the needs of Asian pupils, although no evidence was ever produced to support this claim.

In Cleveland in 1988, however, a parent complained that the curriculum was unsuitable and the daughter was 'learning Pakistani'. After taking legal advice, Cleveland Council decided that it had a statutory duty under the 1980 and 1988 Education Acts to comply with the parental request for transfer.

A subsequent investigation by the Commission for Racial Equality highlighted a potential clash between the 1976 Race Relations Act and the Education Acts. The law should be changed to ensure that a parent's right to choose a child's school cannot be made on explicitly racial grounds.

Ironically, if a case like Cleveland had happened in the private sector, the CRE would have had the power to issue a non-discrimination notice which would be binding for five years. In the maintained sector, the Education Secretary has the final say on the issuing of such notices. The CRE has asked the Education Secretary to remove the conflict by amending educational legislation to allow LEAs to fulfil their duties under the Race Relations Act, 1976. It is clear from a recent statement by the Education Secretary that he has no intention of doing so.

There is no doubt that it would be a good thing for education and for society if the final outcome of the Cleveland affair were to be a judicial review backing the Race Relations Act. It would do nothing to prevent racist decisions by parents, but it would mean that such behaviour could not be publicly proclaimed with the full backing of the law.

#### Conclusion

It is clear from the analysis of the National Curriculum within the context of cultural and religious diversity that its nature, process and the associated assessment system are inappropriate to the diverse ethnic make-up of British society. More than that: the combination of a prescribed common curriculum allied to universally applied testing procedures seems likely to further reduce the self-esteem of children from ethnic minority backgrounds and thus to depress their level of educational achievement.

It is now time for government policies on equal opportunity to be clearly defined and machinery, including mainstream legislation, to be put in place which attacks prejudice and racial discrimination, not just in schools and other educational institutions, they do not exist in a vacuum - but in society at large. Asian and Afro-Caribbean children and young people live most of their lives in the wider society, and when they leave educational institutions they should be able to look confidently for jobs appropriate to their abilities and aptitudes; they should be able to look for promotion by right of achievement; for mutual respect with their white peers that derives from common humanity.

## CAN ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION SURVIVE THE 1988 EDUCATION ACT?

John Eggleston

### Introduction

My position is simple, familiar and positive. Good anti-racist teaching is the key to good education. Every report confirms this. Most recently, Smith and Tomlinson's report for the Policy Studies Institute (1989) demonstrated the crucial nature of good anti-racist teaching which, with a real belief in its efficacy, can ensure that so-called under-achieving groups can achieve. Such work shows that there is no necessary correlation between race and achievement. Indeed, a recent study conducted by us at Warwick University on the education of unemployed black adults confirms this view (Eggleston et al, 1990). In a range of self-help black-led groups that we worked with, hundreds of black young people who had failed at school were achieving highly in professional and vocational qualifications, employment, degree and diploma programmes.

All the progress being made could be slowed by the implementation of the Education Reform Act. The Prime Minister seemed to have realised this, albeit incompletely, in her Sunday Telegraph interview on 15 March 1990 - at a stroke, she abolished testing at 7 and 11 in all seven of the non-core foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, having recognised the difficulty and potential injustice which were likely to occur.

The National Union of Teachers has come out clearly about the near impossibility of implementing the testing arrangements made law by the Act, and Education Officers up and down the country are demonstrating the virtual impossibility of making Local Management of Schools work effectively and yet still retaining the crucial services provided centrally by the local authorities. In Avon, even the school secretaries are up in arms about the impossibility of implementing the Education Reform Act effectively within their schools with diminished LEA funding.

### Local Management of Schools

Let me mention a few of the major areas of difficulty. Not surprisingly, I will start with Local Management of Schools. The sharp reduction in funding that this is bringing about in virtually all schools, regardless of the communities they serve, is public knowledge. The problem is, of course, particularly acute in schools with substantial ethnic minority populations; the classic case of Cabot School in Bristol is but one of the many examples where a school previously supported by substantial LEA enhancement is facing severe cuts in its budget. Added to the new constraints on Section 11 funding, the effects are dramatic.

But why do schools, wishing to provide generously for the needs of black children, not use their new freedom to make appropriate provision? Alas, it is not that simple. Not only are those funds reduced, but the pressure on all schools to ensure high recruitment and retention of pupils is likely to push them in a different direction. Every school, if it is to ensure that it is able to obtain even a reasonable funding basis, has to fight to keep its numbers at a high level. The sovereign parents will now control the numbers of pupils who walk through the school gates each morning and thereby determine the size of the school budget. The way to win these parents' minds is, increasingly, to show not only high levels of achievement (as measured by the results of the Standardised Attainment Tasks) but also to provide the items now seen to be the hallmark of affluent schools - computers and other electronic hardware and software, resources and facilities of all kinds. It is on such things that schools will have to spend a much higher proportion of their funding if they are to stay viable.

Our research in the West Midlands has shown very clearly that black parents, understandably, will favour the schools that the white parents favour and many have sound evidence to justify their preferences (Eggleston and Sadler, 1988; Eggleston and Lashley, 1989). So it is unlikely that schools will be able to invest heavily in the kind of support systems that have previously been so beneficial for their black pupils.

The remnants of Local Education Authority support for anti-racist education are likely to be further eroded by the current Government-led encouragement to schools to press for even higher proportions of the Local Education Authority's budget to be made available to them. Indeed, it would not be too great an extrapolation of John McGregor's recent pronouncements to predict an end to Local Education Authorities as we now know them within the next four to five years. It requires little further predictive capability to recognise that the LEA anti-racist and multicultural support teams would be some of the earliest casualties in the process.

#### Parental Choice

Closely associated with Local Management of Schools is the parents' new 'freedom of choice'. There has always been the possibility that parental choice would covertly create an apartheid situation in schools, with many white parents electing to send their pupils to the 'all-white' schools. What has not been realised until now is that the preference based on this kind of ethnic apartheid would not only be visible but overt. The case whereby Cleveland Education Authority has allowed a parent to exercise choice explicitly for these reasons, a choice that was subsequently endorsed by the Department of Education and Science, raises a wholly new dimension which adds dramatically to the racist implications of the 1988 Act.

#### Multi-ethnic Perspectives within the National Curriculum?

The National Curriculum itself is, as we already know, fraught with problems. There is some hope for a genuinely multi-ethnic perspective in the reports of the Working Groups on Mathematics, Science, English and Technology. Perhaps the most encouraging feature is the emphasis on non-standard English in the English document. But overall and in the contexts of the reports as a whole, these concessions to a multi-ethnic dimension are small and marginal. Moreover, it is difficult to see those elements in the trial materials currently being produced in some of the curriculum areas. Even schools with the best intentions may find it hard to devote significant attention to the multi-ethnic dimension in their curriculum and in this way much of what has been achieved in recent years is likely to be lost. In time, there will be cross-curricular themes and one of them will be multicultural, but these are yet to be glimpsed and their implementation may be a long time ahead - if ever. The problems being experienced by the national Curriculum Council groups on the multicultural cross-curriculum theme do not engender optimism.

#### Standardised Attainment Testing

The Standardised Attainment Tests are, perhaps, one of the major areas of concern. Study after study has demonstrated that children from ethnic minorities, particularly those who do not have the majority language as their mother tongue, are likely to do less well than mainstream standard language speakers. There is here, however, a ray of hope: the tests could effectively demonstrate the true capability of black as well as white children. There is much evidence that teachers, even if 'well intentioned', often fail to recognise the true ability of black children and regularly place them in lower attaining streams and examination courses than they have the capability to occupy (Wright, C, 1986).

If black children and their parents, as a result of Standardised Attainment Tasks, have convincing, negotiable evidence of their capability, this discrimination should be less likely to occur. However, the statement by Mrs

Thatcher, focusing the testing on English, Maths and Science only at 7 and 11, may turn out to be disadvantageous because it is precisely in these areas, often wedded to traditional teaching and assessment, that black children may do less well, whereas in some of the other foundation areas, they might have had a more open chance to demonstrate high achievement and potential. And, perhaps most fundamentally, the emphasis on Standardised Attainment Tasks, particularly in the basic subjects, is likely to devalue and even minimise the impressive non-assessable achievements in anti-racist education to which many teachers have devoted their efforts in recent years. Schools as well as children are likely to be increasingly assessed and valued on a narrow curriculum.

Underlining all this is the question of ideology. The ministerial position is consistent - all that is needed is good teaching of black and white young people, and obsession with anti-racism, with its 'loony left' connotations, is simply a distraction. Their concern with good teaching sounds disconcertingly like my own. But there is a fundamental difference: for me, good teaching cannot exist without a sound, coherent anti-racist perspective.

The ministerial team had a field day over the publication of the Smith and Tomlinson Report (1989) by the Policy Studies Institute. This report was seen to indicate that their thesis was sound and much play was made of the fact that achievement was low in a number of schools with a strong anti-racist commitment. The ministerial team was quick to lay the blame for such low achievements on the schools' preoccupation with this time-consuming ideological distraction, i.e. on anti-racist policies.

The exultant commentary ignored two basic features which were clearly to be seen in the report. The first was that a number of the high achieving schools also had anti-racist policies and a number of the low achieving schools did not, and, secondly, that in many inner city schools, black children could and should do better than the norm for the often low-aspiring white children who shared their schools. To suggest that the highest level of white attainment in any school must also mark the upper level of achievement for black children is, perhaps, one of the most oppressive forms of racism and racist comment - but it seems to have passed unchallenged.

