

Black History

Black perspective on the presence of Black people in Britain



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BLACK STRUGGLE AND THE CAPITALIST CRISIS

Black people had nothing to do with creating the current deepening of the capitalist economic crisis. But the white-power government, newspapers, T.V., intense economic hardship is nothing new in the Black community. The white employers who make up the ruling, capitalist class have so systematically discriminated against Black oppressed white people until they have recognized that reality, steadily rejected white privilege and accepted the principle of an independent Black liberation Movement. But the Black community cannot just sit around far from voting, are competing ever more desperately with each other for profits which are ever harder to grasp. On the other hand the struggles of the super-exploited African and Asian majority of the world are liberation

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BLACKS in BRITAIN 1500-1980s



This short history will attempt to deal with the presence of Black People in Britain since Britain's initial contact with the Slave Trade in the 16th Century. It is not being suggested that this is the earliest Black presence in Britain because it has been suggested by some historians that there was originally a Black Tribe in Britain the (Black Celts) and that they had powerful Kings who ruled area's of Scotland traces of them remaining in Scotland as the 10 th Century AD. There is conclusive evidence that Black soldiers served with the Roman Army in Britain 100 BC to 300 AD, and some evidence that the last Roman Governor Septiminus Severus 190-211 AD was in fact a Black African. This history will deal with the modern period when Black People would enter Britain under new conditions those of Slavery.

The Black peoples contrary to popular opinion had a very long, varied and influential history in Britain. It is impossible to state with any certainty the beginning of our presence but the first recorded arrival of a group of Black's was in 1553, brought to England by John Lok from the Guinea Coast as slaves. Another early pioneer in the transport of Slaves was John Hawkins who quickly grasped the financial possibilities of the Slavery traffic, and laid the foundation of English Slaving. Hawkins left England in 1662 acquired Slaves on the Guinea Coast which he traded with the Spanish Hispaniola returning to England with great profits in 1663 English adventurers and traders had taken part in small scale individual slaving, but the above mentioned formed the first two organized and openly supported ventures. It should be remembered that the Portuguese and Spanish had begun earlier in the 1500s, when they were the most powerful European powers and monopolized the trade at this time.

The Black people in Britain are linked with the trade and its repercussions. The trade transformed the face of three continents Africa-America-Europe, and the other manifold relics of the trade manifests themselves to this day.

This paper is predominantly concerned with the number of Blacks resident in England from the late Sixteenth century onward, their varying impact and the attitudes developed towards them. These attitudes are mainly reflected in the legislation passed which affected them, their representation in literature and the use made of them by reactionary politicians. Throughout the 15th, and 16th centuries.

There was much speculation over the cause of the Blackness of the African and George Best in his discourses of 1578, went to great lengths to disprove a prevalent theory that the Blackness of the African was a result of the Equatorial sun. Best states in his discourses "I myself have seen an Ethiopian as black as cole, brought into England, who taking a fair English woman to wife

begat a son in every respect as black as the father was." Another reason given for the blackness of Africans was the curse of Sham in various versions, centered around Sham's displeasing Noah and God by his actions on the Ark which resulted in his offsprings the African being black the colour of sin. Thus from their earliest contacts, based on a religious interpretation, the Black African represented by his blackness to the English consciousness the result of a curse of God. Blackness was then seen, as a type of infection and the dominant attitude from the earliest contact, was one of great curiosity and wonder. Another aspect of the early response is reflected in drama by Shakespeare's Othello, written around the 1600s and reflecting a more aristocratic intellectual approach. This approach may owe something to the famous Blacks in Greek-Roman- and African history primarily Egyptian. As well as the memory of the Moorish occupation of Spain between the 8th and 14th centuries. Earlier more mystical and romantic ideas about Africa are reflected in the claims of the Mandeville travels available from the 1360s it told of the kingdom of Prester John in the center of Africa, "Where the land flowed with milk and honey, and the rivers with precious Jewels". It should be observed that early reactions to the African exemplified by Best's did not see the African as a natural Slave and did not show any concern about him marrying a white woman. In the same way the first reaction to African Culture, was one that accepted it as distinct but equal, by the 18th century African culture was seen as obviously and markedly inferior.

QUEEN ELIZABETH I.

The Black people in England have always been subjected

to periods of welcome and to periods of rebuttal. The first example of this rebuttal was in 1596 when Elizabeth I, wrote a letter to the Lord Mayor of London and other Cities stating that there were too many Blacks in England and that they should be deported. In 1601 she issued a proclamation ordering all Blacks out of the Kingdom and licensed Casper John Senden to deport them. Senden had previously transported Englishmen back from Spain for the Queen. She also called upon the population to aid Senden in his task.

Elizabeth in 1601 can be seen to have reservations about the Trade and its effects. She felt England was over populated and had too many poor, 370 years ago a sentiment that is often heard today. It should be remembered that these were very harsh times to be poor in England, the Peasants were being driven off the Land by growing enclosures and had to take shelter in the Poor Houses provided by Elizabeth earlier in her reign. The English poor were seen as an unbearable burden and often faced starvation. The Blacks were singled out as scapegoats even though there were larger foreign minorities eg the Huguenots and the Jews.

THIS SHORT HISTORY WILL BE CONTINUED IN SUBSEQUENT ISSUES OF THE BLACK VOICE. 20p.



IGNATIUS SANCHO,
POET & PLAYRIGHT
OF THE 18th CEN.

BLACKS in BRITAIN 1500-1980s



THIS IS THE SECOND INSTALLMENT OF A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BLACK PEOPLE'S IN ENGLAND SINCE THE INITIAL CONTACT IN THE 16th CENTURY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SLAVE TRADE. TO ENSURE RECEIVING THE ENTIRE ARTICLE WE ADVISE READERS TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE BLACK VOICE.

Part Two

None of these minorities though were as identifiable and possessed such a universally low social status as the Blacks, these attributes are an important factor in the treatment of Blacks in their long stay in England Elizabeth's attempt to expel the slaves proved largely unsuccessful because of the strong resistance of the slaveowners.

There were a small number of free Africans resident at the time but they possessed very little influence. Elizabeth was the first person to use the black settlers as a scapegoat, and this set a precedent which became a recurring aspect of the Blacks living in England. It also shows that by 1600 there were quite a number of Blacks resident in England: enough to cause Elizabeth I concern. Throughout the 17th century the number of Black increased, and they found employment as servants for which purpose they were in great demand by the nobility and leisured classes. (Having Blacks as servants was a novelty). Later in the 18th century the novelty of black servants was superseded by Chinese servants. In fact during the 17th century the blacks acquired Poor Law dependence and quickly established themselves as a socially accepted class.

The slaving activities whose intensity is reflected in the number of blacks resident in England really got into full swing after the restoration of 1662. This marked the victory of the new rising bourgeoisie over the feudal aristocracy in Britain. The bourgeoisie who came to prominence were more adventurous and international in their outlook. This new attitude is reflected in a quote from Louis XIV in 1670: "There is nothing which contributes more to the development of the colonies and the cultivation of their soil than the labourious toil of the negroes". This new view recognises the necessary contribution of the African slave, and can be contrasted with the view of Elizabeth I, who was not clear on the role of the slaves and therefore had reservations about the trade. The reinstated aristocracy gave full support to the new bouyant bourgeoisie by creating the Royal Company in 1672. The company was given a monopoly in the transportation of slaves which it lost soon after, being unable to supply the great volume of slaves needed by the newly developing West Indian colonies owned by Britain and

France as well as the established Spaniard. One aspect of the treatment of blacks resident in England at the time was that they were treated as pets, and they often wore the same metal collar and exotic mythological name as the other pampered pets and playthings of the aristocracy. The blacks then, if fortunate was treated like one of the pampered pets, if unfortunate, they were treated like any other piece of private property to be used and disposed at will. A colossal amount of propaganda was done to excuse the treatment of African slaves, the most effective of this propaganda was simple, "he is good for business", with all its variations. During that time a small number of freed slaves found occupation in a few spheres other than servitude; primarily as seamen on the ships or as serving boys in public houses, hence an advertisement which appeared in 1659 "A boy about 9 years old in a grey serge suit his hair cut close to his head, was lost on Tuesday last August 9th at night, in St Nicholas Lane, London. If anyone can give notice of him to Mr Thomas Barker at the sugar loaf in the Lane, they shall be rewarded for his pains". It should be borne in mind that the inhabitants of any country which was penetrated by the English adventurers, were taken back to England as curios. There are many reports of these curios. One report mentioned a Turk and a Negro being brought back as pets for a little girl in 1662. Black people were concentrated mainly in Bristol and London.

moral dilemma

An interesting effect of the African presence was the confusion this caused in the judicial and moralising circles of England. In the moralising circles the trade gave the lie to many of the

high sounding tenets on which the society leaned. Even more confusion was caused in the judicial circles, where as early as the 16th century a judge declared "The air of England was too pure for a slave to breathe". A further statement was made by the Lord Chief Justice Holt in Queen Anne's reign (1700). The Justice affirmed "As soon as a negro comes to England he becomes free". An enlightening quote which exemplifies this more balanced approach follows from Thomas Browne's enquiries into vulgar and common errors he states "Lastly whereas men affirm this colour was a curse, I cannot make out the propriety of that name. It neither seeming so to them, nor reasonably unto us. For they take so much content therein, that they esteem deformity by other colours, describing the devil and other terrible objects white. And if we seriously consider the definitions of beauty, and exactly perpend what wise men determine thereof we shall not apprehend a curse or any deformity therein. Further on in his disclosure he concluded a section on



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, some historians claim that he fell in love with Lucy Negro a famous black courtesan and that the dark lady in the sonnets is in fact her.

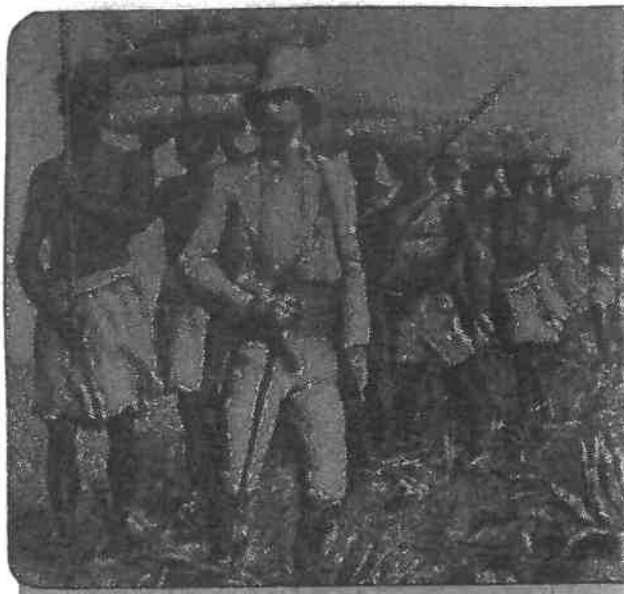
beauty with the following "The Moors being products of nature share a common beauty with all mankind". The new bourgeoisie soon overcame these objections and the scientific evidence

which supported then the slave being put in the category of the poor and the socially low who had no rights anyway.

The 18th century was a crucial time in the development of slavery and the ideas that made it possible. More propaganda than ever before was done to fix in the public mind, that the African was inherently inferior and therefore worthy en masse to be slaves. For the first time a comprehensive code was adopted towards the Africans, and David Hume, one of England's most revered philosophers could state - "I am apt to suspect the negroes, to be naturally inferior to the whites. There was never civilised nation of any other complexion than white, or even any individual eminent either in action or speculation, no ingenious manufacturer among them no arts no science there are negro slaves dispersed all over Europe, of which none ever discovered any symptom of ingenuity".

Hume, because of his education, could be expected to be in possession of evidence, historical and otherwise which disproved his above assertions and so can be seen as an early racist intellectual, interpreting the world to conform to his own reactionary outlook.





the white man's burden - 19th-century exploration in Africa

In the 18th century the Slavers, Plantation owners and their propagandist carried the day only losing ground in the 1780s when the more far sighted began to see the dangers and limitations of the old plantation system. The African in England during this time was subject to attacks from many quarters.

They continued to resist through running away from their masters at every opportunity, the successful ones endeavored to talk their fellow slave into quitting their masters and joining with the English poor in their battle for survival. From their earliest arrival the slaves had begun to run away, to secure their freedom they used any method at their disposal. Undergoing marriage or baptism, as well as resisting any attempts of their former masters to recapture them.

The argument over whether slaves who entered England were free or not continued. The following legislation reflected the strength of the slave owning classes in the 18th century and their penetration of the superstructure. In 1729 the Yorke-Talbot opinion upheld the legality of slavery in England. Talbot and Hardwicke also judged that slaves who entered England were not free and could be compelled to return to the colonies. In 1749 Hardwicke judged that a runaway slave could be recovered, this gave the full support of the law to the slave owners. The trade at this time was at its peak and there was little opposition to it. Throughout the century the price and demand for slaves rose, as the competition for slaves developed so did their brutalisation. The 18th century can

be seen as the great capitalist transition period, during that century they laid the basis for the second phase of their development. During this century the English peasant and workers were without effective organization. The populations of towns were swelling with the influx of peasants who were forced off the land. The worker had not yet reached the stage of development where the capitalist were forced to make concessions to them. The capitalist in this time reorganised their strategy, pushing legality instead of morality thus laying the foundations of the modern judiciary, with the manoeuvres they are able to perform under it.



OLUDAH EQUIANO----
Writer and Fighter in the 18th Century.

Black people during this time were concentrated in London and other large port towns e.g Liverpool and Bristol. Blacks began

to have a great impact on English politics, in the late 18th century and early 19th century. This was a great period of development in England, America and Europe. In 1772 the Mansfield judgement was given which reversed the earlier legal judgements and which the anti-slave lobby which had grown up claimed as a great victory. Infact this was a concession given by the capitalist who had realised the limitation of the plantation econ-

omy and were placing their emphasis on fast developing industrialisation. This victory was the same as that gained by the northern industrialist with the aid of the slaves 70 years later in America. The various estimates of the number of slaves in England at this time varies between 15,000 and 20,000. Most of the abolitionist were not concerned about slavery in the colonies, as to the reflection on their claim for a free England, when slavery was practised in England. The 18th century ended with a movement to ship blacks from England to Sierra Leone. There was much talk of overpopulation, this being the time of Malthus's Essay on population 1798. Malthus attempted to prove that the world's population was too great for it's food supply. The return to Africa movement also came at a time when America had fought for and won it's independence 1776-1783. Some blacks had fought for England in this war in return for a promise of freedom. After the defeat some of the blacks came to settle in England.

