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NIGGER HUNTING
IN
ENGLAND?

by

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THE POLICE AND THE IMMIGRANT IN LAMBETH

INTRODUCTION

For the seven years that I have been residing in Brixton, I have been constantly beseiged by members of the immigrant population with matters of conflict between them and members of the Police Force. Although I have not yet been personally unjustly accosted by any member of the Police Force and although on the surface it appears as if there is a good relationship between immigrants and members of the Force, I dare not make a general statement of fact that all is well, and since this is the opinion of many of my colleagues in the West Indian Standing Conference (London Region) I have been requested to make a survey of the situation in this part of London to see whether I can find any obvious reasons why immigrants are suspicious of the police and have the feelings that police actions towards them mainly stem from the colour of their skins.

It appears to me that underlying the fact that the police are trained to treat all people with kindness and respect, there must be some reason why complaints are frequently made by members of the coloured community against policemen. In the main most of these complaints seem to suggest that policemen are, like other members of the host community, averse to members of the coloured population in this country. After all they are all human and, as the saying goes, belong to the same kith and kin.

This task I have undertaken in a very impartial vein to unmask any deep rooted cause for friction there may be when policemen meet immigrants.

To tackle this job, I have listened to cases at various courts in the Borough. I have had discussions with members of the police force, members of the white community and members of the immigrant population and above all I have had statistical data given to me, through Chief Superintendent J. R. Norman, Police Liaison Officer for coloured immigrants in the Metropolitan Area, by the kind courtesy of the Police Officers of "L" Division, about cases brought by the police of that Division against members of the immigrant Community in Lambeth during the past year.

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH

The Borough of Lambeth occupies 6,335 acres and is divided into 20 wards. It is bounded on the West by the River Thames and running along the river through Waterloo Bridge along an imaginary line parallel to the Wandsworth Road and about 220 yards west of it to Queenstown Road then along Wixs Lane. The southern boundary is marked by an imaginary line through Clapham Common into Cavendish Road crossing Tooting Bec Common to Streatham Vale bank. The south western tip runs southerly along Greyhound Terrace and Hassocks road parallel to Woodmansterne Road.

The Borough's boundary continues parallel along this road, then curves upwards to cross the said Woodmansterne Road at Bishops Park Road, then across Streatham High Street running parallel to and between Streathbrook Road and Briar Avenue until it meets Crown Lane. It continues along this road which ends at Westow Hill at its south-easterly tip swinging around Crystal Palace Park and Woodland Road, then along Croxted Road as its eastern boundary, then into Herne Hill, Denmark Hill, through Denmark Road, Flodden and Farmers Roads. It then runs into St. Agnes Place and Kennington Park and joins the Kennington Park Road at Newington, then along Dante Road, Brook Drive into King Edward Walk and Gray Street through Antfields and Broad Wall to the River again on the narrow northerly tip about one mile east of the Waterloo Bridge.

In this area, there is the Metropolitan Police "L" Division with six police stations. The Headquarters is at 367 Brixton Road and the sub-divisions are as follows :- There is the Clapham Station situated at 51 Union Grove, the Kennington Road Station at 49/51 Kennington Road, the Balham Station at Cavendish Road, the Streatham Hill Road Station at 101 Streatham Hill Road and the Gipsy Hill Station at 16 Central Hill.

The Magistrates Courts that serve this area are the Lavender Hill Magistrates' Court to the western boundary of the Borough and the Renfrew Road Magistrates' Court off Kennington Lane farther north. The County Court is situated at Cleaver Street, S. E. 11.

THE STRUCTURE OF "L" DIVISION

The Headquarters of the Metropolitan Police "L" Division is at Brixton Road, where the Division Superintendent and the chief Superintendent have their offices.

Each of the Sub-divisions - Balham, Brixton, Clapham, Gypsy Hill, Streatham and Kennington are officered by a Superintendent and a Chief Inspector. The same officers serve both Gypsy Hill and Streatham; Clapham and Balham Stations have the same officers, Brixton has two Chief Inspectors while Kennington has its own Superintendent and Chief Inspector. The strength of the force varies according to the requirements for stations of these sizes and the availability of personnel.

IMMIGRANT POPULATION IN LAMBETH

The average total population of Lambeth is 227,960 of which about 22,000 are immigrants, about 80% of which are Jamaicans. The wards of Lambeth where most immigrants live are Angel, Effra, Ferndale, Herne Hill, Landor and Minet while in the wards of Stockwell Grove and Springfield, there is a mild concentration.