To ensure real achievement, it is imperative to develop an anti-racist National Curriculum to match our enthusiasm for anti-racist teaching. A number of pressure groups are working to achieve this - NAME, the Greystoke Group in Manchester, ARTEN, CARE all recognise that the key to achievement is empowerment. But this is not empowerment of some at the expense of others. If teacher expectations are not to be discriminatory, empowering some and disempowering others, we must recognise the fundamental truth that power is not a scarce commodity but one that can be enjoyed and shared. Power is only in short supply if we care to make it so and create artificial shortages. Until we recognise this and erase the expectations, or even the fear, of wide distribution of power within society, achievement itself will be in short supply.

#### Conclusion

The path we have to tread within the Educational Reform Act is hard, but we can still win. We must make the Act work for anti-racist education and achievement for all and use every means to adapt it, modify it, exploit it and make it happen. We must not wait for a new Education Act, however attractive this may be. If we do, tens of thousands of children will have missed their chance while we are negotiating and acting politically. There is a short-term goal as well as a medium-term one. We must work towards both if we are to do justice to the black and white children currently in our schools.



## THE CALL FOR 'SEPARATE' SCHOOLS

Carlton Duncan

### Introduction

In 1980 some members of the Sikh community in Southall, Middlesex, near London, made an attempt to acquire an existing secondary school. They eventually failed in their attempt. Three years later, in 1983, the Muslim community in Bradford, West Yorkshire, showed a similar interest in seeking to purchase five existing schools. Later still, Muslims in Kirklees, West Yorkshire, sought to purchase the premises of an existing school in order to establish a voluntary aided Muslim primary school.

These are just some examples of attempts, albeit failed attempts, by the black communities to set up and run their own schools. There is also an increasingly loud call from the Afro-Caribbean community and from certain sections of the Muslim Asian population for this kind of development.

Both in the London Borough of Brent and in Bradford, small private concerns have, in fact, taken off and currently operate as 'separate' schools. 'Separate' in the sense that they are not funded and staffed by the state.

In addition, the Seventh Day Adventist Church has been successful in establishing the John Loughborough Secondary School in North London which is fee-paying and selective. More recently, a similar school, at the primary level, has begun to operate in Birmingham. These schools are black-led and managed and receive no help from the state.

What is significant is that, so far, all attempts by the black communities to follow the examples of the Jews, the Anglicans, the Catholics and other essentially white religious groups in owning and running their own schools with assistance from and recognition by the state have met with failure. Even more curious was the rejection of the Southall Sikhs' application since it was made at the same time the Church of England applied successfully to purchase another school in the same area. This is even more difficult to understand when it is remembered that the right of the black communities to establish their own voluntary aided schools is well rooted in law. Under the Education Act 1944, these communities, as with other groups of individuals, are entitled to submit proposals for the establishment of voluntary-controlled foundation schools in the interest of their children's educational needs. The final decision on any such application would rest with the Secretary of State for Education and Science.

Mention must be made, too, of those most 'separate' of all schools, the public schools which have somehow managed to produce most of our leaders in industry, politics, government and so on, both historically and currently. Yet blacks still see very little future for progressing to their own 'separate' schools.

It should be made clear that many of the supporters of 'separate' or 'black' schools are not necessarily advocating that enrolment should be restricted to black children. What is more important to them is that such schools should be 'black'-led and guided. This view is expressed by the Headteacher of the John Loughborough School at a recent conference:

.... we can see clearly that what is needed in inner city schools are teachers who have a cultural awareness and an affinity with the pupils they teach. The staffing, leadership and ethos of such schools with significant or predominantly black enrolment should reflect that reality. Non-white schools per se are not a solution to the underachievement problem, but there is a strong educational argument for saying that black children are more effectively taught by black teachers. The experience of the John Loughborough School demonstrates

quite pointedly that when there is cultural harmony in the teaching process and particularly in the classroom, pupils grow in confidence and self worth, thus producing academic results commensurate to their abilities. Expectations and perceptions are more positive, thus providing an important ingredient for pupils to achieve success.

Some may argue that a school like the John Loughborough School gives pupils a false view and isolates them from the real world, but this is not the case. Whether we are at work or school, at the end of the day we retreat to our home environments, which are the bastions of cultural exclusiveness. I have not heard of all white schools, and there are numerous ones in rural Britain, being criticised for isolating white pupils and for giving them a distorted view of society. Neither would it be tolerated for all white schools to have predominantly black teacher and black managers. This would be a totally unacceptable situation, yet this is the reverse experience for many black children in inner city schools. The strengthening of our pluralistic society will be advanced when we can allow black children to develop self respect and acquire those basic skills needed to function effectively in a multiracial society. This is only possible if their teachers share their experience. (Davidson, 1989)

Why do some Black people want separate schools?

We turn now to the question 'Why do some blacks want their own schools?' Why is it necessary for sections of the British society, which are subjected to the same taxes and rates obligations as all others, to be seeking to opt out of existing educational provision? To find the answer to this important question, we need to consider the views and experiences of the black communities themselves.

The British Educational System was slow in responding to the presence of the black communities. Where it responded, it did so in rather negative terms, such as the over-use of suspensions, ESN Schools, remedial education, low teacher expectations, negative stereotypes and a Eurocentric curriculum.

The inevitable result of all this is reflected in the numerous reports, enquiries and research documents which emphasised black under-achievement. For decades, blacks have been pointing out this difficulty with little effect. It is little wonder that 'self-help' in the forms of supplementary schools and a cry for 'separate' schools has been seen as the only saving grace.

Institutional racism makes it almost impossible for the black child to get a fair deal in the British school system. For example, the procedures for selecting and promoting staff do not favour black candidates. The result is that black children are consistently denied the benefits of black positive role models. Role models are important for a child's motivation. Even the ethos of a school (as might be reflected on the walls and in and around classrooms) in largely black catchment areas - usually inner-city areas - appears to be affected by institutional racism. Text-books, pictures and other inanimate reflections of our people seem to recognise only the existence of white people. In my view, 'separate' schools are needed to change this practice.

Religion and Separate Schools

The discriminatory practice of many schools in not recognising the religions of many black children, in particular Islam, has been a cause for concern for many decades. Schools have been very slow to move away from a Christian-dominated religious education, even in schools with 98 per cent or more Muslim children. The Education Reform Act 1988 is expected to worsen this problem. To many black children and their parents, their religion is a way of life.

In view of the Salman Rushdie developments, schools should open their pupils' minds to other religious views. It is important that our young people should

grow up learning to appreciate that religious tenets and practices differ and that no religious ideology has a monopoly on truth or superiority. They should learn that Islam, for example, is as important to Muslims as is Christianity to its followers. In short, learning in tolerance is an essential ingredient of peaceful religious co-existence.

I believe that only in 'separate' schools could this kind of life and openness be achieved, for it is precisely the recognition of this kind of need, and its absence from practice in state schools, which have motivated the call for 'separateness' in this field of life. Issues of this sort have now given birth to a new Political Party - 'The Islamic Party of Britain'.

#### Ethnic Minority Languages

Many of our black communities do not speak English as a first language. While they would never deny the importance of learning to speak English as fluently as possible, they realise that it is of equal importance to be able to communicate effectively in their own languages. Regrettably, our schools, despite the lead given by the European Economic Community Directive (1971), do not recognise this need and, therefore, often make no provision for non-European languages. Worse still, many teachers either ridicule or degrade the languages of their black children to the extent that some black children have become ashamed of their own language. In its report, the Rampton Inquiry acknowledged the negative consequences of such practices in schools:

The attitude of schools and teachers towards a West Indian child's language is of critical importance. If a teacher simply rejects a West Indian child's language as 'bad English', the child may see the rejection as meaning that he is inadequate and that his family and indeed his ethnic group are not respected by the teacher. (Rampton 1981)

To deny, reject or degrade the languages of black children is to demotivate such children, to cheat them of pride and rob them of the best medium of communication about their own cultural backgrounds. I believe that the black communities wish to retrieve some of this through their own schools. In Birmingham, the Springfield Junior School's appointment in 1989 of a home-school liaison teacher who did not speak any of the languages of the vast majority of its parents demonstrated why such parents believe that schools should have regard for language and culture beyond the English Language and English cultural practices.

### Dietary Requirements

Many black parents have brought effective pressures to bear on their local education authorities to reflect their presence in school meals. For example, Bradford in West Yorkshire and Birmingham in the West Midlands are two authorities which have responded positively to such pressures and are now, for example, providing Halal meat and Afro-Caribbean lunches in some of their schools. The large majority of LEAs have ignored such pressures and are not likely to respond. Some black communities see 'separate' schools as the answer.

To many black parents, 'separate' schools are the only guaranteed way of 'keeping their offspring safe from what they see as an immoral and decadent society...' (Lashley, 1985). This is especially so with regard to the education of Muslim girls and it is to this issue that I now turn.

### The Question of Single-Sex Schools

Some black parents want 'separate' schools to mean single-sex schools. This was highlighted in the Swann report:

Where the concerns of the Muslim Community about the 'welfare' of their children in relation to requirements of their faith finds particular expression is in the specific calls which have been made for the establishment of single sex Muslim schools. Indeed the fact that in the evidence which we have received the terms 'separate' and 'single-sex' have tended to be used inter-changeably and seen as synonymous, is a measure of the extent to which concern about the education of Muslim girls lies at the heart of much of the debate on Muslim schools. (Swann, 1985)

While many Muslim parents view existing state single-sex schools as considerably better than co-educational schools in terms of their needs, they do not, by any means, regard them as anywhere near ideal. Much of what is wrong with state schools generally also affects state single-sex schools. Consequently, 'separate' schools are badly needed.