This was also the time of the French Revolution, followed by the Napoleonic wars. All these factors went towards weakening the English capitalists and draining their confidence. This was the time when 25,000 or so Black people became a great problem and it was decided to send them back to Africa because they were taking the bread out of the mouth of the English worker. The return to Africa scheme was suggested by the so-called friends of the slave whose only real concern was that slavery was

practised in their 'Fair England'. This expedition was made in 1787 and failed disastrously. It attracted very few Black people to it less than 1,000 and of those attracted only 450 were transported along with 60 white prostitutes. All through the attempt the Africans were robbed and abused by incompetent organizers and swindlers, and when they finally arrived in Sierra Leone they were quickly abandoned by the organizers and left to fend for themselves. This then was the attempt of the English to solve the problem of their black settlers in the 1780s. One not much different from solutions been suggested 200 years later in the 1980s.



GRANVILLE SHARP----
A Leading Abolitionist

One serious aspect for present day black inhabitants was the way that English culture became infused with the stereotype of the black man, a stereotype which dogs us to this day. The ideas promoted was basically that the African had no civilization and it was the duty of the European to civilize them. That without the guidance of the white man the African would revert to the state of a beast from which only the white man was saving him. Other justifications were that only the African could work under the conditions of the West Indian colonies and the Southern plantations those conditions being similar to those in Africa. It was also claimed that the African was being saved from certain death in African Wars and that the Slaves on the plantation enjoyed a better life than the people in Africa an argument still used today by the racist South African regime.

These ideas are most developed in the work of Edward Long in the 18th, and Thomas Carlyle in the 19th century. Long in his history of Jamaica 1774 states "It is astonishing that although they have been acquainted, with Europeans and their manufacture for so many hundred years, they have in all this series of time, manifested so little taste for arts, or a genius either inventive or imitative" compared with this confident quote of the 18th century Carlyle's quote written in the mid 19th century is much more bitter. "That the Negroes are all very happy and doing well. A fact very comfortable indeed. West Indian whites it is admitted are far from happy. West Indian colonies not unlike wholly sinking into ruin. At home too the British white are rather badly off. Several millions of them hanging on the verge of continual famine, and in single towns many millions of them sore put to it, at this time not to live well, or as they should in any way spiritual or temporal but to live at all: These again are uncomfortable facts and they are extremely extensive and important ones but thank heavens for our interesting black population:- equaling in number the heads of one of the Ridings of Yorkshire, and in worth (in quality of intellect, faculty, docility, energy and available human valor and value) perhaps one of the streets of Seven Dials are all doing remarkably well".

This outburst came in 1849 soon after the Irish famine which Carlyle cynically blamed on the blacks who quit the plantations to work for themselves after the abolition of Slavery Carlyle felt that blacks should be made to work that being their only use other than being a figure of fun. His activities methods and use of language bear close resemblance to that of Enoch Powell in more modern times.



AFRICAN SLAVERY – Birth of Racism

One of the most burning issues confronting Black people today is the issue of Racism and the serious form of Institutionalised Racism. The racism that exists today is a reflection of the historical development and interaction between black and white people over centuries of struggle. The one event that dwarfs all others and is very much underrated and trivialised is that of the theft of tens of millions of Africans from their homes in Africa and their enslavement by the peoples of Europe.

This period of slavery was the most important era in European history, because Africans provided the foundation on which it was possible for industrial societies to develop to the level they now boast of. In doing so they committed the three greatest crimes against black people.

1. The taking of black people's land (Africa)
2. The taking of black people's minds (Propaganda)
3. The destruction of 300 million black men, women and children during the active trade in Africans and slavery.

To truly understand this issue we must have a general impression of Europe, Africa and the Caribbean area at that time in history. Europe in the late 14th Century was essentially a Feudal society with the majority of people working as small peasant farmers, making just enough to live on. The King had overall control of the country with a vast aristocracy interwoven with the Clergy. The means of exchange was essentially barter. There were other forms of trade but they involved long journeys across land to the Middle East, India, China and Africa. Africa at the time had vast amounts of different societies with some that had already gone through the Iron Age and had developed a system of documenting information in writing. Their societies were developed in terms of local government organisations and a very structured society. The West Indies at the time were inhabited by Red Indian who sailed down from the Central American region. The two main tribes were the Arawaks and the Caribs. These Indians were farmers and fishermen who lived a leisurely, simple life. These Indians were very skilled in pottery and making many items from wood, rock and animal bones. They created ornaments of different forms.

There was said to be an awakening of fresh curiosity in the world spreading over Europe at the end of the 14th Century, which led towards developments in art, science and many other fields. At this time Europeans knew about the existence of Africa, China, India and most of Asia through the long land routes. But due to the primitive maps they had compiled at the time, they had not known about the existence of the American Continent or the Caribbean area as this involved a long journey across water which they were incapable of navigating.

For trade reason Europeans had always desired a sea route to India and Africa. Christopher Columbus, born in Italy, 1451 was a capable map maker and sea goer. He provided the experience that was needed. According to his maps he thought he could reach India by sailing westwards through a completely new route which would mean large amount of

money would be saved. No one in Italy believe him or in other parts of Europe except King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. An expedition of this type would prove to be an expensive venture and the king and queen was not given support because of their belief in christian charity but their belief in Columbus that he would find gold to plunder and all the benefits would go to Spain.

TO BE SOLD on board the Ship *Banc-Uland*, on Tuesday the 6th of May next, at *Ashley-Perry*; a choice cargo of about 150 fine healthy

NEGROES, just arrived from the *Windward & Rice Coast*. —The utmost care has already been taken, and shall be continued, to keep them free from the least danger of being infected with the **SMALL-POX**, no boat having been on board, and all other communication with people from *Charles-Town* prevented.

Ashley, Lawrence, & Appleby.

In 1490 Columbus and his fleet set off for India, after about eight weeks at sea the sailors began to lose faith in Columbus' navigation and mutined. According to his maps and his navigation he was sure they were in the "Indies" near India. Due to Columbus mistake the general area later became known as the WEST INDIES. From the outset the reason for the journey was for plunder and gain so when they arrive in the Island and found the Arawack and Carib Indian and only slight traces of gold or treasure they became very disillusioned. But the tales of gold from the Island's Indians had led Columbus to the mainland of America where Incas and Aztecs' people prospered. For these people gold and other precious stones and metals were central to their culture.

Columbus returned to Europe to see the Pope who was immensely powerful at that time to protect their find from other European exploitation. The Pope ruled in the treaty of Tordesillas that the Caribbean area and the Americas should be controlled by Spain, and Africa



by Portugal. But the mood of Europe was that of plunderer like Francoise I of France who replied:

"The sun shines for me as ot others. I should very much like to see the clause in Adam's will that excludes me from a share of the world'.

The king of Denmark replied: "He wanted to claim his place in the sun" (referring to the Caribbean)

After initial contacts had been made with the Indians who had shown the Spaniards how to survive and how to far farm under tropical conditions;

the Spaniards then began to encourage mass migration to the "New World" in pioneering spirit. When the Europeans arrived they expected an easy life of plenty but what they found was hot tropical conditions and fertile land that needed plenty of hard physical labour.

The Europeans at the time thought that the Indians could be enslaved as the conquered people and labour for the conquerors. This was to mark the most horrific period of world history.

IT WAS at midnight on July 31st 1834 that almost three-quarters of a million men, women and children in the British West Indies ceased to be slaves, through an Act in the House of the British Parliament. Charles Small this week gives World readers a fascinating insight into the history of slavery...

BETWEEN 1640 and 1713, in the West Indies, sugar cane had become a monoculture. By 1673, seventy families were owning twenty eight thousand of the ninety thousand acres of arable lands in Barbados.

Since most of the arable lands were cultivated with sugar cane, the inhabitants began to look outside for other supplies, like animals, building materials, and cheap labour. Added to this, the white population was dwindling considerably, and as a result the black population doubled. Slavery, on the whole stemmed from more economic than racial factors. It must be noticed, that at different periods of West Indian history, slaves were of different colours, namely, red, white, black and yellow. The first slaves in the West Indies were the Caribs, Arawaks and Ciboneys under the Spanish *encomienda*, repartimento and *mitae* system. Then as the Indian population dwindled, the white indentured workers came from Europe to work on the sugar plantations. There were three kinds of white indentured workers. There was the ordinary indentured worker who signed a contract, binding him to the plantation for a period of time. At the end of that time he was compensated for his labour. Then there was the other kind of indentured servants called the Convicts. After serving on a plantation for a number of years, he was then given a small estate of his own. The Redemptioners were allowed to buy their freedom after serving for a number of years. The indentureship system led to many abuses.

The servants were worked to excess. According to Dutre, "there were masters who were forbidden to buy more...". The 1659 Barbadian Petition to Parliament described the system as "... grinding at the mills and attending the furnaces or digging on the scorched Island, being whipped at the shipping post for their masters pleasure, and sleeping in sites worst than bogs in England."

Secondly, indentureship encouraged kidnapping. In 1640, about 200 Frenchmen were kidnapped and sold to some Barbadian planters. In 1655, a Jesuit priest said, "... ship owners took advantage of the lives of many people whom they persuaded that life in the Islands were a bed of roses, the land flows with milk and honey, one works little and gains much."

Thirdly, indentureship led to vagrancy. The harsh treatment of the servants encouraged them to run away to the hills. Both the English and French governments supported white indentured

labour. White labour was a very expensive thing. The money that a white man survived on for ten years procured a black man for life. By 1640, the West Indian planters began to search for a form of

to the West Indies was known as the middle passage. It was simply the journey of a slave ship from Africa to the West Indies. The slaves were chained together on the deck of the ship. Each one was allowed only the space equal to that in a coffin. The journey often lasted between six to thirteen weeks, depending on the weather and the behaviour of the slaves on

up on the beach. The purchasers, at the ships owners command, would dash towards the slaves and grab the ones that they had intended to buy. Sometimes, fighting would occur between the purchasers if two or more grabbed a particular slave. In such instances, the ships owner had to settle the dispute. During a scrambling session in Grenada, the majority of the women were ex-

in 1820. The slaves had to undergo the laborious tasks of preparing the lands for the planting of the sugarcane crop, weeding, harvesting, curing, and distilling in order to get the sugar necessary for export. The slaves worked every single day of the year. During the rainy season which began in May, they planted crops and maintained equipment. The season, which lasted from January to May, was used for harvesting and processing the sugar cane.

The slaves were divided into gangs, according to their sex, physical strength and age. The first gang did the more laborious work. The second and third gangs did all the lighter work. The slaves were constantly looked over by their masters and longed for the day when some freedom would come.

Between 1650 and 1713 sugar cane cultivation had become a monoculture in the West Indies. By 1713, seventy families in Barbados were owning 28,000 of the country's 90,000 acres of arable lands. The slaves hated the plantations and not long after they rebelled.

RESISTANCE

Many of the slave owners treated their subjects quite inhumane. They were severely punished, overworked and undermined. As a result of these cases the slaves resisted to the best of their strength. Their desire to resist was a result of many underlying factors. There were vast areas of dense forests offering asylum to the runaways. The slaves at that time had completely outnumbered the white population, and the warlike attitude of the Africans constituted to their aggressiveness. Between 1655 and 1831, there had been thirty one slave uprisings in the West Indies. Of these, thirteen had taken place in Jamaica and just one in the tiny Island of Grenada. The most popular of these slaves uprisings were the 1655 and 1763 rebellions in Jamaica and Guyana respectively. Other forms of slave resistance included suicide, and women imposing the death penalty on their own children.

FREEDOM

Maroons were simply slaves who escaped from the plantations. They turned fled to the mountains. They had won their freedom at a great price. They were a people who were unable to read or write, but were determined to give up their lives to maintain their freedom. When the English captured Jamaica in 1655, the Spaniards were determined to resist the English invasion.

At that unsettled period of time, many slaves escaped to the hills. They organised themselves and chose Juan De Bolas as their leaders. In 1660, Juan De Bolas, offered help to the English against their Spanish rivals. The English accepted this help and won the battle; and between 1663 and 1665 the English allowed the maroons to live in peace and comfort. They remained confined to the hills and there they adopted themselves to a wild form of life. After a short period of time they became skilled guerrillas and fighters. By 1663, Juan De Bolas had become a traitor. He accepted the bribe from the English and was given a number of soldiers to track down the maroons and destroy them. The English task force failed and Juan De Bolas was killed by his former comrades. The maroons were constantly joined by other maroons who had escaped the plantation. They spent their time killing, plundering, and raiding various plantations. Between 1690 and 1730 the maroons were a force to be reckoned with. By 1730, the colonists were desperate. All attempts to wipe out the maroons had failed, and by 1739 the British Assembly in Jamaica had passed forty four Acts in order to suppress the maroons. In 1734, the English launched their first successful war against the maroons destroying the main maroon stronghold of Nanny Town. The maroons who escaped the attack fled deeper and deeper into the untraceable forest. It was at this time of distress, Cudjoe, the leader of the maroons on the west end of Jamaica, retired into the Cockpit Coun-

try in central Jamaica. It was a very mountainous area and there they launched their defence. In 1730 they were extremely desperate, and by 1739 Cudjoe signed a treaty with the English. The treaty gave Cudjoe and his men freedom to enjoy themselves once more. Cudjoe himself, was appointed as Chief over the maroons. However, the treaty required Cudjoe to search out all maroon settlements, and to capture and kill all maroons who escaped from the plantations. Between 1739 and 1795, the maroons had practically lost all their freedom as a result of the many other petty laws passed by the British, and by 1795, the Trelawney maroons led a revolt against the British. A bitter combat followed, and by 1796 all the maroons had surrendered. Their punishment was severe. About five hundred of them were shipped to Halifax and Nova Scotia in Canada.

By 1800 they were all sent back to Africa, never to see their beloved Jamaica any more. Those maroons who stayed in Jamaica were used by the British to search out and destroy all maroon set-



Slave Coffles, driven by soul-drivers

cheap, effective plentiful labour. The negroes from Africa satisfied that demand. The result was African slavery. Many companies, then began to buy slaves from Africa. Among them was the Company of Royal Adventures. As much as fifteen million slaves were shipped from Africa to the West Indies. Most of them came from places like Sierra Leone,

Angola, Dahomey, and the Gold and Ivory coast of Africa. Some of the tribes transported across the Atlantic included the Ibo, Kroos, Ashantiés, Ebo, Coromantines, Jolas, and Angolans. The Whydahs were a very lazy tribe who were later shipped.

Slaves were captured in many ways. A vast number of tribal chiefs sold their subjects into slavery, as a form of punishment. Prisoners of tribal warfare were sometimes sold into slavery. Families often sold themselves as slaves. Among some of the greatest names in the slave trade were the Griffiths brothers, Fat Sam, and Blundell Fobre. The route used to transport the slaves

board. One of the most famous case of death on the middle passage occurred on Captain Luke Collingwood's ship. It left Sao Thome in 1781, with 400 slaves on board. Sixty died part of the way. On arrival in the West Indies, many of the slaves were weak and sick. Fearing that they might not be sold, he threw one hundred and thirty six overboard in order to collect some insurance money. They went to court over the matter and he was awarded the paltry sum of thirty pounds.