### Racial Harassment

The experience of Burnage High School in Manchester serves to illustrate very well a major worry which black parents have with existing state schools. Their children are frequently the victims of racial taunts and attacks - Burnage takes us to the extreme of murder. Black parents cannot feel safe if they feel and know that teachers are likely to dismiss racist name-calling and racial taunts as child's play or liken them to other nick-names such as 'four eyes' or 'fattie'. This is about their children's lives ultimately. It is, therefore, not difficult to see why there is support for 'separate' schools among certain sections of the black communities.

### Conclusions : The Case for Separate Schools

Of course, many arguments have been advanced against 'separate' schools. One such criticism is that the existence of 'separate black' schools would encourage the authorities to do nothing to improve state schools to accommodate black pupils equitably. This might be so. However, we must remind ourselves that the call for 'separate' schools has arisen mainly because the authorities have tended largely to fail black children.

Another criticism of 'black' schools is that they may encourage 'black elitism' which, in itself, is damaging to the cause of black advancement. There are two responses to this point.

First, it would be up to these 'separate' schools to create and maintain an ethos and philosophy designed to mitigate this possible effect. What we certainly do not need is for social mobility or forgetfulness of 'from whence we came' to create unhelpful divisions within the black communities, any more than they are already in evidence.

Secondly, while not necessarily advocating elitism, we should not forget that this is an existing privilege of the white communities through public schools - the most 'separate' of schools.

Yet others take the view that a black school exposes itself to physical attacks of a racist nature. The pupils and staff would be likely victims of racial harassment and abuse. So what? This is already a commonplace experience for black people.

Similarly, the argument that qualifications gained in 'separate' schools would have no currency in the wider job markets introduces nothing new as far as black people's experiences will show. It is far better to be qualified without jobs than to be without both qualifications and jobs.

The majority of the Swann Committee members advanced the following arguments against 'separate' schools:

We do not believe that creating an artificially separate situation in which groups of children are taught exclusively by teachers from the same ethnic group is desirable from the point of view of the children, the minority community or society as a whole and we are not therefore convinced that 'separate' schools can be supported on these grounds. Within our philosophy of 'Education for All', we have stressed the role which we see all teachers having in understanding and meeting the needs of all pupils.

...In many respects we feel that the establishment of 'separate' schools could well fail to tackle many of the underlying concerns of the communities and might also exacerbate the very feelings of rejection and of not being accepted as full members of our society, which they were seeking to overcome. (Swann, 1985)

These arguments are both racist and weak. To argue that it is not in the interest of black pupils to be taught exclusively by black teachers is definitely racist unless the same can be said where white pupils are taught exclusively by white teachers as is the case in some of our leafy 'white highlands' of Britain. Were this position to be true, we would need to start worrying about what happens in part of America, Africa, India, the West Indies, and so on, where blacks are taught exclusively by blacks as an everyday experience. Would the majority view on Swann be the same where black pupils are taught exclusively by white teachers? In many of our inner city schools whose pupils are almost totally black, there are only white teachers to be found.

The implication that 'separate' schools would mean separateness and would therefore be contrary to the principles of 'Education for All' as advocated by Swann seems to forget the separate existence of Catholic, Jewish, Church of England public schools. Yet the majority members of Swann did not call for the abolition of these 'separate' schools - perhaps that would have been 'politically unacceptable'. Why then should black pupils not enjoy the same privileges as these others? Only racism can explain this state of affairs.

It was the problem of under-achievement among black children which prompted the Swann Inquiry. We are now told that separate schools would not tackle 'the underlying concerns' associated with our main problem, i.e. under-achievement at best, this is a speculation; at worst, it is racist because it implies that since white-run establishments have failed black children, black-run establishments must fail too.

These arguments, therefore, do not stand up to examination and should be disregarded in favour of the rather more sensible views of those six members of the Swann Committee who dissented from the majority view on the issue of 'separate' schools. The six members and their views are presented below:

The following members have dissented from the line taken on this issue: Mr M.A. Khan Cheema, Dr F.S. Hashmi, Mr T. Carter, Ms Y. Collymore, Mr C.G. Duncan and Mr D. Wong. They have accordingly prepared the following statement:

The right of ethnic minority communities to establish voluntary-aided schools is firmly enshrined in British law. We believe that it is unjust at the present time not to recommend that positive assistance should be given to ethnic minority communities who wish to establish voluntary-aided schools in accordance with the 1944 Education Act.

We recognise the arguments against 'separate' schools: that they would not necessarily address the underlying concerns of ethnic minority communities, for example, and that they might increase the very rejection and marginalisation which the communities are seeking to overcome. We note at the same time the overwhelming evidence submitted to the committee, particularly by Muslims, that voluntary-aided schools for ethnic minority communities should be established.

#### Conclusion

We acknowledge that the concerns of ethnic minority communities would, to an extent, be met by LEA provisions of more single-sex schools and, more significantly, by vigorous and immediate measures, in schools, in LEAs, and at the DES, to implement 'Education for All', as outlined in the main body of this report. If and when education for all is a reality, there will be no need for separate schools. This is no reason, however, for not considering the case for such schools at the present time. On the contrary, an emphasis on an ideal future may be an excuse for inaction in the present, and for failure to meet immediate needs.

## POST 16, COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND RACIAL EQUALITY

John Field

### Introduction

Within an overall context of destabilisation and decline, the 1980s saw a number of new and exciting developments within the broad and disparate post-16 area. Some of those developments held particular significance for black people: for example,

- an increased willingness to take the youth and adult offerings away from the institutions and out into the communities ('outreach');
- the development of new access routes in further and higher education, or into employment (e.g. ethnic minority access to the police);
- new community-oriented qualifications such as those offered through Open College Networks;
- a growth in flexible provision, including open learning, modular provision and credit transfer;
- a broadening of the concept and practice of 'adult basic education';
- the emergence of an anti-racist curriculum (e.g. in youth work or trade union education); and
- a series of curricular and organisational initiatives designed to attract and meet the needs of under-represented and 'disadvantaged' groups (e.g. the work promoted under the REPLAN programme).

These developments were limited. But while the black communities remain generally under-represented, both as participants and as a focus of study, the 1980s saw a clear if still modest widening of opportunities.

That broadening is now at risk. But it is an open question whether ERA is, in fact, the primary causal factor, as it may be in the schools sector. Since most of the post-16 area has a very vague and imprecise statutory basis, and since it is by definition non-compulsory and many of the providing bodies are voluntary groups, legislation is rarely central in the post-16 area. Most of ERA's impact on youth work and community and adult education was incidental to the Act's main purposes, which we must remember were to do with the restructuring of schooling.

## The Education Reform Act and Continuing Education

ERA's implications for anti-racist work post-16 can be sketched out fairly briefly.

1) Schools-based strategies for the development of community education face great difficulty. This has three dimensions.

Under LMS, governing bodies' interventions will critically damage the coherence of community provision; heads and governors will be under enormous pressures to raise income from fees etc.; hard-pressed parent-governors cannot be expected to accept the allocation of new resources to a youth wing; and so on.

Governing bodies, which very rarely represent the black communities, have statutory responsibilities which will duplicate or clash with the overseer role of representative community associations.

The structure of the National Curriculum inhibits the use of the community as a curricula focus and therefore undermines what is commonly seen as a crucial basis for future lifelong learning.

2) Further education colleges are probably the most significant providers of post-16 opportunities for members of minority ethnic groups. Colleges are now responsible for their own budgets and are being financed on a performance-related basis. Stretched budgets will not run to expensive strategies designed to bring in groups which are difficult to recruit. College governing bodies are weighted towards representation from private business - which means that colleges are largely governed by the same people who are responsible for racist recruitment policies.

3) Higher education has been largely removed from the LEA sector. In particular, the polytechnics are now corporate bodies, removing them from the kinds of LEA policy-driven, anti-racist practices which some institutions adopted before 1988. More marginally, universities are no longer directly funded by the DES to carry out local liberal adult education; under ERA, any university wanting to carry out liberal adult education has to tender for it; this year, four English universities closed their adult education departments.

Essentially, earlier predictions that ERA would make anti-racist practice more difficult in post-16 education have been borne out (Leicester and Field 1989). Indeed, there is some case for supposing that the situation is actually worse than expected. As well as the predictable direct effects on post-16, ERA has had at least three contingent implications.

First, by omission, it left unresolved the ambiguous statutory status of youth work and adult education. This has left them even more vulnerable to cuts than before as they are now one of the few 'slack' areas left to LEA's discretion.

Second, by intensifying the funding crisis of inner city schools, ERA has jeopardised community education precisely where it is needed most.

Third, ERA has crucially - perhaps fatally? - weakened the role of the LEA without, in the case of youth or adult work, substituting alternative representative structures.

Against this, there are, of course, positive developments. There are colleges which have embraced their freedom from the dead hand of the LEA by laying down for the first time policy guidelines on anti-racist education. A handful of colleges have secured reasonable levels of representation by black business interests (and black trade unionists) on governing bodies. Some inner city heads, governors and teachers have been able to go out and win resources for



their school without fearing that the LEA will claw it back. Some polytechnics and universities are cross-subsidising between programmes, robbing the profitable activities to pay for access programmes. These developments are important ones, but it is doubtful whether, in aggregate, they can compensate for the overall negative impact that I believe ERA has had and is continuing to have.

#### Current Trends in Post-Initial Education

ERA, though, is a relatively minor influence on the post-16 sector, where I would argue that a number of other contextual developments are far more significant. I will take four examples.

The first is the new employer dominance which the government has created across the further and even higher education systems. The two most important manifestations of this development are the Training and Enterprise Councils, and the National Council for Vocational Qualifications and its subordinate Industry-led Bodies. Both are employer-dominated, with some input from trade unions and, in the case of TECs, local government.

Let me take two examples of the implications. First, the ILB on Training and Development does not have one educationalist in its membership (unless you count the trade union representative). Second, despite the presence of Asian owned clothing establishments, restaurants and retail shops, Asian representation is exceedingly low on Training and Enterprise Councils at the local level.

It is fairly clear to me that employer domination over the labour force, with its structural inequalities, is currently being secured also over the vocational education and qualification process. The first victim may, ironically, be employment training, if the TECs have their way - ironically, since the state is using ET to create a command 'market' for the National Vocational Qualification!

The second is demography, a word on everybody's lips. At the younger end, current demographic changes may work in the interests of equality in that when young people are in short supply, black people may be able to gain access to educational qualifications and occupations which would otherwise have been closed. But it also has to be said that during labour shortages, it is the least-privileged young people who end up in low-skill, no-prospect jobs. At the older end of the life cycle, I am worried that the growing interest in 'the third age' has so far been largely blind to issues of 'race'. The third age is as riven by structural and institutional inequalities as are the other two; black older adults have the fewest financial resources at their disposal, but they also have specific learning needs relating to the anomic situation in which 'elders' find themselves in our culture.

Just one more demographic note: the workforce of teachers in adult, further and higher education is not only predominantly white, it is also likely to be the workforce of the year 2000, since the typical FE lecturer is in his or her late 30s or early 40s, with twenty years of working life ahead. There will be relatively limited recruitment in higher education until the late 1990s, while recruitment in further education and youth work is unlikely to increase substantially until the early 2000s!

The third contextual development relates to the financial insecurity of the most creative and innovative post-16 work. Many of the 1980s developments took place on the back of fixed-term funding. Many black adult educators, youth workers and college lecturers earn a living from 'funny money'. Such insecurities are only partly financial. Indeed, they can certainly foster an impression that the work is temporary, possibly of second-level significance compared with the more secure 'mainstream' positions.

Fourth is the place of black people within the widening, European educational system of the coming decade. As mobility, overseas experience and (certain) linguistic abilities come to be criteria for higher level occupations, where will black people be? One indicator is their current position in such exchange schemes as YES, ERASMUS and TEMPUS: although the evidence is solely impressionistic, it seems to me that these offer access for and to a Europe that is largely white and middle-class.

Such contextual and institutional factors are, in my view, of greater significance than ERA in shaping the future of continuing education and the prospects for greater racial equality within it. Ideally, we should also explore the impact of environmentalist movements and the ecological crisis on post-initial education. Remarkably, they have had very little impact to date, and although environmentalist groups have been very successful at educating and developing their own membership, the agenda and support of these groups are regrettably narrow - i.e. white, middle-class (Agyeman 1989). To work out an agenda for action which incorporates much broader perspectives, across such a diverse field, would take the discussion into some fairly contentious and far-reaching areas.

Prospects: towards an agenda

In discussing what might be done, in this case from a local government perspective, I should like to start by asking: Is the LEA a good starting point? It is not the case that it has no powers at all after ERA - that day is still to come - but does it offer 'an appropriate technology' for change? Like other traditionally non-participant groups post-16, one of the major barriers to participation is alienation from the entire educational system. Veronica McGivney speaks of:

Alienation from the British education system arising from school experience; conscious or unconscious racism; stereotyping; lack of ethnic minority individuals in teaching and in other 'authority' positions (McGivney 1990: 105).

If LEAs are to foster greater racial equality post-16, this collective biography cannot simply be ignored.

Some of the tasks which local government (not just education departments) sometimes undertakes are:

- needs analysis and facilitating consultation between providers and community groups;
- supporting broad educational opportunities within the council's workforce, through such means as paid educational leave and tuition benefits schemes;
- developing a suitable resource formula to support forms of post-16 provisions which actively promote racial equality;
- supporting forms of resourcing which empower learners rather than institutions;
- encouraging voluntary organisations to become providers as well as advocates;
- providing local facilities for accurate advice and guidance with appropriate language support;
- requiring providers to monitor the allocation and use of resources by appropriate and agreed PIs;
- partnership-based approaches between community organisations and policy bodies; and of course
- development and training for governors, staff and volunteers.

Local government can and should be commissioning more research into the connection between policies and practice and racial equality. In addition, it

should co-operate with external researchers, including community groups, investigating these issues.

#### Conclusion

Post-16 opportunities are central for people who have not benefited proportionately from the education system in the past. In Britain, those groups include black adults but also others who are similarly subjected to massive structural discrimination and an invisible apartheid in the schooling system, for example, working class people generally, older adults, women with respect to science and technology. One significant finding from a research project at Warwick University referred to earlier in this volume (p.19), was that self-help groups were considerably more effective than formal educational institutions in enabling young black adults to gain vocational and professional qualifications (Eggleston et.al., 1990). Certainly there is evidence enough to justify our asking how far we should extend our horizons beyond the formal educational system and devote equal energy and attention to what is going on, perhaps sometimes informally, in voluntary organisations, citizens' movements and self-help projects.

## Race Equality And The Northamptonshire Experience

Gina Ogden

### Introduction

I was delighted to receive your invitation to address this very important conference on the Educational Reform Act and Race Equality and I am pleased to have been able to accept. My brief is to share with the conference Northamptonshire County Council's approach to the promotion of Equality of Opportunity and good Race Relations. In order to do this, I will briefly provide some information on the patterns of settlement of black and ethnic minority populations in Northamptonshire, I will then focus on the Authority's Race Relations Strategy and finally, through examples, illustrate some of the developments in the area of race equality within our educational establishments and in the department. I have had to be selective in the examples I shall be using because without that, my talk would be inordinately long.

### Ethnic minority distribution

Northamptonshire, like other shire counties, consists of town and country areas with the main concentrations of ethnic minority communities residing in the towns. The 1981 Census revealed that in Northamptonshire there were 15,367 persons whose head of household was born in New Commonwealth or Pakistan. This constituted 2.9 per cent of the total population of the county. However, these figures are now out of date and can no longer be relied upon to be accurate. The size of the ethnic minority population can only at present be estimated. In 1986, the Leisure and Libraries Department of the County Council estimated the distribution of Afro-Caribbean and Asian families located in the districts across the county. This table illustrates our current information on the number and distribution of Asian and Afro-Caribbean families in the Authority.

Table 1: Numbers of Families

	Cor- by	Dav- ent ry	East- North- ants	Kett- er	North- ering	South- ampton	W'- North boro	TOTAL
Afro- Caribbean	12	3		24	900	746	1685	
-----								
Asian- language:								
Bengali	25				30	250	10	315
Gujarati	50		5	10	100	300	10	975
Hindi	15	15		15	50		10	105
Punjabi	50		20		125	180	10	385
Urdu	15	5		80	120		60	280
-----								
Asian Total	155	45	10	350	900	10	590	2060

The majority of the black and ethnic minority communities live in the Northampton, Wellingborough, Kettering and Corby areas and have been residents of Northamptonshire for a number of years. We know, for example, of Afro-Caribbean families who came to live in Northamptonshire in the 1940s. There are now second and third-generation citizens of Northamptonshire who have little or no contact with the country of origin of their parents or grandparents. The 1960s brought an increased ethnic minority population to the Authority, reflecting very much the pattern across the country. These communities brought with them cultures and life styles very different from the indigenous populations. They have contributed and continue to contribute to the richness and variety of cultures in Northamptonshire which is highlighted in the many social and cultural activities which are the norm in our town areas in which both ethnic minority and white communities participate.

Two groups are more recent, the Bangladeshi and Vietnamese communities: they face, at present, the difficulties and adjustments that any newcomers to any country in the world would face. The Authority is aware of this and additional provision has been made to facilitate their establishment and to ease their transition to a very different society from the ones which they are familiar. This has been done through a Community Resource Support Grant, a fund established in the Authority when urban aid grants came to an end in 1986.

As well as the ethnic minority communities in the towns, there are an increasing number of families moving out into villages. This highlights the importance of not only ensuring that the needs of ethnic minorities are addressed but that all members of our community and society have an understanding of the ethnically and culturally diverse society in which we now live and that they respond positively to it. The need for this in relation to education was well addressed by the Swann Committee in 1985 where the committee suggested that 'The fundamental change that is necessary is the recognition that the problem facing the education system is not how to educate children of ethnic minorities but how to educate all children' (Swann, 1985). In response to the Swann Report and to the Race Relations Act, we produced an Aide Memoir on Multicultural Education for schools which I shall refer to later.

Racial harassment and tension in the County are issues which are taken seriously by us. A policy of monitoring racial harassment and bullying is being implemented by various departments of the County Council.

A multi-agency approach has been developed in the Authority to deal with racial attacks and harassment. In essence, this approach is an arrangement whereby a number of agencies come together and pool their various strengths and expertise with a view to maximising the options available to deal with racial attacks and harassment. Five committees have been in existence since 1988 involving Area Education Officers, the Police, Race Equality Councils, Social Services representatives and the Race Relations Advisers. Meetings of the committee are held once a term where all recorded incidents are discussed and strategies to deal with them developed. Four of the five committees are chaired by the police who play a very important role within these committees in both providing advice, guidance and taking legal action when appropriate.