Mutinees often occurred on the Middle Passage. Any slaves who revolted were punished severely as an example. He was either thrown overboard, or being tied to the mast of the ship and severely beaten. On some occasions a hot coal was tied to their mouths. Sometimes, the slaves went on hunger strikes. Other times they went into melancholy, and some even committed suicide.

On the ships arrival in the West Indies, the slaves were either sold by public auction or by scrambling. By scrambling, the slaves were lined

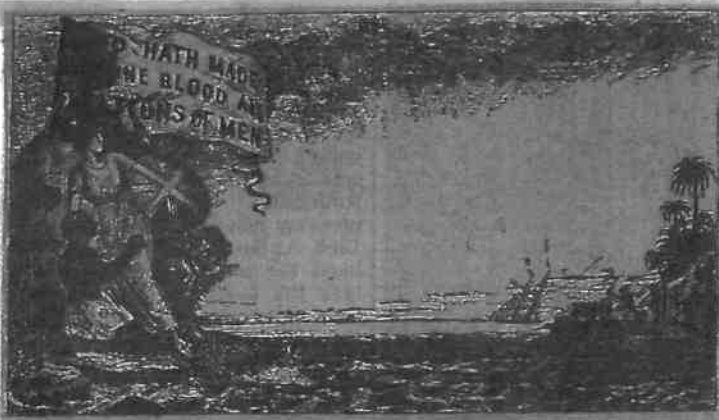
travelling up on the beach. Some of them climbed over a fence and ran about St. Georges town as if they were mad.

SHIPS

The English cities of Liverpool and Bristol made huge profits from the slave trade. In 1709, of the hundred ships involved in the slave trade, Liverpool had only one. By 1771, they had a third of the total number of ships involved in the slave trade. Then by 1795, all of the British ships taking part in the slave trade came from Liverpool. Between 1783 and 1793, Liverpool had made a total profit of five million pounds in the slave trade.

Bristol, on the other hand, by 1730, had made seven thousand pounds profit on two hundred and seventy slaves.

The slaves found it very difficult working on the plantations. The working day began at 5.00 am and ended at 7.00 pm. They worked excessively and were hardly fed. Many died as a result. In Jamaica, for example, slave working were constant. The slave population rose from 30,000 in 1690 to 340,000



Stirring slogans: Anti-slavery envelope



The Governor will give your honour half of Berbice, and all the negroes will go high up the river, but don't think they will remain slaves." But at the height of Kofi's power, his authority was questioned by his fellow comrades, par-

were as follows:

1. All slaves were prohibited from carrying sticks at any time.
2. All slaves marriages were to be carried out only with the permission of their slave masters.

overseer, then it was compulsory that he be married to the slave woman. In due course, she and her children had to be freed also.

8. Children born out of slave marriages shall be slaves of the master of the woman.

9. If any slave ran away from the plantation then he was to be branded on the shoulder with the Fleur De Lys. If he ran away a second time, he was branded on the buttocks and his tongue was to be slit. Moreover, if he ran away a third time then he was punishable by death in the most atrocious form.

10. All slaves were prohibited to do any trading in the town markets.

The English also passed a number of laws to govern the slaves on the plantations. By 1730, there were very few laws that actually protected the slaves. English slaves were treated as property and had no legal rights at all. A number of the English slave laws were as follows:

1. All slaves were prohibited from beating drums or blowing horns on any site. It was commonly known that slaves actually spoke to each other in the form of drum music. This was a form of African culture.

2. A planter was punished if he took the slave of another planter by force.

3. All slave thefts was severely punished.

4. If a slave was killed wilfully by a white man, the man was to be fined sixteen pounds. However, if the slave was the property of another planter then he was to be fined between twenty and thirty pounds depending on the cause for the killing.

5. Slaves who ran away were to be punished by death.

6. All planters were to receive compensation if his slave was killed by any state officials.

These laws were strictly obeyed at first, but by 1695 they had just become a thing on paper. The slave owners did just as they liked.

CRITICISED

Both the Humanitarians in Britain and the Missionaries in the West Indies criticized the system under which the slaves worked. However no improvement had taken place. The period 1823 to 1833 saw slave conditions worsened, and by 1830 things had gone so bad that the English Government forced the West Indian Assemblies to pass slave laws in order to improve slave conditions. The Jamaican Assembly was the first in the West Indies to take this step. They did so in 1830 although it was suggested in Parliament by Lord Canning since 1823. The Bill was passed and Lord Bathurst later sent out letters to the Colonists informing them of the various measures that were to be taken. This is known in West Indian history as the Bathurst Dispatch.



Men, women and children worked in the fields during the slave regime

tiements. Even today, maroon blood can be found in many Jamaicans.

REBELLION

One of the famous slave revolts in the new World was the Berbice slave revolt. The leader of the revolt was a former slave by the name of Kofi, probably of the warlike Ashanti tribe. The revolt occurred on February 23rd 1763, and even today, this day is being declared a Republic Day, Berbice, the Dutch Colony was overflowing with slave oppression. In fact, the Dutch of all slave-owners had gained a reputation for being the most brutal slave-owners in the West Indies. The uprising actually in 1762, some time in December of that same year. Thirty five slaves had seized a plantation, killed the wife master and his family. All the other planters in the province then fell into a panic. Suddenly, at a plantation in Magdelenburg situated on the river Canje, the slaves killed a carpenter and the white master. Other slaves soon joined the revolt and all the planters were taken completely by surprise. On February 25th, a letter from Governor Van Hoogenheim, addressed to the Directors of Holland read; "... only God knows what hangs over our heads, it is not possible that we could hold our own any longer." He tried to organise some form of resistance but his men were completely destroyed and most of them fled to neighbouring Surinam. By March 1763, the rest of the estates had fallen to the rebels and for the next ten months Berbice was ruled by former slaves. Kofi was elected as their leader and later he appointed his ministers, but he was illiterate. He



Condemned slave about to be burnt at the stake

lived in the former Council house at fort Nasseau with two cannons and a black guard at the doorway. His main aim was to protect the slaves and at the same time not to hurt the white man. In his letter to former Governor Van Hoogenheim through a former slave owner he wrote, "... Kofi, Governor of the negroes of Berbice, and captain Akkara, send greetings to your late honour. We don't want war. We also see clearly that you don't want war. The bad and cruel treatment of some of the planters was solely the cause of the uprising. The Governor of Berbice, asks that your honour will come and speak with him, don't be afraid, but if you don't come we will fight as long as one Christian remains in Berbice.

ticularly about the way in which he governed the country. Atta, a lieutenant fought a fierce power struggle against him. Kofi committed suicide in preference to surrendering to Atta. By this time Dutch troops had arrived in Surinam and by 1763 the Dutch had defeated the rebels. In early 1764 the trials and executions began, but by that time Kofi was dead... by his own hand.

REACTION

One of the main reactions of the planters to slave revolts was to confine the slaves to the plantations under a strict number of rules and regulations. In 1685, the French passed the Code Noir in order to govern the lives of the slaves. Some of the clauses of the Code Noir

3. The death penalty was imposed on any slave who injured or killed a white man.

4. The Procurator General was to investigate any complaints brought forward by a slave as regards to his food ration.

5. Slaves who did not accept the Catholic religion were not to be granted an overseer.

6. All slave meetings were strictly forbidden.

7. Any free man who bore children with a slave woman, had to give her two hundred pounds of sugar or be subjected to a fine. If a master bore any children with any slave of his, then the woman and her child were to be granted their freedom in due course of time. However, if this whiteman was not an

BLACKS in BRITAIN 1500-1980s

THE 19th CENTURY EXPERIENCE



THIS IS THE THIRD INSTALMENT OF A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BLACK PEOPLE'S IN ENGLAND SINCE THE INITIAL CONTACT IN THE 16th CENTURY AT THE BEGINING OF THE SLAVE TRADE. TO ENSURE RECIEVING THE ENTIRE HISTORY WE ADVISE READERS TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE BLACK VOICE.

Part Four

We ended the previous section of this history with this quote from Thomas Carlyle "That the Negroes are all very happy and doing well, a fact very comfortable indeed. West Indian whites it is admitted are far from happy. West Indian colonies not unlike wholly sinking into ruin. At home too the British white are rather badly off. Several millions of them hanging on the verge of continual famine, and in single towns many millions of them sore put to it, at this time not to live well, or as they should in way spiritual or temporal but to live at all." Carlyle's and similar propoganda laid the foundation for the second wave of African colonization which occurred in the last quarter of the 19th century.

In contrast the Philantrophists were patronizing Liberals who did not want fundamental change in the society but instead advocated a softer approach to chattel slavery. They did not promote the principle that Africans were free and equal and capable of governing themselves, they promoted a paternal attitude asking for more humane treatment for slaves. There is much material available which strengthens this vision of the African. Other areas such as the Africans treatment in fiction, Shakespeare's Othello, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe etc. Further attention can also be paid to the philanthropists, Granville Sharp, John Wesley, James Ramsey and William Wilberforce. Their role was not so crucial but their ideas were of some importance a quote from Sharp illustrates this "Therefore upon the whole I think it must appear that the service of slaves in England, would be quite as expensive as that of freemen, and consequently that there cannot be any real advantage in a toleration of slavery in this Kingdom, at least I am not able to point them out, though I have carefully studied the subject" For another side to this question Richard Hart's book 'Blacks Who Abolished Slavery' should be read. This gives a detailed account of the Role played by Slave Rebellions and uprisings in the abolition of Slavery. I will leave the philanthropists here and move onto some blacks, who gained distinction or was provided with a niche in the society.

There have been notable Blacks in Europe from the 16th onwards particularly in Italy and Spain. In the 18th, France Chevalier George de St George a black man won distinction at court as a swordsman, skater, horseman and violinist. In England three Africans ex-slaves won recognition in English society and contributed to the Sierra Leone and Anti-Slavery movement. They were Ignacious Sancho, Ottabah Cuogano and Oludah Equiano who worked with the abolitionists and wrote books and poetry. Ignacious Sancho had his portrait painted by Gainsborough, wrote for the stage and was an enthusiastic Theatre goer. He retired to a grocers shop with a wife and six children. I have only touched upon these men more investigation needs to be done into their lives.

There is another aspect of the black presence from the early 18th century onwards. These were the sons of friendly coastal Chiefs from Africa who came over to acquire an english education and culture. This practice has continued in a more developed form up to the present. There were also company and religiously trained Africans. The Companies and Church believing that these personally trained people could be useful to them in Africa. These students also acted as hostages for traders working in Africa, as well as creating people with a friendly attitude to the English. These people continued to arrive through the 19th century and continues to the present.

I should like to say some general things about slavery.

We can discuss why England abolished the traffic in slaves in 1807 and the institution itself in 1834, although slavery continued in other areas up to the 1890s and new forms have developed which are still with us today. A Parliamentary commission in the 1930s stating it was possible to buy a baby for £500 in England. It should also be remembered that there were slaves taken from the English, Scottish and Irish poor. Up to the early 1800s an Englishman could sell or buy a wife. A famous market was said to be booming when the price of wives went up from a half to two and a half guineas. There was also a report from Scotland that between 1740-46, 600 boys, and girls were abducted and taken to the United States as Slaves. The slave emancipation bill of 1834 should be seen along with the other concessions they were forced to make at the time. There was Catholic Emancipation 1829, The Great Reform Act 1932 which extended the franchise, The creation of the Police by Peel and the various Factory Acts which were passed at the time. These were forced from them by the rising militancy and organization of the workers who they feared might make Revolution.

Blacks were not the only minority there were other minorities, there were some Indians and a thousand or more destitute Chinese sailors called Lascars in London in the early 1800s, and Jews, Catholics and other National or Religious minorities could be mentioned. English ships would sail to the East with a small cargo and crew, they would pick up a large cargo in the East as well as cheap labour to sail the cargo back to England then dump the unwanted sailors in port. They did the same with African sailors or with sailors from the poorer European countries. There would be at times as a result more than a thousand Chinese sailors in the poor houses of London. It should also be remembered that at this time there would be a few African, Chinese, and Indian students in the colleges.

Generally there were differing attitudes to black people in the 19th century the poor were seen as a problem. A society for the education of Africans was set up in 1801, and in 1814 a Parliamentary committee stated that "There were many negroes in London whose condition deserved the attention of the House of Commons". Black people during this period were supposedly free, but were as oppressed as ever now finding ourselves under the heel of the most brutal of capitalisms. It must be remembered that this was the period when the aboriginal

population was being dragged from the land and herded into the factories of the Industrial Revolution.

Black people still found themselves employment as sailors, servants and entertainers, some even finding themselves in the countryside as farm labourers others became beggars and became part of the teeming life of London.

The 19th century was also an important period in the growth of racial prejudice and the works of Anthony Trollope and Thomas Carlyle added to the racist foundation laid by the slave owners of the 18th century. Further development of these racist ideas were necessary to facilitate the colonization of Africa towards the end of the 19th century. Trollope and Carlyle were active from the mid-19th century onwards and got support from reactionary Intellectuals like Thomas Galton cousin of Charles Darwin who in his book hereditary genius sought to prove that all individuals races and nations



MARY SEACOLE Pioneering Nurse.

occupied a position naturally suited to their abilities. Both in Britain and the United States the 19th century was the century when their scientist sought to prove that there were superior and inferior races and that the white race was the superior one. Attempts were made to treat black people as scapegoats. Under the dominance of the landowners black people had been treated as servants with roughly the same social standing as other servants and as such socialized with and married among the poor. Only with the victory of the Industrialists over the landowners and the increase in the working class between 1830-50 was overt racism spread among the masses by Carlyle and others who began to make a distinction between the interests of white and black. A similar change in power relationships was to lead to the American Civil War. The development of cheaper printing methods and the close concentration of workers in the towns made it easier for the racists to spread their poison. Compared to the 18th century the 19th century witnessed a

CONTD . ON BACK PA

The dust has only now settled on the extended commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the death of William Wilberforce. Tributes to Wilberforce flew from all pillars of the establishment, from parliament to the church and we were asked to revere Wilberforce as the man who freed Black people from Slavery. The freeing of Black people from slavery is Wilberforce's only achievement of note and it is this that we now call into question.

We will here contend the opposite which is that Black people were not freed from slavery by Wilberforce but by their own determination to fight and make sacrifices for freedom. We also contend that the decisive role played by Black people in ending slavery has been generally suppressed and in its place put the Myth that Black people gained their freedom from slavery courtesy of the work of pious white abolitionists. I shall have more to say on the reasons why this myth was created later.