#### Northamptonshire's Race Relations Strategy

The increased number of ethnic minorities within Northamptonshire during the 60s and 70s, together with the requirements of the Race Relations Act of 1976, led our different county council departments to develop a range of strategies to meet the needs of ethnic minorities and, of course, to undertake policy changes to adhere to their legal obligations. You will recall that the 1976 Race Relations Act places a duty on all local education authorities to ensure that their various functions are carried out with due regard to:

- a) the elimination of unlawful racial discrimination, and
- b) the promotion of equality of opportunity and good race relations between persons of different racial groups.

In 1982, the County Council made a decision to have a more coherent and corporate approach to the promotion of Race Relations in the Authority and a Race Relations Adviser was appointed. The council later established a Race Relations Advisory Panel and a Race Relation Consultation Group. These two groups are at the core of the development of our Race Relations policy and practice in the Authority. The corporate approach assured that each department was able systematically to develop an approach which contributed to and could draw upon the experiences of all County Council departments. I would add that another important feature of our approach to Race Relations is that it has all-party support - Race Relations is not the domain of one political party or another, it is the concern and responsibility of all and requires the commitment of all.

The appointment of the Race Relations Adviser led to further efforts to improve service delivery to black and ethnic minority communities and the promotion of Equal Opportunities and Race Relations in the Authority. In 1988 the Authority felt it appropriate to bring the various initiatives and future proposals together in the form of an overall strategy. The strategy identified the major issues that concern black and ethnic minority communities in Northamptonshire.

Seven primary issues were identified:

- A - low take-up of ethnic minority employees in the County Council
- B - low take-up of County Council services
- C - unemployment
- D - education
- E - racial attacks and harassment
- F - urban aid and support to county organisations
- G - employment of staff under Section 11

For each issue, the County Council objectives are stated and future actions to meet the objectives listed. Finally, an action programme of specific goals is set out together with departmental responsibilities. The action programme is reviewed yearly. To illustrate this approach, I will focus on the educational issues identified in the strategy.

Strategies for Education

County Council's objectives are stated as -

The County Council will make every conscious effort to increase the esteem and understanding of all pupils, students, teachers and lecturers for one another in order to dispel racial prejudice and discrimination. Racism has no place in the Authority's educational institutions and the curriculum will be designed at every stage to promote harmony between those of different races, cultures and creeds.

The County Council will provide training for staff to increase knowledge of local cultures; of race relation policies and legislation; and to develop their capacity to recognise and combat individual and institutional racism. The County Council will act to promote equality of opportunity as an employer and in the community through the provision of appropriate education and training.

A selection of actions to meet the objectives are listed below.

1. Developing a curriculum to reflect the educational needs of children from a multi-cultural society.
2. Meeting the specific linguistic needs of children who speak English as a second language (ESL).
3. Training for school headteachers about the extent to which racist attitudes and practices can influence teacher expectations relative to ethnic minority children.
4. Schools headteachers being encouraged to take action where necessary to ensure that the ethos of classrooms and staff rooms are not influenced by racist attitudes and practices.
5. Taking practical measures to eradicate racial bias (individually and institutionally) through anti-racist training; INSET courses; seminars; and consultative meetings between ethnic minority parents, teachers, governors, community organisations and local authority officers.
6. School governors (ethnic minority and white) being informed and trained as to how racism can and does affect ethnic minority children's school performance.
7. Each school carrying out a critical review of its allocation procedures to ensure that a child's ability (irrespective of his/her colour) is the sole criterion upon which he/she will be placed into any teaching group.
8. Monitoring G.C.S.E. and other examinations results to show:
  - (a) The type and number of subjects taken by children from each ethnic group, eg
    - Whites
    - Indians
    - Pakistanis
    - Bangladeshis
    - Vietnamese
    - Other Asians
    - Chinese
    - Afro-Caribbeans
  - (b) The number of passes gained and the grades obtained by each child per subject taken.

(c) The number of ethnic minority children compared with white children who left school in 1989 without qualifications.

9. Using the above statistic to identify under-achievement where it is relevant and devise strategies for combating it.

#### Action Programmes and Equality in Education

I mentioned earlier that from the future actions identified, a yearly Action Programme is formed. The Action Programme for the year 1990-91 identifies the nineteen goals for the County Council as a whole. The five specific goals for the education department are -

1. To monitor GCSE examinations results and use the statistics to identify under-achievement by groups of children and individual schools and devise effective measures for raising achievement.
2. To continue to consult community groups on the development of the National Curriculum and its implications for ethnic minority children.
3. To continue to consult community groups on the implications and developments of the religious education and school assembly aspects of the Education Reform Act.
4. To continue to support the development of links between mother tongue teaching and the school curriculum and develop home-school liaison through teaching and other staff and supplementary schools.
5. To provide school governors with equal opportunities training and identify and train potential school governors from the ethnic communities and encourage their appointment.

The areas of focus in the Race Relations Strategy are the results of a complex consultative process between members, officers, various community representatives and members of the Race Relations Consultation Group. We feel that genuine consultation with ethnic minority communities must be at the heart of any policies and strategies relating to Race Relations. This enables black and ethnic minority communities to have a say in the development of policies and strategies affecting matters of importance to their future development and prosperity. It also ensures that the Authority takes on and responds to the real concerns of the ethnic minority communities as identified by the communities themselves. In addition, the Action Programme clarifies what is being done about Race Equality issues and enables members, officers and people within the communities to gauge achievements, to see the extent to which good practices are being developed and identify future actions in order to meet the objectives stated.

To monitor and review progress within the County Council as a whole and to ensure that effective precise departmental strategies are developed, a number of groups and committees have been established. Here I should point out that it is our policy that the Deputy Chief Officers in each of the County Council departments have overall responsibility for Race Relations and Race Equality in their departments, therefore giving the issues status and a high profile. The two groups which have been established by the County Council are the Race Relation Joint Consultative Group and Race Relations Advisory Panel. The membership of the Consultative group consists of -

African Groups - 1 representative  
(Ghana Union)

Asian Groups (7) - 1 representative -  
Kettering  
(Sikh Community)

- 4 representatives -



- Northampton
  - (Hindu Community)
  - Pakistan Community)
  - Bangladeshi Community
  - Hindu Community)
- 2 representatives -
  - Wellingborough-
  - (Hindu Community
  - Moslem Community)
- Afro-Caribbean Community (4) - 2 representatives -
  - Northampton -
  - 2 representatives -
  - Wellingborough
- Chinese Community - 1 representative -
  - County
  - (Chinese Society)
- European Society - 1 representative -
  - County
- Vietnamese Community - 1 representative -
  - County
- Community Relations Council - 2 Community Relations
  - Officers
- Co-options - 2 co-opted members
  - from any of above groups
- Council Members (10) - 7 County Council Members
  - 2 members of Northampton Borough Council
  - 1 member of Wellingborough Borough Council

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Achieving Race Equality within Education : Some examples relating to the 1988 Act

I would now like to focus on two areas of the development within the Education Department in relation to the strategy.

#### 1. Ethnic Minority Governors

During our consultations with ethnic minority communities, an issue that has been identified for two years now is governor training and the need for increased numbers of ethnic minority governors in schools. At present, Northamptonshire has very few ethnic minority governors and we therefore aim to rectify this situation.

The powers and responsibilities of school governors within the Educational Reform Act includes among others the organisation and conduct of the school, the curriculum and admission of pupils.

There is a great potential here for school governors to ensure that principles of race equality are applied to all aspects of school life. Our strategy involves a number of different activities, some of which are in operation and others planned for the future. These include:

1) A specific training module on Equal Opportunities, including Race and Gender, offered to all governing bodies. The training module includes both the curriculum and legislative aspects in relation to the Race Relations Act and the Sex Discrimination Act.

2) Meetings with existing ethnic minority Governors have been held and further meetings are planned to identify specific areas in which training might be required and to support the establishment of an Ethnic Minority Governor Support Group.

3) We have been actively involved in the identification of individuals from ethnic minority communities interested in becoming school governors and organising pre-governor training based on training needs identified by them. The strategy developed to meet these goals illustrates that our commitment to equal opportunities is not only in terms of removing barriers which restrict ethnic minority pupils from participating in society but also, where there is a need, to equip ethnic minority groups with the knowledge, skills and understanding required to participate fully and on equal terms in all aspects of school life.

## 2. Ethnic Monitoring

Another issue which has been identified within the Action Programme is concerned with the monitoring of GCSE examination performance of ethnic minority pupils. Action 12 within the 1990/91 Action Programme aims to:

Monitor GCSE examination results and use the statistics to identify under-achievement by groups of children and individual schools and devise effective measures for raising achievement.

The importance of monitoring how pupils are performing cannot be underestimated. However, the purpose of such monitoring should be clearly related to the identification of factors which may facilitate or impede the achievement of pupils. I feel that without this as a clear rationale, monitoring is a futile and wasteful activity. The new DES requirements to collect ethnically-based statistics will be important in the future in monitoring the performance of ethnic minority pupils pre-16, particularly at the National Curriculum Key Stages, and will help schools to identify areas in which additional support may be required. The monitoring of GCSE examination results in the Authority has shown us that, while many ethnic minority pupils are performing at a higher level than or on a par with their white peers, two groups (Afro-Caribbeans and Bangladeshis) continue to perform poorly in relation to their peers. There is a clear need here for further exploration and to develop clear strategies to redress this situation. As well as guidance for schools on ways of addressing issues of under-achievement of these groups concerned, a project has been set up in the authority which aims to -

- a) Obtain more comprehensive information on the numbers of Afro-Caribbean and Bangladeshi groups in schools
- b) Examine/isolate factors which may contribute to under-achievement
- c) Obtain from pupils their perceptions of their performance
- d) Identify particular areas of the curriculum where under-achievement occurs in order to ensure that the Multicultural Education service is targeted towards those areas
- e) Examine in conjunction with the careers service the destination patterns of the two groups.

I look forward with interest to the findings and outcomes of the project.

While the Race Relations Strategy acts as a catalyst for developments in specific areas based on identified needs, a number of other developments and initiatives, which stem from an adherence to sound educational principles and philosophy, can be found in our schools and other educational establishments. One of these is our approach to multicultural education.

## Multicultural Education and Racial Equality

To support the work of schools and colleges, we have within the Education Department an Inspector with the responsibility for promoting Multicultural Education and a team of six advisory teachers for Multicultural Education.

These six have specific curriculum areas as well as their multicultural perspective - very important for the team is their credibility within schools and the Inspectorate is essential. Our task this past year has been to ensure that the work of this team is integrated into our National Curriculum implementation work. There is a support service which meets the specific linguistic needs of ethnic minority pupils consisting of forty-five teachers and ancillary staff. The Aide Memoir for schools on Multicultural Education was published in 1986 to enable schools to review their practices in relation to Multicultural education and to provide for the LEA a framework which could be used to review externally the progress in our institutions. Three areas of policy were identified within the Aide Memoir:

1. To develop the curriculum to reflect the needs of a pluralist society.
2. To ensure that education establishments' organisation and ethos are consistent with the idea of equality of opportunity for children of all races.
3. To meet specific needs of children who speak English as a second language.

There are also a number of other officers in the education department with the responsibility for ensuring that the department responds to ethnic minority needs. Within the adult education service, a team of teachers is appointed to develop and promote access opportunities for ethnic minority communities and provide English as a second language to ethnic minority adults.

I would like to share with you some examples of practice in our educational institutions. There is within our schools a commitment to the involvement of parents in the education of their children. The Education Reform Act gives parents further and increased powers to require from schools information on the curriculum and the educational performance of their children. Parents may also choose the schools to which they send their children and LMS provides parents, through their governing body, an opportunity to define curricular and expenditure priorities. There is a need for ethnic minority parents to participate fully in all aspects of school life.

Conference delegates will be aware of some of the difficulties schools can have in establishing and maintaining contacts with parents from ethnic minority communities. This is often due to a lack of confidence that ethnic minority parents and, in fact, parents in general have in, to quote a colleague, 'crossing the green moat around the school building'. The record of a particular school in Northampton which has an ethnic minority pupils population of 60 per cent was poor and until a year or so ago, very few ethnic minority parents involved themselves in the life of school. Teachers in the school recognised this as a major issue to be addressed by the staff and the governors. Over the past years, genuine efforts have been made to increase ethnic minority parental involvement. The school now has five ethnic minority governors (two Bengali, two Afro-Caribbean, one Chinese) and three classroom assistants. Parents' meetings are held in the morning, afternoon and evening, thereby ensuring that the timing is convenient to a large number of parents.

The Adult Education Service organises a range of provisions for ethnic minority communities to facilitate access to educational and vocational opportunities. These include classes which aim to develop literacy, numeracy, communication and language skills. There is an English Speakers of Other Languages section which is concerned with enabling members of the community to develop the necessary language skill to function effectively with society. Special arrangements have

been made for women and where their participation in centrally held classes is poor, tuition is provided within their homes.

The teaching of mother tongue languages has also gained support from the County Council. A recent survey carried out by us revealed that there are some forty-two languages being spoken, ranging from well-known ones such as Urdu to lesser-known ones such as Twi. Since 1984, we have supported the teaching of some of these languages and I am pleased to say that the number of pupils taking GCSE examinations in their mother tongue is gradually increasing. This year, for example, twenty-six pupils entered for and passed their GCSEs with grades A-C.

The final example I would like to share with you is that of a rural school with no ethnic minority pupils. In such schools, the need for preparing pupils to recognise the nature of British society, to understand and respond positively to the diversity within our society, is essential.

The teachers, governors and parents of this school recognised that the education being offered may be limited and may not be providing opportunities for their children to experience, understand and have contact with people from a cultural and ethnic background different from their own. This school has demonstrated its commitment to multicultural education by carrying out a review of its curriculum and ensuring that there is active promotion of multicultural education in all areas of the school's curriculum. Furthermore, over the past two years, it has taken a number of additional initiatives. These include:

- Visits to a range of places of worship
- Artists residencies which have included artists from India
- Resources which reflect a multicultural society - for example, the home corner
- Exchange and visits to town schools with a multi-ethnic population.

Some of these activities may be perceived to be tokenistic, but I feel it is inevitable that in schools and communities which are all white, experiences have to be provided if we are to instil in our youngsters positive attitudes towards communities that they have no day-to-day contact with.

I hope I have remained within my brief and have given you a picture of Northamptonshire's approach to race relations and, in particular, some of the work of the education department in this area. We are, perhaps, further ahead than many other authorities in having established an overall corporate approach involving all County Council departments and in having strategies which are regularly reviewed and monitored in consultation with ethnic minority communities. But, of course, there is always room for further effort and refinement. The Education Reform Act brings with it new challenges which require us to sharpen our focus and review our approach.

#### Conclusion

I should like to conclude by identifying three aspects in relation to ERA which need to be considered by ourselves in Northamptonshire and, indeed, other Local Education Authorities throughout the country.

First, the future role of Local Education Authorities in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the National Curriculum will be an important one. There are opportunities and statutory requirements within the National Curriculum which promote good Race Relations and Equality of Opportunity. The identification of these is essential and Local Education Authorities will need to examine how these aspects are being addressed within the curriculum offered to all pupils. Issues of Race Equality and Equality of Opportunity must be part and parcel of the broad balanced educational experience of all pupils and not an addendum or marginalised as a separate issue.

Secondly, under LMS, management of resources at institutional and Local Authority level needs to ensure that the promotion of race equality continues to be supported. This aspect is particularly pertinent at present when decisions on the future use of Section 11 funding are being finalised. It is likely that many aspects of work in the area of multicultural education will not in the future be resourced through Section 11 Grants. Governor training focusing on equal opportunities is an important preparation in ensuring that governors who are responsible for making budgetary decisions take into account race equality.

Thirdly, we also need to be clear about what constitutes fundamental social and moral values in a society which now has many cultures but which may from time to time conflict with each other. Our young people should be enabled to understand and value their own culture and heritage as well as others. Differences are part of a democratic society and where the expression of these differences does not impinge on the lifestyles and practices of others and adheres to democratic principles, they make an important contribution to British society.

I will end by quoting to the conference the opening words of the Education Reform Act of 1988, with which you will all be familiar and which I fully support. It calls for a curriculum that -

- a) is balanced and broadly balanced,
- b) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society,
- c) prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of modern life.

These requirements within the context of a multi-ethnic and multicultural Britain and an increasingly interdependent world place race relations, race equality and multicultural education at the centre of educational provision.

## ERA and The Future of Local Education Authorities

An Edited Transcript of a Speech by Gus JOHN

### Introduction

I have been asked to talk about the ERA and the future of local education authorities. As someone who has been involved in education for some considerable time in this country, especially in the context of black struggle, I find it difficult to approach this task without first stating what I consider to be the fundamental role of education in this society.

### The background

As an educationalist and a socialist, I am guided by certain basic beliefs that, for example, education is a fundamental human right. It is not a privilege to be granted on the basis of social class, racial or ethnic origin, wealth, religion, age, sex or physical ability. It is for use and as such, it should be possible for individuals to key in and out of education at all ages of their lives. Education is not just for skilling people for the work-place, it is for developing in people the social skills and competences to take control of their own lives and to function as responsible social citizens demanding and safeguarding their own rights and having due regard to and respect for the rights of others. Whoever effectively denies access to education for individuals and groups in society denies them fundamental human rights and contributes to their oppression. Education and schooling should be about, among other things, assisting disadvantaged groups in society, and people in general, in understanding the roots and the persistence of racial and social injustice, and providing them with the individual and the collective tools with which to combat both.

The thirty-five years between the 1944 Education Act and the start of this Conservative Government witnessed many consultations and policy meetings in communities, within the teaching profession and in board-rooms around specific themes. These included debates about priority areas, comprehensive education, the 11-Plus, access to quality schooling and to higher education by working-class students, women and black people. The agenda also included the question of multicultural education, access to education across all stages for people with special educational needs and, of course, the relationship between schooling and the economy. All these themes have been major preoccupations of the last thirty-five years. In one way or another then, they have all been about the purpose and function of education and schooling and about fundamental rights and entitlements.

Thatcherism in the last decade has been about challenging the very principles on which individuals' rights have been protected and extended up to 1979. The enactment of the 1988 education legislation is consistent with the authoritarianism of social policy and centralist rule in an era of Thatcherist free-market enterprise-ideology. And as such, those major upheavals in education policy, content, curriculum formulation and delivery and, above all, education administration by local authorities must be subject to the same rigorous analysis we bring to the Poll Tax, the Housing Act, Social Security Legislation, NHS reorganisation and the rest.