Like all other changes the destruction of slavery (here we mean in the English colonies) was the result of struggles on various fronts, in this instance, militarily, economically, politically and morally.

On the military front slavery was challenged by the endless armed uprisings of the slaves. Pride of place here must go to the glorious Haitian revolution under the leadership of Touissant L Overture, Dessalenes and Christophe. Here the people of Haiti defeated the French army and any other european power that involved



themselves in the Haitian war of Independence between 1791-1803. They not only defeated the white slave owners living in Haiti but a French expedition of 60,000 men and a British expedition of a similar number. This victory lead to the birth of Haiti in 1803 a full five years before the traffic in slaves was abolished in the British colonies in 1808.. Haiti is only the most spectacular example of the continuous wars waged by slaves against slavery. In just looking at the period from 1800 to 1834, we can note 6 major uprisings in

Jamaica and other major rebellions took place in Barbados 1816, Guyana 1823, Trinidad 1819,25 and 29, Antigua 1831, and St Kitts in 1834. Only a fool would conclude from all this armed opposition that slavery could be continued for any further length of time. In this context of opposition the victories gained against the British by the Maroons in their anti slavery wars in Jamaica and the resultant creation of independent marron areas can not be over emphasized. In Berbice runaway slaves also banded together to win and defend a good deal of that territory against the slave-owners. Slaves were also influenced by events in other parts of the world, like the American war of independence in the late 18th century and the creation of Sierra leonnie and Liberia in the early 19th century.

On the political front the battle over slavery was fought not between abolitionist (humanists) and slave owners but between the new industrial bourgeoisie and the plantocracy. The new industrial bourgeois only got the upper hand with the passing of the Great Reform Act in 1832, which gave them power and slavery was finally abolished in 1834. The industrialist had no use for slave labour machine production having no need for a slave so they had no vested interest in

slavery and they were certainly not prepared to pay the price of endless uprisings. This same issue was raised again by the American civil war later on in the 19th century.

We now look at the work of the abolitionists (philantropists) who formed their committee in 1787. They certainly did not then have the emancipation of slaves on their agenda.

In fact when the French Jacobins proclaimed the abolition of slavery in 1794 they thought them hasty and that the Jacobins had not given enough thought to the question . In fact the abolitionists were dragged to their position by events beyond their control.



The Haitian war of Independence had a profound effect on them although they did not support it as they thought the war would harden the plantation owners against reform. They in fact all but ceased to campaign between 1800 and 1804 because the sugar plantations were booming and they felt that the plantation owners would not listen to calls for reform, only with a glut of sugar after 1804 did they start to campaign again.

We now end this very sketchy outline by commenting on why the myth of abolition by philantropists has been created. Its major purpose is to take the fighting tradition out of Black history and replace it with the charitable works of white dogooders. So that Black people do not win for themselves their freedom from slavery but are granted it by benoalent whites. This is important because the end of slavery instead of being a victory for Black slaves and a defeat for White reaction becomes a victory for Whites and the acceptance of charity by Blacks. An important issue here is that slavery did not just cease after the 1834 Act but that slaves had to fight to break away from the plantations as in Jamaica between 1834-40. The slave trade also continued in the US until the 1860s and in Latin America until the last quarter of the 19th century.

BLACKS IN BRITAIN

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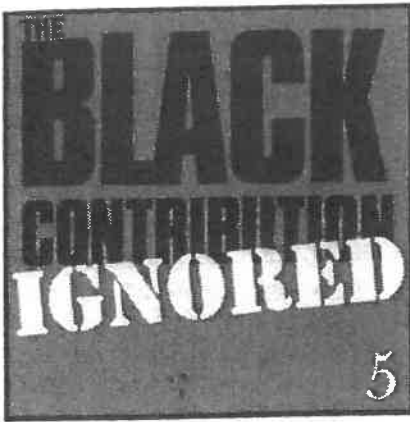
much deeper penetration of racist ideas into the society

The abolition of slavery in 1834 was blamed for the problems facing Britain as the century progressed even the Irish famine was blamed on black people it was claimed that there would be no famine if black people had continued to work on the plantations. A popular idea at the time was that 1 black working in the colonies was enough to keep the bread in the mouth of 6 englishmen.

The American Civil War and the propoganda done by Southern sympathizers also contributed this growth in racism. There was some opposition to racism by the English working class and many gave support to the emancipated slaves sending money to the slaves to buy land and machinery. A quote from Anthony Trollope shows in what light these racists portrayed black people. "Physically he is capable of the hardest bodily work, and that possibly with less bodily pain than men of any other race but he is idle unambitious as to worldly position, sensual and content with little. Intellectually he is apparently capable of but little sustained effort, but singularly enough

he is here ambitious".

In concluding our look at the 19th century, we can see that black people were well established in various towns in England for instance Liverpool Bristol, Cardiff and areas of London. They found employment chiefly as sailors, servants and traders of particular interests were those black people who made their living as beggars the most famous of who was an ex-sailor who had made a detailed model of a ship which appeared to be tossing on a wave as he walked along. In this century too many black people made their mark on British society, chief among them was Mary Seacole who contributed as much as Florence Nightingale to nursing and who worked particularly hard during the Crimean War..Tom Molineux in boxing. William Cuffey who worked for the Chartist movement and Samuel Coleridge Taylor in Music. These are just a few of the influential individual black people who had managed to progress in spite of the racism in society. But by the end of the century the foundation of the more crude aspects of British racism had been laid.



DADABHAI NAOROJI: BRITAIN'S FIRST BLACK MP

Rozina Visram and Audrey Dewjee

'If the 254 millions of Her Majesty's subjects in India are ever to be represented by one of their own people in the Imperial Parliament, it would hardly be possible to find among them all one more worthy of the position or more fitted than the Hon. Dadabhai Naoroji.' *Pall Mall Gazette*

'Though bearing so strongly Indian a name, Mr. Naoroji is to all intents and purposes an Englishman as well as an English subject. His long residence in this country and his thorough mastery of our tongue, added to his English appearance, take away any objection which might occur to his not being an Englishman.' *William Digby*

Nineteen black candidates stood in the 1983 General Election and yet none was elected. Was this because they were only adopted as candidates for unwinnable seats? Certainly none were selected for a 'safe' or highly marginal seat. Was it because the British public is not yet ready to accept representation by black members of parliament, or because the electors believe that a black member would find it impossible to be a good constituency MP and represent the interests of Britain's black community? Questions for the 1980s one might think, and yet almost 100 years ago the Hon. Dadabhai Naoroji triumphed over similar problems to become Britain's first black MP, representing not only Finsbury Central, but the entire population of India as well. It is ironical that a white electorate sent the first ever Asian to Parliament, where he sat for three years (1892-1895). He was by no means the only Asian to reach Parliament before 1940, two others served in the House of Commons, while a third sat in the Lords.

Dadabhai Naoroji, a Parsee, was born in Bombay on 4th September 1825, the son of Manekbai and Naoroji

CENTRAL FINSBURY
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION, 1895.



D. NAOROJI.

Address to his Fellow Electors
in Central Finsbury, July, 1895.

Courtesy of Finsbury Local History Collection, Islington Libraries

Palanji Dordi. His father, a priest, died when he was four years old and he was brought up by his mother. Manekbai was an intelligent woman and with the help of charitable grants she ensured a good education for her only child, who excelled at school, particularly in mathematics. Naoroji was one of the first graduates of Elphinstone College, Bombay, and was to become the first Indian to be appointed Professor (of Mathematics) at Elphinstone. He was one of the leading intellectuals of his time, and instru-

mental in founding and helping many literary and scientific societies, libraries and museums. He also started, in 1853, the famous Bombay Presidency Association. He was a strong advocate of female education and social reform. While in England, he was a regular contributor to both British and Indian papers such as the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Times*, the *Daily News* and the Gujarati language *Samachar Darpan*. He founded the Zoroastrian Association, becoming its first President from 1861 to 1907, the East

India Association, and was three times elected President of the Indian National Congress. Naoroji was a prolific writer and two of his most famous and scholarly publications are 'Poverty and Un-British Rule in India' (1901) and the 'Rights of Labour' (1906).

Naoroji first came to England in 1855 to help set up the Indian mercantile firm of Cama & Co. with branches in Liverpool and London. He later resigned from the firm on a point of principle (the firm dealt in cotton and opium), and set up his own cotton business. However, to Naoroji commercial activity was incidental to his life's main aim which was to plead the cause of India before the British public. For instance, his business ventures served as a base from which young Indians could sit the entrance examinations for the Indian Civil Service, which were then held only in London and so effectively barred Indians from entering the Service. Although India represented the brightest jewel in the British crown, with millions of pounds being extracted annually, ignorance of Indian affairs predominated both at the level of the general public and in Parliament where even the Indian budget was 'huddled over in an evening to empty benches.' Naoroji set out to educate public opinion about the wrongs of British rule — through distributing literature, writing articles and addressing meetings. But in the end he realised that if India was to receive justice, the Indian voice had to be represented in Parliament since 'Not one single voice is there . . . to tell at least what the native view is on any question.' And so began his campaign to enter the British House of Commons: on the way he had to confront many hurdles, including British racism, but in the end he succeeded, through hard work, determination and with the support of radicals like John Burns, Charles Bradlaugh and H.M. Hyndman.

1886 saw Naoroji canvassing for a constituency, but his approaches to the Liberal Party met with an ambivalent response. On one hand many were desirous 'to see a native of India in Parliament' but he was informed by Bright that 'constituencies wanted either local men or men of distinction.' Hodgson Pratt suggested a university seat or a Scottish seat as 'the Scotch were far more liberal than the Liberals of England,' while Digby recommended

'my changing the headdress to an English hat. Better to appear altogether like an Englishman.'

A few days before polling day, Naoroji was adopted for Holborn. The prospect of victory was hopeless — not only was it a strong Conservative seat, but it was anti-Irish Home Rule, and for a Gladstonian Home Ruler like Naoroji to contest it meant sure defeat. Nonetheless, Naoroji threw all he had into the fight. In his election address he put Irish autonomy to the forefront and declared his support for Liberal measures of social reform, including changes in the Land Laws affecting town and country dwellers. He addressed meetings and made clear to his audience that he stood before them representing 250 million of their fellow subjects in India and he appealed to them to allow a voice to be heard in the British Parliament on their behalf. He went on to add that he did not forget that his first duty would be to the constituency and if returned he would represent its interests to the fullest extent. He answered searching questions and created a favourable impression. An eye-witness described his political debut as: 'If Mr. Naoroji had changed his name to Mr. Brown or Mr. Jones no one would know him to be a Parsee. But Naoroji is a puzzler for the British elector . . . (he) has the appearance and the manner of a cultivated English gentleman, his face a shade or two off colour, perhaps, but certainly not darker than many an

Australian . . . Mr. Naoroji is shrewd and penetrating, with a large leaven of benevolence . . . is an admirable speaker, with a strong voice, capable of many inflections . . . and his mastery of our language is marvellous in its fitness and its fluency.' And so his light skin and English appearance made him acceptable! But the result was a foregone conclusion despite the gallant fight — he lost to his Tory opponent by 3,651 to 1,950 votes.

His second attempt to enter Parliament began when he was elected official candidate at Finsbury Central in March 1888, by a majority of five votes over his nearest runners-up. However difficulties soon arose: the ballot was declared to be not final and Richard Eve was chosen as the candidate by the Local Association. Naoroji stood firm on principle. 'They have thus thrown the gauntlet to me and I have picked it up. I have informed them that I will go to the poll and contest the seat.' The National Liberal Federation seemed to be behind Naoroji — F. Schnadhorst, its organising officer, had written asking Naoroji not to be 'influenced by the attack on you. You have been fairly selected and it is our duty to support you.' He had further opined that 'although a Parsee is much handicapped in an English Constituency, Naoroji is not only the better man and politician of the two but is more likely to win. Naoroji will be more liked the better he is known — Eve just the opposite.'

The dispute, however, dragged on and the Local Party split. Later even Schnadhorst seemed to have a change of heart, believing the only way to heal the split was by arbitration. But Naoroji regarded this as a breach of faith. What finally jacked Naoroji into the limelight was not the backing of the Liberal headquarters, but a racist attack from no less a person than Lord Salisbury, the Tory Prime Minister! In referring to the Conservative majority at Holborn, Lord Salisbury triumphantly declared: ' . . . but then Colonel Duncan was opposed by a black man, and however great the progress of mankind has been, and however far we have advanced in overcoming prejudices, I doubt if we have yet got to the point of view where a British constituency would elect a black man.' Indian opinion was outraged. Queen Victoria expressed anger at her Prime Minister's remarks. Up



ALIE 20.



AGE 41.

and down the country the incident made headlines in the press, while the Liberals made political capital out of the episode and lionised Naoroji.

In June 1890 Eve retired from the field leaving Naoroji as the candidate. But in January 1891 a rival candidate, F.A. Ford came forward with the backing of the Liberal leaders, and the struggle began all over again. Supporters like Digby rallied to Naoroji and once the affairs of the Liberal Party passed into the hands of Lord Ripon (a former Viceroy of India), he endeavoured to get Ford out of the contest. Ford withdrew, rather than split the party vote.

Naoroji stood for the entire Liberal Programme. Measures dearest to his heart apart from Indian reforms included Home Rule for Ireland; women's eligibility for seats on the county council; and justice and fair play to labour. Support for his campaign during the election came from wide circles — Keir Hardie, John Burns and Digby were most prominent: while feminists like Josephine Butler and Florence Nightingale were pillars of strength. The Maharaja of Baroda provided 20 coaches on the day of polling.

The result was a win but by a very narrow majority — of 3! Nonetheless his supporters were jubilant: 'the cheering might have been heard at St. Paul's on one side and Chelsea Hospital on the other.' Congratulations poured in: Gladstone declared his satisfaction that 'what Lord Salisbury called a black man' had just been returned. Letters of support came from as far afield as Melbourne, Australia (from the Scottish National Association of

Victoria), while the appreciative citizens of Bombay presented to the electors of Finsbury a wooden casket containing an album of photographs of Indian life. But antagonism prevailed in certain sections of the press. Naoroji was derided as a 'fire-worshipping Asiatic'; an alien to India and belonging to 'a race of mere traders, none of whom ever drew a sword or pulled a trigger either for or against us . . .'; * and *St. Stephen's Review* declared 'Central Finsbury should be ashamed of itself at having publicly confessed that there was not in the whole of the Division an Englishman, a Scotchman, a Welshman, or an Irishman as worthy of their vote as this fire-worshipper from Bombay'!

Despite his age of 67, Naoroji proved a model MP and a tireless constituency worker. He interested himself in the work of Friendly and Temperance Societies, Trades Unions, Working Mens Clubs, and municipal reforms. At Westminster he was never absent from a division or a meeting of any Committee of which he was a member. He supported the party in the House, and worked actively for the cause of Irish Home Rule. He campaigned against the notorious opium trade and the degrading conditions of Chinese labour in South Africa. He also interested himself in women's causes, supporting the Women's Franchise League.

But his main concern, inside Parliament as outside, was India. His maiden speech, made on 9 August 1892, during the debate on the Address, was on the relationship between Britain and India. At every opportunity he tried to educate his fellow MPs about India's grievances, the financial drain on India owing to British trade and taxation practices; and he worked for Indian reforms. With the aid of William Wedderburn and W.S. Caine he organised the Indian Parliamentary Committee devoted to the attention of Indian affairs. He got the co-operation of Herbert Paul to sponsor the famous resolution of the principle of simultaneous examination for the Indian Civil Service in England and India. The resolution was opposed by the Government, but the motion was carried by a majority after a memorable debate in the House.

In 1895, just before Parliament was



AGE 66.

dissolved, he was appointed to the Royal Commission on Indian expenditure. Though he was re-nominated the Liberal candidate for Central Finsbury in the 1895 General Election, the chances of success for the Liberal were slim. Liberal policies of death duties, land tax, progressive labour legislation, temperance, disestablishment of the Church and reform of the House of Lords all raised the wrath of various vested interests. The Liberals lost and Naoroji although backed by the Labour Party and the Irish National League fell as well, but another Indian, M.M. Bhowanagree, standing as a Tory for Bethnal Green was elected. Released from Parliamentary duties Naoroji could devote all his energy to the Royal Commission, though eventually he was to be disappointed by its results.

Naoroji did not give up; at the age of 79 he accepted the nomination for North Lambeth. But the candidature was not to prove plain sailing; events not dissimilar to Finsbury were repeated. There was a split in the Local Association: a rival candidate, W. Wightman, a local man, was put forward. He informed Naoroji patronisingly that 'It is against all previous electioneering experience that any candidate, situated as you are, should win the seat, and I should be very sorry indeed if you had a bad defeat, which would have grave results on the movement for Indian democracy both here and in India.' As at Finsbury, Naoroji was convinced of his 'just position' and soldiered on, appealing to the electors. Months of haggling followed; feelings grew strong and even Wedderburn tried to persuade Naoroji to retire from the field. But

* In this connection it is interesting to note that Naoroji's grandson, Kershasp, served in the Middlesex Regiment in the 1914-18 war. Although a student at Cambridge University, he was obliged to join as a lance-corporal because at that time the British army would not accept Indians as officers.

Naoroji was not to be moved: he considered it 'a duty to humanity, to hundreds of millions of our suffering fellow-subjects in India and the suffering poor in this country'. . . . Even after Wightman died, the hostile members of the Liberal and Radical Association refused to accept Naoroji and put up another Liberal candidate to oppose him. A smear campaign about corruption was bandied about. When the election came it was a three cornered fight between a Tory, the official Liberal and Naoroji. The electors put their local needs before the needs of India, and Naoroji lost.

Naoroji left England finally in October 1906. Even in retirement he continued to work for Indian justice. He died on 30 June 1917.

Dadabhai Naoroji was a tireless worker for Indian reforms. When he talked about the 'injustices' of British rule, this did not lead him to question the presence of Britain in India and make the logical jump to demand British withdrawal. Naoroji in this respect was not a 'radical' nationalist. He did not envisage complete independence. On the contrary, his remedy was 'self-government under British paramountcy.' His overriding concern was in getting justice and reforms in the administration of India. Despite examples to the contrary, he had a rather naive faith in British fairness and sense of honour. He admired much about Britain and believed that India had benefited from British education and institutions. He was sure if the British were made aware of the 'crushing burden' of taxation, 'the drain' of finances and the resulting poverty of India, of the 'un-British rule', then 'justice' would prevail and the relationship between India and Britain endure.

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Illustrations on pp 10 - 11 courtesy of Mary Evans Picture Library

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BLACKS in BRITAIN 1500-1980s

THE 20th CENTURY EXPERIENCE



THIS IS THE FIFTH INSTALMENT OF A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BLACK PEOPLE'S IN ENGLAND. IT DEALS WITH THE PERIOD OF INITIAL CONTACT IN THE 16TH CENTURY AT THE BEGINING OF THE SLAVE TRADE. IT THEN TRACES THE FLUCTUATION IN FORTUNE OF THE BLACK BRITISH COMMUNITY UP TO THE PRESENT. TO ENSURE RECIEVING THE ENTIRE HISTORY WE ADVISE OUR READERS TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE BLACK VOICE.

Part Five

We will now look at Black people in Britain during the 20th century. At the beginning of the Century there was estimated to be between 20 and 30,000 Black people in Britain. They were to be found mainly in the large seaports of England and Wales with the greatest concentrations being in London, Cardiff, Hull and Liverpool. Cardiff will be used as an example of their experience until after the 2nd imperialist World War.

There is some evidence of a Black presence in Cardiff throughout the 19th century and a fresh trickle began to arrive from the 1690s onwards. They were settled mainly in the poor dock areas of Cardiff and were mostly employed as sailors. The Cardiff population was made up of a mixture of many afro-Asian peoples and it was claimed by some right-wing writers of the time that certain areas of Cardiff was like an exotic African town.

The 1914-18 war brought many Afro-West Indian workers to serve in the English merchant navy, with some sailors even being forced off foreign ships and into the English navy in order to free English sailors for war duty. Many black people felt that it was not their war and that they should not be fighting, but they were told that they were British citizens and that it was their duty to serve her in her hour of need. Also of note in this context was the British West India regiment which had a force of 15,000 men and which fought valiantly for Britain in the war. Many black people also came as technicians and to work in Labour battalions to aid the war effort. Of particular note was their contributions in the munitions and chemical factories. Thus we see that black people were warmly welcomed during the first World War.

Between the First and Second World Wars black people faced great difficulties due chiefly to the decline of British industries and a resultant growth in racism. Immediately after the war British servicemen were demobbed from the services being surplus to requirement after the war was won and were added to the ranks

of the unemployed. English Industry and shipping steadily declined and the unemployment figures reached the 20% mark. Right wing elements used the black presence as a scapegoat for the country's difficulties and this led to anti-black riots in Cardiff and in most of the other ports with a large concentration of black people. The riots started in Cardiff in June 1919 and went on for several days resulting in 4 black people dead and many more injured. In Cardiff the riots were led by men wearing Army uniforms who accused the black men of taking their jobs and women. In reality black people faced even greater unemployment than white the figures for Cardiff in 1919 showed 1500 out of 7,000 black people unemployed. This unemployment amongst black people then rose steadily between the two wars. At this time the age old solution for any black problem either real or imagined was again promoted. Repatriation came into its own a ship with a capacity to remove 200 people was produced and in fact 40 people was in fact repatriated, this reversed the war experience of the black population in Britain when they were forced off foreign ships and into the English navy, now they were being forced onto English ships to be dumped into foreign lands.

During this inter war period black people remained tied to the ports and with racism making ever greater inroads both among employers and the unions our position remained precarious. The shipowners paid black workers less than white workers a practice reminiscent of apartheid South Africa and the Seamen's Union

encouraged discrimination against black sailors with a English jobs for white sailors policy. The state aimed racist acts at the black population. The Alien order act of 1920 barred migrants who could not support themselves or their dependants from entering the country. This meant that black sailors who sailed from British ports often could not re-enter the country. The police could and did arrest Aliens without a warrant and could also and did close down Alien businesses. The 1925 Coloured Seamen order was aimed against all Aliens and classed black citizens with other aliens and the police in practice certainly made no distinction between black British citizens and aliens. Black people were forced to register with the police who so interpreted the act that they could deport any black person they wanted to. Often even the production of a British passport was refused as evidence of British citizenship the police in fact classing every black person as an alien.

Another more positive aspect of the black presence in Britain from the 1900 onwards was the involvement of black people in the political struggles against the racism that oppressed them in Britain and the struggle for the independence of Africa Asia and the West Indies from British colonial rule. A Pan-African conference was held in London in 1900 which was chiefly organized by Sylvester Williams from Trinidad and was attended by W.E. B. Dubois from the U.S. a man who was to play a leading role in the developing Pan African Movement. This conference could be said to mark the beginning of the struggle against British colonialism. The people who attended it came from Africa, The West Indies, The U.S., France and Britain. London was also the venue of the first Universal Races Congress which was held in 1911 and was again attended by black people from all over the world and which acted as a unifying force for the emerging Anti-colonial movement. Because of its position in the triangle with Africa and the Americas London became a centre where the ideas and people involved in the struggle could meet. London was also a venue for the 2nd Pan African Congress in 1921 and Manchester the venue of the 5th in 1945

Black people also formed organizations to defend their interests in Britain chief among these were the West African Students Union (WASU) which was formed in 1925 by Lotigo Solinke. This organ-

ization was made up of the African Progress Union, The Gold Coast Students Union, The Nigerian Progress Union and the association of Students of African Descent. This organization (WASU) survived well into the 1950s and was an important contribution to the Independence movement which swept through Africa after the 2nd World War. Another organization of great importance was the League of Coloured People which was formed in 1931 by a Jamaican Dr Harold Moody. The League produced its own paper the Keys as did (WASU) and was involved in both the social and Political struggles of black people until well into the 1950s.

Some black people also found themselves involved in the major political organizations in Britain. Chief among these was Councillor J.R. Archer who was elected Mayor of Battersea in 1913, some blacks during this period even made a contribution to the Conservative Party. It should also be pointed out that one of the great 20th century black men Marcus Garvey, now one of Jamaica's National Heroes lived in England from 1912-14 and again from 1936 to his death on the 14th of June 1941.

We have here presented just a sketch of this period, its most important lessons being the use made of black people during a time of need 1914-18 and the treatment handed out when we were considered surplus to requirements between 1919-39. We close this section with an informative quote from one Commander Kenworthy a Conservative member from a speech which he made in the House of Commons "Will the right honourable gentlemen bear in mind that there is a great deal of unemployment among white Seamen in our ports, and that it is very irritating for them to see Black Seamen being continually shipped. This speech was made in 1923 but echoed the racist sentiments that were prevalent throughout this period. At the time of this speech a Third of all black seamen were unemployed and yet a representative of Democracy in Britain could cynically use them as scapegoats for the problems that beset the country.

BLACKS in BRITAIN 1500-1980s



THIS IS THE THIRD INSTALMENT OF A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BLACK PEOPLE'S IN ENGLAND SINCE THE INITIAL CONTACT IN THE 16th CENTURY AT THE BEGINING OF THE SLAVE TRADE. TO ENSURE RECIEVING THE ENTIRE HISTORY WE ADVISE READERS TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE BLACK VOICE.

part six

I will now briefly look at the 2ND World War and some of the attitudes which were displayed towards Black people in that period. Again a good number of Black people answered the call of the 'motherland' left the colonies and came to Britain to aid her in her hour of need. One interesting aspect of the War period was the clash between the British and American attitudes to Race. Many instances are documented of American Servicemen remonstrating with British landlords who served Black Servicemen. Some landlords refused to reproduce American segregation practices in Britain but others capitulated. Against this background of its need for labour the state allowed racism to flourish by doing nothing about it. Racism was left up to the individual some landlords served blacks while others did not. Black servicemen, both American and colonial British did not accept this discrimination and while fighting the german enemy fought many battles with English and American Servicemen and any section of the British public which would uphold a colour bar.

The segregation issue came to a head when Laurie Constantine the cricketer later Lord Constantine was refused accommodation in the Imperial hotel Russell Square on the grounds that white american guests would take exception to his presence. Learie filed suit for damages in the High Court and won but this decision certainly did not halt the growing tide of Racism sweeping Britain.

As in the First World War Black servicemen served the British Armed forces well particularly in the R.A.F. although very few are portrayed in the many Battle of Britain films either as flier or mechanics. Black servicemen also made a great contribution to the Royal and Merchant Navies inspite of the colour bar that confronted them particularly in the R.A.F. The war though was an important factor in increasing the number of Black people in Britain which was estimated to be 40,000 by 1945.

We now move on to deal with the post 2ND world war situation which can best be characterized as the modern period of Black history in Britain. This modern period begins with the docking of the SS Empire Windrush at Tibury in June 1948 with 492 male settlers on board and one female stowaway all from the West Indies. They were mostly Ex- Servicemen who believed that there were opportunities for progress far

greater than could be found in the West Indies. They came in response to the demand for labour needed for reconstruction after the destruction of war. This demand for labour was common to all the Industrial economies in Europe. In this same year 1948, Britain also passed a Nationality Act which gave her Colonial subjects British citizenship and facilitated the entry of much needed cheap colonial labour. They answered a call made by British politicians such as Winston Churchill and Enoch Powell. This can be contrasted to Powell's later stance of repatriation.



Black factory worker aiding the war effort.

Another act of importance around this period was the McJaren Walter Act which was passed in the U.S. in 1952. This act limited the numbers of West Indians allowed in the U.S. to 100 annually. Previously the U.S. had acted as a Mecca for labour from the West Indies which since slavery was abolished had continued to act as a source of cheap labour for the U.S. and Latin America. With the door to the US closed West Indian Labour

looked to Britain which coincidentally was willing and able to accept them. In fact West Indian labour was encouraged to the extent of adverts in the West Indies.

Most West Indian immigrants at this time were convinced that they were entering Britain for 4 to 5 years at the most, at the end of which they would be able to return to their homelands with enough savings to make a successful life for themselves and their families. They were soon to be dissallusioned by the realities which they encountered in Britain. For the first five years 1948-53, Black immigration fluctuated between 500 and 700 annually. The numbers then increased steadily until by 1954 there were 10,000 annually in this period a peak of 29,000 annually was reached in 1956. By 1962 there was estimated to be 1,200,000 Blacks in Britain (Africans, West Indians and Asians).

Black people in this period 1948-62 came up against the Racism of the colour bar in Britain they were banned from entering clubs, Bars, Dance Halls, Pubs and accomodation because of their colour. Of even more importance was the colour bar in Housing and Jobs where Black would be workers or tenants were greeted by signs which said no Blacks, no Niggers, no Sikhs. They would knock on the door of a home with a sign saying Rooms to Let only to have the door slammed in their face when the Landlord saw the colour of their face. Racism then was up to the individual a landlord could let you a room or refuse you or a publican serve you or bar you from his pub depending on their individual whims. This obviously created a feeling of uncertainty in the Black community.

We now look at the Black response to this racism. As in the past black people responded by creating organizations to defend their rights. This was also the period when Africa, Asia and the West Indies were moving from a colonial to a period of neo-colonial semi-depedence. This development was signalled by the Independence of India which was granted in 1947. This was followed in 1956 by the Independence of Ghana which was the first African colony to gain Independence.