There has always been a link, in my view, between education, schooling and the national economy, a link which has been made much more explicit by the present Government. A preoccupation with the quality of the British workforce as compared with that of certain European Community countries and industrial giants like Japan and the United States leads inevitably to questions, if not accusing fingers, directed at the British schooling and education system. Labour governments before Thatcher raised but, significantly, failed to deal with this issue. In many respects, the so-called great Education debate initiated by James Callaghan and Shirley Williams in the middle-1970s was

already moving dangerously in the direction that Sir Keith Joseph and Kenneth Baker were later to go.

Britain under Thatcherism and at the hands of successive Labour governments before Thatcher have been pre-occupied with the various manifestations of the nation's economic crisis. And both Labour and Conservative governments have identified as a root of the problem some key issues, and I think they can be characterised as follows.

Firstly, the power of the unions, and let us not forget that the unions had some fun and games with Harold Wilson, Barbara Castle and James Callaghan. They worked out contracts, compacts and alternative recipes in place of strife. The unions sought to use their power to constrain the power of the executive and control of the state under capitalism and in the hands of Labour. The Conservatives would have none of it and certainly not after the demise of the Heath government.

The second key issue relates to the Welfare State and the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement. In other words, how to regulate public spending and put boundaries around the way in which local governments choose to provide services. Furthermore, what are the effects of this on the availability of investment funds for industry, for national priorities and, particularly, for defence and for law and order?

The third issue relates to education and, in particular, the 'progressive' tendency in education which appeared to be more concerned with issues of equality and social justice than with the interest of labour. As far as the Conservatives are concerned, therefore, the comprehensive movement in education killed off the competitive spirit and the strong tradition of elitism in British education, thus reducing the products of education to the level of mediocrity which was a disservice to the national economic interest. This is, in my view, how the Conservatives basically analyse what they call 'progressive' movements in education. Some industrialists, therefore, are said to have concluded that the school has become an adventure playground for educationists, in which a multiple compassion for disadvantaged pupils may have produced a softness which is markedly in variance with the competitive requirements of industry.

The Thatcher resolution and education

The Thatcher revolution, consistent with a threat to remove all traces of socialism with which the Labour Party tinkered, has been about nurturing a new consciousness, a persuasive political culture that is based upon elitism, individual initiative, enterprise and erosion of community and communalism and the survival of the strongest and wealthiest. It is a political culture that is, in essence, anti-working-class. The attack on workers' rights in relation to labour and the work-place has been extended to and is commensurate with the attack on the rights and civil entitlements of ordinary working people in the communities, including the right to education. Here, education is to become a product which must be treated like any other privatised industry. Within this framework, local education authorities are no longer here to provide a service. They will, instead, be expected to regulate the availability of a commodity, i.e. education.

The Youth Training Scheme was supposed to provide young people with training for a regenerated economy. Yet a whole range of independent studies concluded that YTS was not delivering either the quantity or quality of training that that generation required. Nigel Lawson, no less, declared that YTS was designed to create a workforce that would have the right skills and would be (in his words) adaptable, reliable, motivated and prepared to work with wages that employers can afford to pay. It met with massive resistance and had to be imposed as a condition of drawing dole. Young people were aware that it effectively depressed them, their wage levels and their job expectations.

Equality of opportunity in education, for which some local authorities attempted to lay the building blocks, however falteringly, has been gradually outlawed by the recent education legislation. Furthermore, the revamping of Section 11 makes it even clearer as to what it is that the Government wants to endorse and facilitate, and what it does not. We are all very familiar now with the iniquitous consequences of opting-out, open enrolment, a Eurocentric curriculum and the rest.

I just want to give one illustration of the extent to which that legislation is designed to reintroduce the most obscene plans of elitism over which Local Education Authorities have no control. According to the Director of Education in the West Midlands, some months ago, the total annual capital budget available to his authority for maintenance on further education establishments was in the region of something like £39,000. Yet, in a neighbouring authority (Solihull), the Government is allocating £565,000 to equip a science laboratory in a City technology college. This CTC will draw the brightest and most able students from the neighbouring schools whose parents already bemoan the fact that the comprehensives lack up-to-date equipment for information technology and science work.

Similarly, the issue of student bursaries is going to become even more contentious. Most mature students on access and return-to-study courses receive discretionary awards. Ours, in Hackney, ran out something like two months ago. Most applicants are women with dependent children and often with unemployed dependent partners. Leaving aside the fundamental rights of such students to education, vocational or non-vocational, the fact is that they are becoming and will continue to be an essential part of a skilled workforce in this country.

I have two great misgivings; one is that there will be a tendency for colleges and higher education institutions to define much more narrowly what people can and cannot study. The second fear I have is rather than concentrating on training and valuing a local workforce at home, the Government will soon start considering recruiting a more skilled workforce from the EEC members states. We know that there will not be too many blacks, skilled or otherwise, amongst them. And for that same reason, we also know that we are likely to have a growing pool of dispossessed unemployed blacks in the urban centres of Europe with much more refined systems of internal control to keep them in their place.

It seems to me, then, that the provisions of the Act around notions of parental choice, open enrolments, local management etc, are considerably more problematic than they appear to be, and certainly, ordinary parents have not been given the space or the assistance to fully comprehend their adverse implications. The debates that we have had within the black community regarding ERA have been mainly in relation to whether or not it provides room for more denominational schools, Adventists, Church of God, Moslem and so on.

The aims of ERA, I suggest, have much more to do with regulating the power of local authorities to plan and deliver education service, based on notions of education entitlements and equality of access to learning opportunities, than with making the education and schooling progress more democratic. I believe, for example, as a manager, that you increase choice by improving quality and not by the notion that parents can leave my LEA or others and send their children in droves in a net outflow of students from Hackney to some other place which shows up better in a league table. This concept of parental choice, it seems to me, is fundamentally an attack on working people in boroughs like the one in which I try to manage education. Even members of Mrs Thatcher's own Government are conceding that, for example, there are not enough teachers generally and not enough with the requisite specialisms to deliver the national curriculum at upper primary and secondary levels.



Despite its preoccupation with a link between education and Britain's capacity to boast a skilled and employable workforce, the Government has done more in the last decade to devalue the status of teaching as a career and to demoralise teachers than anyone would have thought possible. It has set itself on a collision course with the teaching profession, while at the same time bombarding it with seemingly unending innovations. It has failed to invest in the physical environment in which education and schooling takes place whilst the teachers and the local education authorities which set the policy framework for the practice of education get maligned for rapidly declining standards. With an estimated 300,000 qualified teachers not working in classrooms and with 1500 teachers leaving inner London schools last term, the Government is now actively encouraging the recruitment of Danish, Dutch, German and a host of European teachers to deliver the British national curriculum.

The right of access to education and equal opportunities which are generally based on principles of quality and equality are dependent upon a system whose responsibility it is to provide: an adequate supply of quality teachers; a partnership between providers of and participants in education; and an environment that is conducive to learning and to sharing. Compare the Thatcherist commitment to law and order and to the police, judges etc., in terms of pay, status and an enhanced legal framework and increased powers in the 1980s with the Government's record on education, especially in relation to teaching supply, teachers' pay and conditions of service. The record is abysmal to me, there is just no comparison.

In the face of such fundamental attacks by the state on people's rightful entitlements, what responsibilities do individuals and collectivities of people have towards resisting such attacks? It seems to me that black people are aware of their rights. There is evidence of an independently organised parents' movement which, whilst not nationally cohesive, has made a tremendous difference to how individuals, schools and particular individual local authorities interpret what their responsibilities are. The black section of the population, which is constantly and systematically being disadvantaged in education in the wake of the Act, seems to me to be mobilising. A movement such as this and an independent students' movement which is nationally organised are essential for the protection of state education and for the struggle for quality and equality in education. Only thus, it seems to me, would it be demonstrated that education is too crucial an issue to be left to the ideological whim and caprice of the state in the hands of any government. I say any government because I fear that having waited so long in the wilderness, if the Labour government gets back into power it will be so eager to stay in power, that it will not wish to forsake it by implementing drastic changes to improve the present situation. The black working-class movement in education and schooling has pointed the way in the last two decades, although it has failed to prevent its agenda being deflected by the pragmatic concerns of governments that show themselves to be more concerned about political expediency than about racial and social justice.

The assumption that the power of the executive can only be regulated through the checks and balances of the ballot box once every five years, and that parliamentary elections are simply punctuation marks between periods of elective dictatorship, is one that oppressed groups within this society must challenge, through their own self-organisations and in pursuit of their own interests in their essential movement as a class.

#### Conclusion

I genuinely believe that the very future of this society depends on people's right to a good education and an assurance that education is not seen as a product in the manner that I have described before, but as a service that guarantees people's fundamental rights and is essential to the very integrity and social position of the society. Those local authorities which decide that they need to put reason on the backburners and which do not confront the

problems encountered by black parents, black governors, black teachers and black children, are making a very sad mistake in terms of their very ability to manage and handle the communities over which they preside.

It seems to be that we need to transform the struggle to preserve and improve state education into a movement which sets out to protect the very existence of local education authorities.

## Schools and Multi-cultural Education: Labour's approach

A Statement by Derek Fatchett (MP)

The Labour party firmly believes that all children in our schools should develop an understanding of, and sensitivity towards, the plurality of cultures and traditions in our multi-racial and multi-cultural society. A future Labour government will expect every LEA to draw up a statement on its aims in relation to multi-cultural education and to produce a programme outlining the steps it proposes to take to remove barriers to equality of opportunity. Our approach favours central government encouragement but local government initiative. This must represent the appropriate balance as it is local government and individual schools which best know the needs of their own communities. This is not to underplay the role of central government: by imposing a duty upon all LEAs to develop a policy statement, government will play a crucial part in influencing and changing expectations.