In 1945, Africans, asians and west Indians had united to hold a Subject peoples Conference. This growth in political maturity continued during the Fifties and was given impetus by the work of Claudia Jones a Trinidadian who from her entry into Britain 1957 after her deportation from America because of her Socialist beliefs had

campaigned for greater Unity and for a progressive paper to serve the Black community. This was realized in 1958 when she along with Amy Garvey and others brought out the first issue of the West Indian Gazette. In this period West Indian and Asians formed many small organizations to defend themselves or reacted spontaneously when confronted by racism to defend their lives. West Indians formed a West Indian Association in Merseyside in 1951 while in 1953 Indian workers in Coventry formed an Indian Workers Association.

The Fifties in Britain saw a resurgence of the Right Wing with their message of Racial superiority and Racial hatred. Organizations such as Colin Jordans White Defence League took to the streets. There were calls for immigration control made in the commons and clashes developed when black peoples were attacked by whites. In 1954 Racial warfare was waged in Camden Town for two days. In 1958 Notting Hill (London) and Nottingham erupted when Teddy boys egged on by the Fascist Right attacked black people who with no one to protect them were forced to defend themselves "Nigger hunting" and Nigger Baiting spread and black meeting places like Cafe were attacked by gangs of whites. This period of violence ended with the murder of Kelso Cochrane in 1959 a crime for which no culprit has been brought to justice to this day.



Black servicemen many of whom lost thier lives.

This period of attacks on black people was rounded off by the State with the passing of the Commonwealth Immigration Act. This Act set out to restrict the entry of black people to Britain and thus to placate the growing racism which was developing in Britain. As in the past rather than trying to defend the rights of black people and to guarantee the black community the same rights as the white, the British state capitulated and so took the first step towards institutionalizing Racism in the Immigration Laws of Britain.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BLACK VOICE.

"Old Soldiers Never Die..."

OVER 16,000 Westindian men and women fought on the side of the British during World War II. Of these 7,000 lost their lives to keep Britain free from its would-be Nazi oppressors. After Britain gained victory in 1945, the British Government under King George VI did little to compensate its black war veterans, in most cases they were pushed aside and forgotten.

In Jamaica today over 13,000 war veterans discarded by the British Government have returned home to oblivion and poverty.

In 1945, the British Government failing to meet its obligations of resettling the veterans, shed the responsibility onto the shoulders of the Commonwealth countries.

The then poor Jamaican Government by willingly taking up the responsibility "in an act of idiocy" relegated the Jamaican veteran to a life of poverty.

Those veterans who were tradesmen received £25 to buy trade tools, some of them were sent to "school," others were put to the land to work like slaves on a tough and unwilling soil.

Jamaican veterans alive today are little better off than they were 40 years ago, but organisations like the "Jamaican Veterans' Organisation" is campaigning to improve their living conditions and to give a chance to war veterans, many of who are in their 70's and 80's, "to spend the twilight of their years in some form of comfort no matter how humble."

The Jamaican Veteran's Organisation based in Kingston is 30 years old. Its patron is Senor Roderick Francis. The organisation exists solely on voluntary contributions and receives no aid from the Jamaican or any other government.

Where does the Jamaica war veteran stand in the scheme of things? There is an organization known in Jamaica as the *Jamaica Legion*. It was formed immediately after the last war no doubt a "copycat" of the British Legion. The legion has as its patron the island's Governor-General, Sir Florizel Glasspole. The subvention they receive from Government over the years from all political parties is to say the least miserly. When the money the beneficiaries are given is calculated it works out to an average of \$6.00 (six dollars) per week, payable

The Jamaica Veterans Organization is currently making an islandwide survey to determine the number of unemployed Ex-servicemen, the number that is unemployable and those in need, and eventually hopes to give assistance in the form of a regular monthly monetary payment.

This organization hopes that the present British Government will at least turn a listening ear when the plea for assistance is made on behalf of these unfortunate men. A formula must be invented whereby *Justice is done to these men*.

It is with deep regret that the J.V.O. is obliged to bring this maltreatment of the Jamaica War Veteran to the attention of the conscience of the British Government and British public. The necessity should never have arisen. The survivors of World War are by no means few. They are in

their 80s and 90s and understandably are dying at a rapid rate. In Jamaica we see the common phrase in action: "Old soldiers never die, they only fade away." It should be added "Fade away how?" They die in poverty.

It must also be made known that in Jamaica today where an ordinary funeral cost approximately two thousand dollars (Jamaican) all officialdom is able to do via the Jamaica Legion is to offer the poverty-stricken relatives of a dead war veteran the "princely" sum of fifty Jamaica dollars.

The various bodies that comprised the armed forces in Jamaica during both World Wars are:-

- . Royal Army Service Corps.
- . The Jamaica Battalion formerly Jamaica Infantry Volunteers.
- . The Caribbean Regiment.
- . Royal Corps of Signals
- . Jamaica Militia Artillery.
- . Jamaica Engineering Corps.
- . Jamaica Home Guard Embodied Reserve.
- . Royal Engineers.
- . Royal Army Ordinance Corps.
- . Royal Army Medical Corps.
- . Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.
- . British West India Regiment.
- . The West India Regiment.
- . The Royal Air Force.
- . The women who served in two bodies.

The Jamaica Legion is a "is only a drop in the bucket." It is supposed to be looking after the interest of war veterans but can offer assistance to only 1,200 men and 350 widows leaving thousands more needing assistance. The task of assisting war veterans and widows is bigger than the Jamaica Legion. Assistance for the thousands of Jamaica war veterans must come from a much higher level.

THE BLACK BRITONS

THE West Indians who came to Britain before the Second World War were mainly those with some education or money who believed they could find better opportunities for themselves and their families.

One of them was Londoner Pauline Crabbe who remembers the day she discovered colour prejudice in next week's programme in the TVS series *Passage To Britain*, on Channel 4 on Wednesday (23 May) at 6pm.

Pauline says her father brought the family to Britain "because he believed absolutely in the British education system."

REFUSED DRINK

Much later, when Pauline's white husband was refused a drink in a pub when she was with him, Pauline says: "It woke me up to the fact that there was colour prejudice and I think the anger has stayed with me throughout the years."

Before 1939, the 20,000 or so blacks in Britain were mostly negro servants popular with smart 18th century society, and sailors who had jumped ship.

But the Second World War sparked off greater immigration by West Indians as it did for many groups coming to Britain.

PREJUDICE

In the 1930s the Rev. Harold Moody took on the prejudice of the British hospital system in getting a West Indian girl placed on a nurse's training course. Ironically, in the Second World War, West Indians were warmly welcomed into the health services.

When hostilities ended, labour-starved Britain readily welcomed West Indians and London Transport even sent officers to Barbados in 1956 to recruit 300 badly needed bus drivers and conductors.

Len Fairweather, now unemployed and living in Brixton, came from Jamaica and remembers: "In the days of the Teddy boys I had to walk on the streets with friends otherwise I got beat up."

RIOTS

The crisis came in the 1958 Notting Hill riots but despite this, West Indians stayed on and made homes here.

No one knows how many black Britons there now are - the question on ethnic origin was withdrawn from the last national Census and previous figures were gathered haphazardly.

WEST INDIAN WORLD MAY 16 1984

Marcus Howe on the Black Worker since 1945. Leeds Sept 13th 1982.

We have reached a watershed in the history of black people in this country - 1981 Black People's Day of Action; last summer young blacks firebombed their way into the headlines and for the last five years we have seen the development of the Asian youth movements. We need to understand and clarify events in order to strengthen the forces of the black community. I have been asked to talk about the black worker in Britain since 1945. I want to make a speech analysing the situation not an agitational speech. Now we have a concept of a new Britain with black workers at the forefront. We have seen two of the three gold medals won at the Olympics by Britain were won by black workers.

When we talk about black workers in this country we are talking about an international social force and we have to understand the whole world. Quote from an article in Washington Post saying that all over the world, both east and west, we have reached a situation where there is no consensus of support between the governed and the governors. In my opinion this is a correct view. In Britain, among the black population, there is no one who feels represented by Thatcher. Nowhere else is the situation the same except for in Northern Ireland. We have reached a serious position, a critical situation. Because when there is no consensus, the government will attempt to wipe out the people. Either the government goes or you go. This is the framework in which we are working and we need to seek alliances with others who feel the same way. Only a mass movement can sweep away all and restore the relationship between the governors and the governed. That is what is on the agenda - sweeping all away. In order to understand this development we have to make an analysis of the background.

Example of foreign visitor coming from Switzerland reading about black people in Britain in article on plane and gradually becoming aware of their presence in key areas as he comes into London: immigration authorities; cleaners and canteen workers in Heathrow; going through Southall - Asian labour; driving Ford car made by black workers in UK; passing school with black students and teachers; working on tube and in buses, in hospital. We work in all the key areas & in every major city in this country. And this power we have is of crucial importance. It is power which has been accumulated over the last 30 or 40 years.

How do we come to be here? In 50's James Callaghan put it bluntly. He said that every immigrant is a store of capital. It took £4,000 to raise a person in this country for productive employment. This sum is transferred as a free export wherever immigration takes place. Britain needed immigration urgently. Out of a population of 50 million 25 million were productive workers. Immigration helps provide for the unproductive population of 25 million. He said that Germany lost the war but got reparations in human capital. So did Britain.

1945 was a breakway date for black people. In this year in Manchester there was a conference on African and colonial independence attended by Padmore, Nkrumah and CLR James. The Labour Party, right left or middle, thought they were crazy to talk about independence. But in 17 years all the empire had gone. It was the Labour Party that was crazy. There has been no other period in which so much has been achieved. This was the first open political struggle of black workers and intellectuals in this country. This conference decided the programme and strategy for independence. This was achieved by intellectuals and black workers in Cardiff, Liverpool etc. In 1982 we can do much more. The question is now posed again. We are faced with the question of the liberation of Africa, India etc from neo-colonialism. This is a crucial question for us here and there is a tradition of mobilising here in the north, in Manchester. The conditions now are much better than they were in 1945.

Let us look at the political situation before mass immigration. There was a shortage of labour. This meant that the working class was in a strong position. There was the bus strike in the fifties. So what did they do? London Transport went to Barbados and recruited workers. This was the case in all the major cities in this country. From the Midlands they went to the Punjab to recruit ~~EM~~ workers for the foundries. They used the surplus labour in our countries to undermine the strength of the white working class here. We were prepared to accept worse wages, worse working conditions and worse living conditions that

What did the trade union movement do? The trade union movement and the 'left' stretched out no hand to us, they gave us no guidance. For them the working class was white and male and not international. When we were faced with discrimination and police brutality, the Communist Party said we should change out social behaviour. We should behave in a more British way.

These were the economic circumstances of the time which led to the next major date - the race riots of 1958. The economic conditions - competition in the labour market - led to the race riots. The economic conditions did not make race riots inevitable. It was the failure of the left that made riots inevitable. Whites attacked blacks. Of course elements of the right surfaced but the left should have made it impossible for these elements to surface. The Labour Party dare not say anything because as always they wanted to get back into power. But there was no way that we would put up with this. When we reacted we were labelled violent and anti-social. Before we were docile slaves. Now we became violent. And the police did not take a neutral position even then. They were on the side of the fascists. The right is a force for discipline because if you have a situation where black people are afraid to walk the streets, then you have a pliable and obedient work force. The government will go slow on the fascists until we make it impossible for them. Until it is counter productive for them. If we bomb down their cities if they allow the fascists to march, then they forbid the fascists to march. Those who have been the primary force are the young West Indians and Asians. The white anti-racist movement has been secondary. But in 1958 we felt a certain restraint. When Kelso was murdered, we gave him a fine funeral but it was nothing like New cross 20 years later.

1970 was the next important date for West Indians. Society needs a disciplined work force and West Indians deviated from British behaviour. ~~They said~~ We had parties; we didn't like pubs so we organised shabeens; we smoked ganja. This led to police harassment. Our reason for being here was to work so they invented us for a black man on the streets. Because we could only be here to work. The foreman was responsible for discipline at work and the policeman for outside. These were the origins of last summer when black youth rebelled in a blaze of glory from Liverpool to Southampton and firebombed our way into the headlines. There had always been a tendency among West Indians to say 'to hell with work - I refuse to be a white man's slave'. And so we organised other activities to make our living. And thus you had the frontlines that exist in all major cities. The police used to do what they wanted then. Older West Indians closed their eyes to what was going on. And the police got away with it. Then there were no constraints on the police. 1970 was the first time the issue was posed. The Mangrove was opened as a cafe and there was a lawyer there all day so if someone got arrested the lawyer was down at the police station before the police even. This was a challenge to the police and they didn't like it. They decided to close down the Mangrove. But we had grown up, we were confident. We weren't prepared to accept that kind of behaviour. We held a demonstration against police brutality. There were about 200 demonstrators and 1000 police. The police couldn't believe it. That ended with street fighting with bricks and bottles. Maudlin set up an inquiry into Black Power subversive activities. 9 of us were charged with incitement to kill the police etc. We won our cases outright. That was important because the jury was 10 whites and two blacks and in those days that was a formidable hurdle. But white working class people are not irremediably racist. They have a shared experience of the police. I'm not saying there aren't difficulties in making common cause, but it is possible.

For Asian workers 1966 was an important year. In 1973 I did some interview with Asian workers. At first they had thought of the boss as all powerful. I asked one Asian worker when he first lost that feeling. He said it was when he saw white workers telling the foreman to piss off. By the late sixties, Asian workers,

had moved to be one of the most militant sections of the working class. Barbara Castle set up an inquiry to investigate the strikes in the Midlands and in the North. There were strikes against the bosses and strikes against the trade union bureaucracy. At the time the strikes were organised by the IWA whose leader was a man called Joshi. The inquiry was to look into the rising influence of the Black Power movement in industry. Grunwick perhaps was the peak of this militancy but the late sixties were the most strikes. It was the time when the Indian Workers Associations were at their most progressive at that moment. After that many of the leaders got recognition, got to be Councillors, they got jobs on the backs of the struggles of Asian workers. Now noone dare pay Asian workers less than a white worker. Look at Imperial Typewriters. There was a major strike in Southall in 1965 then in the Midlands, then in the north.

The next important moment was the murder of Gurdip Singh Chaggar in Southall. Asians had tended to complain to everyone but not take any action on the racist attacks that had been going on for a long time. But by 1976/7 there was a new generation of Asian youth who had grown up here, had been through the jungle of the schools here, who spoke English and were used to urban life. When Chaggar was murdered, the Asian organisations backedpedalled. But from the youth there was a hostile and violent response in contrast to that of the Asian Mafia. There was a fierce struggle between two lines. The Mafia wanted to call a demonstration under the slogan One Race The Human Race. The youth wanted Here To Stay Come What May. The struggle was so fierce that a meeting in a Southall cinema was broken up. This was the generation that included Tadlocahn and Tariq Ali. The Asian youth movement spread throughout the country and everywhere contested the old guard. The old guard moved against them: in Blackburn a leader of the youth movement was beaten up. Where they didn't use brutality they used money - grants for law centres etc. No government has ever financed political revolution and the youth movement was guided into paralysing projects with government money. And this is why the UBYL got clobbered. It wasn't because they made petrol bombs. Hundreds of ~~yax~~ youth made petrol bombs up and down the country. The state did not want the youth to transcend the traditional organisations. It was the same pattern as the Mangrove. The West Indian Standing Conference was eclipsed for ever. The contest has now been won. And it is the same with the Asian old guard, Chapatty Sharma, the mosques and the temples. It is the same contest in the Asian community.

I was greatly upset by the Bradford 12 campaign. It did not advance the struggle. Asian youth everywhere would have responded to the need to make petrol bombs and fight back. But as for the frame up line that the campaign took up, they simply didn't believe it. I knew the campaign had lost its way when I saw them meeting in LSE instead of Newham, Southall etc. The conspiracy arguments were cited for the NCCL not for the Asian youth. The campaign did not talk to the Asian youth.

This is the background of the struggles of West Indian and Asian workers. Now we have a situation where there is no government by consensus and it is the black community that is in the vanguard of the fight against our present rulers. I think it is time we began to look inside the white working class and ask what forces are there with whom we can make alliances?

BLACKS in BRITAIN 1500-1980s



THIS IS THE SEVENTH INSTALMENT OF A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BLACK PEOPLE'S IN ENGLAND SINCE THE INITIAL CONTACT IN THE 16th CENTURY AT THE BEGINING OF THE SLAVE TRADE. TO ENSURE RECIEVING THE ENTIRE HISTORY WE ADVISE READERS TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE BLACK VOICE.

PART SEVEN

This period of our history in Britain starts with the passing of the racist Commonwealth Immigration Act in April 1962. This Act crowned the growing tide of racism sweeping the country, evidence of which is provided by the findings of a Gallop Poll commissioned in 1961 which showed that over 90% of the British population was in favour of Immigration control meaning here the control of Black Immigration. To combat this growing racism Black communities up and down the country had created new organisations to campaign against the Bill. Important among these organisations were, The Pakistani workers Association and the West Indian Workers Association both of which were formed in 1961.

The fight against the Bill also lead to a deepening of the unity between people of Asian and African decent in Britain and lead to the forming of umbrella organisations to reflect this unity. The two most important of these organisations being the Co-ordinating Committee Against Racial Discrimination (CCARD) and the Conference of Afro-Caribbean Organisations (CAACO).

Apart from its major aim of stopping the primary immigration of Black people which it accomplished the bill had an important impact on other areas. For the Black community it accelerated the pace of the entry of Black children into Britain. Black parents knowing that the Bill was aimed at them hastened to bring their children over before the Bill made it very difficult if not impossible for them to do so. This explains the marked increase in Black children and dependants who arrived in Britain in the 3 years either side of 1962. It also to a certain extent forced into the consciousness of Black people the idea that they would be in this country for some time. On another level the racism of the Bill gave a boost to the Racist and Fascist organisations of Britain which now found racism had been made respectable by Parliamentary decree.

In the wake of the Bill came a deterioration in the conditions under which Black people existed in Britain. Town Councils suddenly discovered that their White workers objected to Black workers or that Black workers

could not do certain jobs eg. Bus driving because our reactions were slower than that of Whites, all the most backward ideas about black people now came to the fore. Police brutality towards Black people was now also on the increase and the West Indian Standing Conference documented police excesses in Brixton in a report published in 1962, a feature which still remains to the present.



Other developments were making an impact on the Black community in the early 1960s. As well as the Commonwealth Immigration act in 1962 we also witnessed the 'Independence' of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Uganda. Events which were to have important effects on the consciousness of Black people living in Britain because it marked the first stage of the struggle against British colonialism for Independence in Africa and the West Indies. In Britain it was also a time of growing maturity and awareness for the Black community. The Labour party had promised to repeal the Commonwealth Immigration Act but with the approach of the 1964 general election less talk was heard of repeal. Race

was made an important issue in this Election particularly by the conservative party whose candidate for Smethwick Peter Griffiths campaigned with the slogan "If you want a Nigger for a Neighbour vote Labour", and won his seat turning over the Labour majority in the process although Labour won the Election. The Labour party far from repealing the Commonwealth Immigration Act in fact strengthened it in 1965 by restricting Black immigration even more by cutting the quota of Black people allowed into Britain.

Labour also at this juncture September 1965 passed the Race Relations Act and set up the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants. It is ironic that the first person prosecuted under the Race Relations Act which was set up to protect Black people from Racial discrimination was Michael X a Black man.

One important issue that began to affect Black people in this period was the schooling of their children who had come over to beat the Immigration Act. It is estimated (there were no official figures) that the number of Black children had grown from 50,000 in 1960 to 140,000 in 1967 when when figures were available. By 1963 Black children had begun to be portrayed as a problem in British schools. The problem was placed on the national agenda in 1963 by the action of a White parent's group in Southall who lead a series of protests against the number of immigrant children who attended their schools and demanded segregated schools. These Southall parents supported by the British National party were obviously racist but the response from National politicians were not much better. Edward Boyle, the Conservative minister of education visited Southall in 1963 and stated that segregation was "wrong and dangerous" but also that Black children was to be spread "wider and thinner and so racism leading to dispersal became government policy. The issue of the education of Black children was from this time onwards one of the major pre-occupations of our community here in Britain.

The Black community also struggled in the area of employment and took part in



in strikes and demonstrations. A series of strikes against racism and exploitation throughout the 1960s. There were strikes for example at the Conygre Foundry in Tipton in 1967 and in 1968 at the Midland motor cylinder company. These strikes as well as being against the exploitation they found at work as Black were also often also against the racism they found in the trade Union movement. This often meant that their strikes very often had no official union backing and so were totally dependent on community support (which they received) if they were to succeed.



The consciousness of the Black community was also raised by the developing Black Civil rights movement in America; England was also visited by Martin Luther King in 1964 which lead to the formation of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD) to fight the discrimination which the community faced. Other notable Civil Rights and Black power leaders also visited Britain including Malcolm X in 1965 and Stokely Carmichael in 1967. After Malcolm Xs visit the Racial Action Adjustment Society (RASS) was formed. Black politics in America then had a profound effect on Black politics in Britain and the clearest proof of this was provided by the formation of the Black panther Movement in Britain in 1968.

Towards the end of the decade state attacks on Black people were intensified, the Kenyan Asian Act was passed which took away the right of British subjects in Kenya (Asian) to enter Britain and was again totally racist bringing the idea of partiality to the fore in legislation. A partial being someone with a father or Grandfather born or naturalized in Britain. 1968 was also the year that Enoch Powell started his infamous series of racist speeches which brought the Conservative Party in line with the Fascist Right. As a consequence the number of attacks on Black people increased, Black people were shot at from cars or assaulted or stabbed in the streets by gangs of thugs. The most worrying case at this time was that of David Oluwale who was either killed by or driven to his death by the Leeds police force, in April 1969 (two policemen were

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eventually sentenced to 18 months imprisonment for his death).

We close this section with the response of our Black community to these attacks. The response was to develop even better organisations, We have already mentioned the Black panther Movement. Also of significance was the Universal Coloured Peoples Association (UCPA) which was formed in 1967 and which was a broad organisation which attracted Black people from all sections of the Black community. We should also say here that the Black Panther Movement was an outgrowth from the (UCPA). There was also the formation of of the Black

Peoples alliance (BPA) in 1968 which saw the coming together of of over 50 organisations and reflected the growing Unity between African and Asian peoples. These organisations also reflected the fact that Black people saw the need to organise on a national level. This layed the foundation of the political movement of the 1970s which will be looked at in the final instalment of this short history.

BLACKS in BRITAIN 1500-1980s

In dealing with the history of Black people in Britain since 1970, we must be particularly careful because we are dealing with a period which would have been lived through by many of our readers. Many of the events described here would have been participated in by some readers who will have their particular interpretation and as of necessity some very important events will not be covered.

By 1970 the Black Power movement which had developed in Britain since the Mid 1960s had matured and was beginning to seek the political form that would more clearly reflect the political developments within the Black Movement. The more far-sighted elements were beginning to see that more politically disciplined organisations were essential. The early 1970s saw the break up of the broader organisations like the Universal Coloured People's Association (UCPA) and the Black People's Alliance (BPA). These were replaced by a host of organisations the most important of which were our own organisation the Black Unity and Freedom Party (BUFPP) which emerged from the (UCPA), The

ment also soon started their own publication the West Indian World.

On the wider political front the Conservatives won the 1970 Election and soon passed the 1971 Immigration Act which stopped all Primary black Immigration to Britain and gave the police the power to arrest and ultimately deport 'illegal' Immigrants. It should be remembered here that the preparation for this Bill was carried out while the Labour Party was in power. The Industrial Relations Act was also passed in 1972 and was a Bill that attacked the interests and rights of both Black and white workers and in fact started the trend which has been continued by subsequent governments of

THIS IS THE EIGHT INSTALMENT OF A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BLACK PEOPLE'S IN ENGLAND F SINCE THE INITIAL CONTACT IN THE 16th CENTURY AT HE BEGINNING OF THE SLAVE TRADE. TO ENSURE RECEIVING THE ENTIRE HISTORY WE ADVISE READERS TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE BLACK VOICE.



Part Eight 1970-5

struggle against Portugese colonialism. Support was also given to the Freedom fighters in the racist Heartlands of Rhodesia and South Africa. This support took organisational form with the formation of the Africa Liberation Committee in 1972 who organised the first Africa Liberation Day (ALD) celebrations in 1973. The committee was originally formed by the BUFPP and the Croydon Collective. One event which saddened the Black community as much as the assassination of George Jackson in 1971 was the assassination of Amilcar Cabral on the 20th January 1973 by Portugese agents. On the more positive side Guine Bissau attained its independence on the 24th September 1973 followed by Mozambique in June 1975 and Angola shortly after.

The Black community also had to fight its own battles here in Britain. This ranged from the campaign against the racist bombings of Black people which lead to the Sunderland Road bombing tragedy on the 3RD of January 1971 almost 10 years to the Day before the New Cross massacre. Many Black people were disfigured for life when four fascist inspired white youths threw Petro, Bombs into a party of over 100 Black people with the intention of causing their death. The petrol bombings by racists continued and reached its first peak in 1973 when more than 11 Black businesses and homes were attacked within a week by petrol bombers. The Black community also continued its campaign against police brutality following the death of Aseata Simms in Stoke Newington police station in 1971 and John Lemeletie in 1974 also in police custody. The media had also by this time invented the word mugger (an import from the US) and the police had rediscovered SUS and was using it extensively against Black Youths. Black Individual and groups came under even greater attacks exemplified by the cases of Joshua Francis who was badly beaten up by 12 police men in 1971 and sentenced to 9 months by the courts in 1972 and Cecil Sampson who was

attacked in his home in Sept. 1973 and charged by the police with attempted murder for which he was sentenced to 2 years.. The police also attacked groups and this lead to mass arrests as in the case of the Mangrove 9 in 1970. There was also the police riot at Peckham fair in 1971 in which Radcliff Carr was almost blinded. This was followed by the cases of the Oval 4 and most significantly the Brockwell 3 when thousands of Black youths left their schools to demonstrate against the police attacks on Black youths. Black organisations were also attacked for instance the (BUFPP) when it campaigned around the Sunderland Road bombings in 1971 and Tony Soares of the (BLF) paper Grassroots under the Firearms Act. On the International front in this period campaigns were launched against reactionary Caribbean regimes to save the life of Desmond Trotter in Dominica and to gain Walter Rodneys entrance to Guyana in 1974.

The Black community also waged a vigorous struggle for the provision of good education for their children and against the Educationally Sub-Normal (ESN) schooling provided by the state. Bernard Coard who played a very important role in this struggle wrote the pamphlet How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Sub Normal by the British. Educational System published in 1971. Black people also campaigned for their children to be taught their history and culture a demand that the system proved incapable of satisfying. In response the Black community set out to provide its own schools and the Black Saturday schools movement which had began in the Mid 1960s really flowered in the early 70s. In this period the (BUFPP) organised its summer school in 1971 which aimed to take Black kids from ESN schools and get them back into the mainstream school system. The Black schools movement was country-wide spreading from London to Leeds who boasted the United

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MR. AND MRS. LAMALETIE

Black Liberation Front (BLF) and the Black Workers Action Committee (BWAC). In the early 1970s there would be as many as 20 Black organisations in London and Black organisations in almost every major town in Britain, for example the Black People's Freedom Movement in Nottingham. It should be remembered here that the Black Panther Movement (BPM) had heralded in this trend by breaking away from the (UCPA) in 1969.

Our organisation the Black Unity and Freedom Party was founded on the 26TH July 1970 at its first National Congress and in commemoration of the day set aside to celebrate the Cuban Revolution. The first issue of the Black Voice was brought out in September 1970 and pledged itself in its first issue to carry on the work started by Claudia Jones West Indian Gazette. Other Black Organisations like the (BLF) and the (BPM) produced their own papers the Grassroots and Freedom News respectively. The Black conservatives in response to this grassroots move-

erroding workers rights.

On the International front the Black community gave its support to the struggles of the various Black political prisoners in the USA. Prominent among these were Huey Newton and Bobby Seale of the Black Panther Party of the USA. There was also the arrest and trial of Angela Davis and the Soledad Brothers, George Jackson, Fleta Drumgo and John Cluchette. George Jackson was assassinated on the 21st August 1971 by guards in San Quintin prison. This was an era when the Black movement in the US was under intense attack with the FBI's Counter-Intelligence program (COINTELPRO). There were too many political cases for all of them to be mentioned here but the Black community gave their support to their sisters and Brothers in the US. The community also gave its support to the struggle in Africa against settler colonialism, particularly to FRELIMO in Mozambique the MPLA in Angola and the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Island in their

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Caribbean Association summer school. Black parents and individuals also formed organisations to campaign for better education and important among these was the South East London Black Parents Organisation and the Caribbean Community and Education Workers Association.

We now briefly look at the Industrial struggle of Black workers. As before there were strikes aimed primarily against racism from employers, unions and workmates as well as the perpetual struggle against low wages. The Mansfield hosiery workers went on strike in 1972 in Loughborough and this was quickly followed by the Imperial Typewriters strike in Nottingham which lasted 13 weeks. The Perivale Gutterman strike in 1973 involved 70 workers and the Standard Telephone and Cable strike also in 1973 involved 300 Black workers and 1 white one. All these strikes were sustained by the Black communities and their organisations.