A future Labour government will ensure that the National Curriculum is free of cultural bias and will give parity of esteem to European and Indic languages. The mother tongue can be taught as a separate subject and our approach to a national curriculum would encourage this. In our policy review, we stated that schools must provide greater opportunities to study community languages such as Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujerati and Bengali. Furthermore, LEAs need to consider the proposition that, for certain children, initial teaching might take place in their mother tongue to build up confidence and an improved education performance.

Labour will seek to encourage greater recruitment into the teaching profession from black and Asian communities. More access courses will be funded for this purpose. Institutions will be expected to provide admission profiles analysing applications and acceptances by age, sex and ethnic origin in order to identify inequalities and monitor progress.

Fears have been expressed that ERA has undermined attempts by schools to be responsive and sensitive to the religious convictions and practices of non-Christian pupils and their parents. We will monitor closely the effects of the Act.

Turning to the area of resources, we intend to consult widely upon the principle and the possible practice of taking Section 11 educational projects into DES and LEA budgets so as not to marginalise multi-cultural education.

Finally, with regard to the question of voluntary aided/religious schools, we believe that the right of a school to apply for voluntary status must be available to non-Christian denominations, such as Muslims and Orthodox Jews, as well as Anglicans and Roman Catholics. The exercise of the right must depend upon any applicant school meeting clear criteria about their educational standards and their ability to meet the requirements of the curriculum.

In conclusion, a successful education system must be based upon the principle of equality and quality. A future Labour government will strive to remove the inequalities which exist. There is no valid reason why white, black and Asian children should not achieve higher standards.

## WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

### 1. RACISM IN EDUCATION: THE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF BLACK TEACHERS

Krishna Shukla and Jorge Salgado Rocha

The workshop was attended by eleven participants whose backgrounds ranged from LEA Inspectors/Advisors to teachers with responsibilities for equal opportunities including Section 11. Also present was a reporter from the Voice newspaper.

There was a brief introduction by the chair, K Shukla, who highlighted what he considered to be the main issues. The debate was then thrown open and the following broad agenda was agreed for discussion:

- 1) The present location of black teachers with regard to senior positions, controlling financial and other resources and decision-making responsibilities;
- 2) A consideration of existing good practices and what constitutes 'good' recruitment, promotion and personnel practices in educational institutions;
- 3) That a set of recommendations be reached at the end of the workshop which should be presented to the plenary session.

The general consensus was that the location of black staff was characterised by marginalisation in terms of funding, responsibility, numbers and grading. Most black postholders found themselves funded under Section 11 and were almost entirely excluded from mainstream provision. Furthermore, even under Section 11, black candidates were often disadvantaged in terms of recruitment and were further marginalised within an already narrow provision. In first appointments as well as in promotions, the criteria applied were predominantly monocultural and ethnocentric, despite an expression of support for a multi-cultural society. Concern was expressed especially in the areas of ethnic monitoring by LEAs and governing bodies and it was felt that the area of recruitment, training and promotion lacked a coherent approach to race equality and equal opportunities.

With regard to existing good practices, the workshop participants agreed that there were indeed some to be found, given the limitations in which they have to operate. For example, one such practice followed by some LEAs is the use of Section 5 (2)d of the Race Relations Act of 1976 which allows employers exemption from the charge of discrimination if they wish to restrict selection to a particular racial or ethnic group.

There followed a wide-ranging discussion on the ways in which the situation should be rectified and several recommendations for good practice were made. The following is a summary of these recommendations.

- 1) With regard to recruitment and promotion, it was felt that interviewing panels should include at least one senior black teacher who would be able to ensure that positive action is taken in the selection and appointment process.
- 2) The workshop participants also recommended that ethnic monitoring of the workforce should be fully implemented and taken seriously. Any under-representation revealed by this exercise should be dealt with quickly. A comprehensive equal opportunity policy should be adopted by all LEAs in full consultation with ethnic minority communities.
- 3) It was felt that equality targeting should play a central role in redressing inequalities within the workforce. Specific groups should be targeted and equal opportunity practices and positive action should play a role in redressing the imbalances in the teaching profession.

4) The participants felt that more efforts should be made via positive action to attract black students into teacher training courses in view of the fact that there is a dearth of teachers from minority backgrounds.

5) Since discriminatory practices against overseas teachers continue to be employed in so far as their qualifications and managerial experience are not fully recognised, the workshop recommends that these attitudes and practices be replaced by more objective and fair criteria based on principles of equality of treatment.

6) The provision of in-service training should be a priority to prepare black staff for management positions. Appointments should be made on merit rather than on any pre-conceived notions regarding the suitability of black staff for so-called multi-racial institutions only.

In conclusion, the group felt that a real equal opportunities policy should be coupled with good practices in the personnel field, especially with regard to recruitment, promotion, retention and ethnic monitoring to ensure that discrimination against black teachers is eradicated. The LEAs need to implement a pro-active approach as recommended in Section 71 of the Race Relations Act of 1976. It was felt that such an approach would ensure that the educational and training institutions will produce young people who will be ready to take part in a truly multi-cultural society, with a better understanding and appreciation of the meaning of such a society.

## 2. BLACK PARENTS AS GOVERNORS

David Smith

This workshop was chaired by Ms Walker and attended by fifteen people.

The general consensus at this workshop was that there were very few black parent governors and that there was an urgent need to rectify this situation, especially in view of the increased powers of governing bodies. It was recognised that while there was a need to target ethnic minorities on their 'home' ground and to develop their awareness of the importance of being involved, black parents faced tremendous obstacles within the educational system. These include:

- a) Parents feel intimidated by the 'experts' and might not feel confident enough to express their opinions;
- b) Some parents might not feel confident about their standard of spoken English ;
- c) The timing of governors' meetings are often inconvenient to working parents and those with very young children;
- d) Since there are very few black teachers and headteachers, there is a lack of role models for black parents who might feel alienated in a totally white environment;
- e) Some black parents have a very narrow view of what constitutes education and their attitudes might alienate them from becoming involved.

Further discussions took place within the group and several recommendations were made for us to 'move forward'. Four are listed below.

- 1) The need to work harder at establishing formal and informal networks. Here, the LEAs should assist the establishment of independent governors support groups and black governors should be encouraged to meet across LEA boundaries. In time, black governors can themselves establish strategies for recruiting more governors.
- 2) The workshop group considered it crucial for access programmes to be set up which would recruit and train black governors prior to Autumn 1992 when many governors places will be coming up for renewal.
- 3) Information should be publicised in minority languages and specific targeting of black parents could be made through existing multi-cultural staff in schools.
- 4) All governors should be given training in equal opportunities procedures and white governors, in particular, should be trained to be culturally sensitive to ethnic minorities.

Finally, while it is important for black parents to be pro-active, black governors must not be expected to carry the full burden of representing a black perspective in the struggle for racial equality. In contrast, ALL governors must take responsibility for implementing equal opportunity policies and eradicating racial inequality to the best of their ability.

### 3. RACIAL ATTACKS AND HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS

Jacques Williams

The workshop was chaired by Barry Troyna who introduced the session by posing the question 'What form does the problem assume in educational establishments?'

In general, racial harassment has tended to be equated with overt attacks on black people and their property. This definition does not, however, take into account more subtle expressions of harassment. After much discussion, it was agreed that there are several categories of such behaviour:

- 1) Physical attacks and threats of a racist nature: these include bullying and fighting which has been highlighted by recent research on bullying in schools (CRE 1988; Spencer, 1987);
- 2) Verbal abuse, including name-calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry;
- 3) Threats of violence including racist graffiti, the wearing of racist badges and insignia;
- 4) Introduction of racist materials such as leaflets, comics or magazines into schools;
- 5) Disrespect towards other cultures;
- 6) Comments of a racist nature during lessons;
- 7) Freezing-out, including isolation, starving of information, negative body language, non-recognition of position held etc.

Discussion then centred on different forms of response to racial harassment and attack within educational establishments. Some institutions have a 'There is no problem' approach and thus ignore racial harassment. Others claim that they do not have a problem at the moment, but when such a problem arises in the future, they will take action. However, they do not specify what this action entails. Other establishments recognise the existence of racial harassment and declare that it is a problem for the whole school, i.e. discipline the perpetrator and support the victim. Others argue that a strategy of multi-cultural education based on a race awareness perspective would eventually lead to a more sympathetic attitude and response from the white majority. At this point, it was suggested that it would be interesting to see how an anti-racist policy compared with this last policy approach.

The workshop then turned its attention to practical experiences of the delegates. Various experiences were shared, e.g. the group heard of multi-agency approaches in Southampton and Northamptonshire. For instance, staff in one of the authorities including the Youth Service had helped to develop the strategy which included guidelines for teachers who were required to accept responsibility for responding to incidents committed by pupils in and around schools.

The Burnage report was discussed briefly. One view was that it had significantly damaged the credibility of an anti-racist policy against racial attacks and harassment. A counter view was that the report had merely emphasised the crucial need for anti-racist strategies to include the whole school and the community in developing and carrying out a coherent policy.

Finally, it was emphasised that since the very nature of racial attacks and harassment is largely a social problem, schools by themselves would only have marginal success in finding solutions. What is required, therefore, is a community approach to this problem. However, participants were of the view that since power has now largely shifted from LEAs to school governing bodies, the onus now falls on schools to take a lead in involving the community.

## List of Participants

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