Before closing this section we must quickly note Ted Heath's prediction of 1971 which was primarily aimed at the Black community. He predicted that the greatest threat facing England was not from external aggressors but from the enemy within. It was in this period also that the first campaign was launched to attract black recruits to the police force. We will start the final segment of this history in our next issue with the Spaghetti House siege.

The blacks in British history 15/9/81

BLACK legionnaires in Roman Britain, a group of favoured black courtiers around the Scottish King in 1504, and Good Queen Bess's repatriation policy during the recession of the 1590s, the role of black people in Britain's history is becoming steadily more understood.

A special issue of the magazine, History Today, published this week, contains eight articles on the black presence in Britain and is aimed at the first major historical conference on the subject to be held in London later this month.

The conference organiser, Mr Ian Duffield, an Edinburgh University lecturer, writes in the magazine: "It is fair to say that we recognise a duty not just to the world of learning, but to the public at large as well, to try to spell out the depth and significance of the black heritage in Britain.

The significant role of black people in 18th century

Martin Walker reports on a growing interest in the role of blacks covering 400 years

Britain, when The Gentleman's Magazine of 1764 estimated that there were about 20,000 Negro servants in London alone, is relatively familiar. Dr Francis Barber, the servant and friend of Dr Johnson, and Mary Seacole, the black nurse of Balaclava, are well-known historical characters.

But Ignatius Sancho, shopkeeper and literary figure who wrote as an eye-witness account of the 1780 Gordon Riots, and described "the worse than Negro barbarity of the populace" is less well known.

Queen Elizabeth I's letter to mayors around the country in 1566, was that "in these hard times of dearth these kind of people should be sent forth from the land" suggests a significant econ-

omic role for black people in Britain four centuries ago.

The Queen justified her issue of licences for black deportation on the grounds that "most of them are infidels, having no understanding of Christ or his Gospel."

Blacks in British history have mainly been slaves and servants, although by the late 18th century, newspapers carried more advertisements appealing for information on runaway slaves than for slave sales.

Ignatius Sancho, the black shopkeeper, wrote of white hostility to black people: "The national animosity and prejudice towards their woolly headed brethren... we are all foolish, or foolish, all without exception."

Dr Duffield, writes in History Today: "The period 1814-45 saw two major

surges in Britain's black population, Britain's first major race riots (in 1919), a proliferation of black political organisations and intellectuals of world importance — Jomo Kenyatta, C. I. R. James, George Padmore and Marcus Garvey, to name but four.

About 130 historians, from North America, Nigeria, Sweden and Germany, are attending the conference being held at the University of London Institute of Education from September 28-30.

Papers to be delivered range from a study of the role of blacks in Hogarth's paintings, to the importance of black musicians in the 15th and 16th centuries, to the evidence for significant black presence in Britain before 1550.

Dr Paul Edwards, a literature don at Edinburgh University and an expert on Icelandic sagas, has found evidence of black people in the Norse and Old Norse sagas, as well as in Roman Britain.

WE start off this concluding section of our brief history with a look at the Spaghetti House 3 incident which occurred in September 1975. Three young Blacks Weley Dick, Tony Monroe and Frank Davis took some hostages in the Spaghetti House in Knightsbridge after a robbery in which they were involved went wrong. This incident was particularly important because of the responses to it, on one side there was the response of the British state and on the other that of the Black movement and community. The state's response was one of total overkill, Robert Mark the then commissioner of police subsequently saw it as his greatest achievement because the Spaghetti siege reflected what had become a nightmare scenario for the British establishment that is young Blacks with guns. This should be placed in the context of the attacks then been made on the British state by people fighting for Irish freedom eg The Balcombe House siege. Ted Heath's warning of the threat of internal attacks made earlier in the 70s should be remembered here. The British state certainly reacted strongly this is borne out by the fact that the Brothers were subjected to very harsh sentences totaling 56 years between them.



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The Black community and Black movement responded differently and supported the Brothers whose demands included "Freedom from police brutality and attacks from other racist groups" and Freedom for all Black prisoners until tried by our own peers". The community supported the brothers in the courts and admired their stand of non-recognition of the courts.

Apart from the spaghetti house incident the year 1975 also signalled the decline in the fortunes of the Black movement. By 1975 with the death of the Black Panther movement (Black Workers Movement) it was clear that the old Black Power stance could no longer suffice to satisfy the needs of the Black struggle in Britain. The state had found it relatively easy to buy off Black Power militants providing them with salaries in community projects and by absorbing some of the demands of Black Power eg, Black Studies in their educational institutions. At the same time the grassroots of the Black movement was defining itself clearly into two streams on the one hand there were Black Independent Socialists on the other the Black Nationalists. This divide was actually to find its expression in the celebration of two Africa liberation Days from '66 onwards. 1975 also witnessed the Independence of Namibia a struggle which won the support of progressive Black people as a Third World

country struggling against American Imperialism.

1976 saw the continuing struggle of the Black community against police harassment and the racist murders of Black people. This was the year when Gurdip Singh Chaggar was stabbed to death outside the Dominion Cinema in Southall. The police attacked the community as in the cases of the Railton 4 and the Harlesden 7 but their biggest attack came at the Notting Hill Carnival where nearly 2000 police ran riot as a part of their strategy of convincing the Black community that we have no rights in Britain. On the industrial front we were attacked at Grunwick where Asian workers led by Women struck for their right to unionise against a massive police campaign and held out for over a year. On the international front African countries took their stand against the 1976 Olympics. The Black youth also rose up in Soweto and other South African towns to challenge the system of Apartheid.

1977 started as the year of the beaver with Jack Jones declaring that we had to work harder Jim Callaghan soon turned it into the year of the pendulum declaring that the pendulum had swung too far in the direction of workers and had to come back towards the employers. 1977 was also the year of free enterprise for the racists who went around in vans from which they lept in numbers to attack lone Black people. The National Front was at its peak

and the racists went as far as to attack Black children at the Cowley Road playground in Brixton with iron bars and machettes. This was also the year that the National Front attempted to march through Lewisham with the aid of 2000 policemen but were driven from the area by the attack of Black and anti-racist youths. The police answered this by carrying out their own attacks in Lewisham over 200 of them battering down the doors of Black homes in the early hours of the morning and arresting a total of 24 Black youths. This strategy was duplicated in many other areas for instance Ken-sal Rise where 10 youths were arrested. By the winter of 1977 we had moved from the year of the beaver to the winter of discontent.

1978 saw further attempts by the state to confuse the Black community, another American expression 'Positive Discrimination' was imported from that same land that gave us mugging. It was claimed that Black people would be given and would benefit from positive discrimination which would aid us in our fight against racism. From the start it was obvious that this was a ploy which was intended to generate even more racism among the working class by creating the mirage that Black people were being favourably treated for white consumption while the reality of our oppression and discrimination continued unabated. In this there was also an alarming growth in the number of racist killings which included those of Michael Ferreira, Gurdip Singh, Benjamin Thompson, Michael Nathaniel and Altan Ali, other Blacks eg, Carl Foster were shot at but survived. These racist attacks reached a new low with the killing of 10 years old Kenneth Singh. This was also the year when Margaret Thatcher made her infamous 'Swamping' speech which so emboldened the fascists that they attacked groups of Asian workers leaving their workplace in broad daylight. The Black community responded to these attacks by defending itself in all the ways that it could. It

formed itself into defence committees eg The George Lindo Defence Campaign in Bradford which eventually freed him from a police frame up. Black women; at this time also consolidated their unity by forming the Organisation of Women of Asian and African Descent (OWAAD). Black people were also under attack internationally tragic evidence of which is provided by the Kissanga Massacre in Angola where over 600 refugees were exterminated by South African forces.

1979 opened with the Scandal of virginity testing of Asian women at the ports of entry which was exposed by (OWAAD). The Black community also campaigned around the issue of Sickle Cell Anaemia a disease of the blood which mostly affected Black people. The first Black womens centre in England was opened in Brixton but the most important event of the year was the uprising in Southall in April of 1979 by the Asian community against police and fascist attacks which resulted in the murder of Blair Peach by the Special Patrol Group (SPG) and the arrest of 342 demonstrators. The Black community also lost one of its greatest fighters with the death of Olive Morris on the 12th July 1979 at the age of 27 from cancer.

In 1980 this pattern of resistance was continued with the Bristol uprising which occurred in April around the harassment of the customers who used the Black and White cafe by the police. Internationally this was paralleled by the rising of Black people in Miami also against police brutality and harassment. The deaths of Black people in police custody also continued and Cartoon Campbell was found dead in his cell on the 31st March 1980, to add insult to injury a jury was later to return a verdict of death by self neglect. The Black community had to mourn the passing of another of its great servants with the murder of Walter Rodney by agents of the Burnham regime in Guyana. In England Altan Ali Baig was stabbed to death by skinheads and

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this racist murder was only a taste of what was to come in 1981.

On the 18th of January 1981 the single most traumatic event of the black presence over the last 600 years in Britain occurred. On the morning of that day a party of Black youths celebrating the birthday of a 16 year old girl was fire-bombed by racists. This resulted directly in the death of 13 Black youths and the serious injury of 27 others, another Black youth subsequently died as a result of the tragedy and every Black person in the community has been touched in some way or the other by it. The Black community's response was immediate it set up a fund which eventually raised over £20,000 for the relatives of the victims and also set up a fact finding committee to ensure that the facts about the tragedy came out. It subsequently mobilised a demonstration in March 1981 (The Black People's Day of Action) when over 20,000 took part in the biggest demonstration ever organised by Black people in Britain.

After the tragedy of January 1981 the Black community had had enough of police harassment and racist attacks. Black youth with the support of progressive white youth rebelled against police harassment in Brixton (Swamp 81) in April of 1981 and this was followed by similar uprisings in all the major cities of Britain with a black population of any size.

The New Cross Massacre and the uprisings that followed in 1981 marks a new phase in the Black struggles in Britain. The Black community adopted progressive slogans "Blood Ah Go Run If Justice no Come" "Come What May We're Here To Stay" and "Under Attack We Fight Back Both the state and fascist organisations has got this message and the consciousness of the Black community has been raised

by the events of 1981. The state has been quick to counter attack. It has increased police powers and offensive hardware (The Police and Criminal Evidence Bill) on the one hand and on the other it has increased its efforts to buy off sections of the Black petty Bourgeoisie. It is now argued that the people who benefited most from the Black uprisings are the Black petty bourgeoisie. The progressive Black movement is also now much clearer about its tasks than it was before the uprising and it is to be seen if the state will be as successful in buying off its Black critics post 1981 as it was post 1971.

In concluding this short and unsatisfactory history we should be clear about the most important underlying change in the 35 year period from 1949 to 1984. The most important single thing for us to grasp is the change from an estimated 50,000 people in 1949 to close to 3,000,000 at present. As a consequence the question of race has moved from the periphery to the centre of British consciousness. This Black presence is now seen more than ever before as a threat to the status quo that is as the section which through its oppression both on the levels of class and of race could prove the most difficult to win to an unquestioning support of all things British.

Our Black community continues to be challenged by the persistent harassment of our community by the police and fascists, by unemployment and institutionalised racism. We must build upon our past attempts at unity eg, The New Cross Massacre Action Committee The African Liberation Committee and the Black Peoples Campaign against the Police Bill. This unity is essential so that we can more ably respond to the challenges now before us.

Monument to Black

by
Clive
Davis

THERE are not many monuments in Brixton. True, there are monuments to decay and neglect, like the boarded-up shops. And there are monuments to bad planning, like the sprawling Loughborough estate. But you'd be hard-pushed to find monuments that the locals are proud of. That may be about to change.

In the shadow of Loughborough, a site which is now empty may soon house a monument to the history of black people in Britain, the country's first ever cultural archives centre, writes Clive Davis.

The scheme has been put forward by a group called the African People's Historical Monument Foundation. They want to set up the centre in the heart of Brixton, at the junction of Coldharbour Lane and Somerleyton Road. As the Chairman of the Foundation, Len Garrison, puts it, the roads could be described as "the roots of black settlement".



Len Garrison.

Plans for the centre got fully underway last year. An architect, produced a blueprint for the building. The costs were worked out; they amounted to £1.5 million. Applications were made to Lambeth Council, who own the Somerleyton site. They've yet to decide whether to hand it over to the Foundation. A serious setback came last month, when the Department of Environment turned down the Foundation's request for funds under the inner City Partnership Scheme. Now the Foundation has decided to press ahead with the first stage of the building, at a cost of about £700,000. That sum still has to be raised from

some source, although the Greater London Council has stepped forward with £44,000, enough to pay for the first year's running costs. The Foundation's most pressing priority is to persuade Lambeth's councillors to set aside the Somerleyton site. It's not certain which way the decision will go.

Last week, a deputation from the Foundation handed in a petition to the Council, containing six thousand names. The council's response was muted. Some of the councillors were clearly not keen to see the Foundation receive any help.

Much of the inspiration for the project came from America, from New York's Harlem district. There, on Lenox Avenue, you'll find the Schomburg Centre for Research in Black Culture, one of the most important black archives in the world. Apart from manuscripts and books, the Schomburg houses a huge collection of video tapes, tape recordings, motion pictures and records. It also subscribes to over 500 newspapers and periodicals from Africa, the United States, Europe and the Caribbean.

A British archive could obviously not hope to compete with the Schomburg — not immediately anyway — after all, the Americans have had a fifty-six year head-start. But Len Garrison believes there's already more than enough material in private collections and in other public libraries and archives to make a start. "Most of the members of the committee have been building up collections of their own," he says. "Ranging from books to sculpture and much more besides. We've also been in touch with librarians who could put us onto the trail of material in collections belonging to other

history

institutions."

So what kind of material would be housed in the archive? The Monument Foundation has put together a draft list which contains items as diverse as carnival costumes, biographies, servicemen's uniforms, Caribbean recipes, carvings, sports photos and skin lightening creams. While the emphasis would be on the history of communities in Britain, the rest of the world wouldn't be excluded. As one of the Foundation's members, Richie Riley, put it, "People are always trying to make divisions amongst us.

In America, for instance, in the old days, white people tended to treat West Indians as a cut above black Americans. And I think that mentality still affects us. If the archive presents the history of *all* black people, we'll begin to realise that we share a common history, even though we might be separated by oceans."

To some people, though, history can be a luxury, especially when you're on the dole and looking for work. The Foundation could come under fire from critics who think Brixton needs jobs, not archives. It's a point of view that Len Garrison recognises but doesn't accept.

"Many young people growing up in Brixton can't see why they should be in Brixton. They haven't been given the opportunity of seeing how the community grew into what it is today. A centre like the one we're proposing would fill in that missing background. It would give them a reason to be proud of their community and a reason to develop it further."

The Foundation's main problems aren't just with official indifference or stinginess. There's also the question of time. With each week that passes more documents are lost.