It is frequently quoted by sociologists that Somerleyton -

Geneva Roads comprise a crowded reception area for new arrivals and no sooner that these newcomers become established they move out from this area into areas that fit into their social pattern. A discussion of this view would take me into the realms of sociology and this field is outside the scope of this survey. Miss Sheila Patterson in a study group report entitled "Immigrants in London" refers to this area as being tenanted by new arrivals, the impoverished, the unsuccessful, the solitary, the restless and the minority of anti-social or criminal types, and this is where most week-end parties and punch ups are found.

Fascinating as this may sound, police records reveal that most of the basement clubs were proliferated along the Cold Harbour Lane. Somerleyton - Geneva Roads have not produced the majority of the people that have come into conflict with the police. The concentration of the immigrant population in these streets are due to reasons that have compelled these people to do so and the difference of social habits and behaviour patterns from those of the white community has centred attention to this area as a "coloured ghetto", but that criminal types live in this area is a misnomer.

Of the 80% of the population that live in Lambeth, there is an admixture of social types who have met and lived in the same area for the first time. Their attitudes to policemen in some cases have been imported from their own country. The belief that police are out to persecute, convict and arrest is a pattern that is obtained in the West Indies and once police action in this country tends to follow the trend of the country from which they came, it is exacerbated by the very concept that a 'white' man is always not a friend of the 'black' man from the fact that the latter suffered serious ignominies in his own country at the hands of the expatriate who was in fact the law-maker.

THE POLICE AND THE IMMIGRANT

During 1960 and 1961 there were numerous complaints by the police in Lambeth that the West Indians in the area were organizing rowdy week-end parties, much to the disgust of their white neighbours. Complaints were centred around the loud playing of radiograms after 11.00 p.m., the slamming of car doors after late parties, and the shouting which went on after party-leavers came out of the house on their way home. The police could have done nothing with respect to noises, than to warn the party-givers to try to moderate the volume of these radiograms so as not to disturb the neighbours. To ensure obedience to their requests, the police concentrated their attacks upon these persons by alleging that drinks were being sold on the premises. Two cases were brought to my notice where the police used this tactic to stop week-end parties so as to satisfy the white neighbours. The matters went before the court and the police lost the cases.

In 1962, at a house in Mostyn Road, Brixton, the police found that a house party was being held and alleged that drinks were being sold

without a licence. On information, the police entered the premises, took away the drinks and charged the owners accordingly. When the matter was brought before the court evidence given proved that the drinks found on the premises were not being sold and the persons found on the said premises were just visitors of the persons charged. The case was dismissed.

A more recent case is the one described as the "Wedding Cake Case". This was an instance where it was alleged by the police that drinks were being sold on the premises and that money was seen to pass between buyers and sellers in return for drinks. The police thereupon entered the premises and took away the drinks. On the insistence of the accused parties, the wedding gifts and cakes were also taken to the police station. In fact, the Chief Inspector, Mr. L. Lawson, who was in charge of the raid, pointed out that all his effort to restrain the parties from getting to take full responsibility of removing all the articles from the premises failed.

When the matter went before the court it was found that the party, which was taking place, was in fact an after wedding party, that the persons on the premises were guests and none of the drinks were at any time sold. The police lost the case.

During the last two years, however, in fact from the end of 1962 after the passing of the Licensing Act 1961, there has been a noticeable decline in the amount of parties held in private houses, although after-wedding and christening parties still take place, the number of basement clubs have been reduced from about fifty (50) in the Lambeth Borough to about twelve (12) at the present time.

Two reasons for this big decline in the number of such clubs are due to the Licensing Act, 1961, the successful objections made by various persons to the Licensing Authorities against licences being granted to the persons who applied for them and of checks made upon the premises by the Local Authority, which condemned many of the buildings in which these clubs were held on the grounds of lack of proper sanitary facilities and also improper fire escapes.

The immigrants have a deep suspicion that the police in this area are averse to them. This situation stems from the fact that the police hold that they are peace officers with wide powers vested in them, hence their authority should not be questioned. Immigrants have the tendency to do this, and remarks such as "you have left your jungle to come here to teach me how to do my duty", "you are a cheeky black bastard" etc., are frequently used by policemen when they are confronted with a pertinent challenge of a real over-use of power.

Chief Superintendent J. R. Norman who is the Police Liaison Officer for coloured immigrants at Scotland Yard confirmed the view that

policemen became indignant when they are challenged by West Indians, who when given an order in some form or other by the police, sometimes question the format and tenor of the order given. Superintendent Norman maintains that this is a strange feature in the history of policing in this country, for whereas a white man would humbly acquiesce to an order of a police officer, the West Indian would question it. Of course, the implication here is that the officer would seek reprisals for this type of behaviour, when the time arises and the police can and do create the climate in which he can force an issue to take the necessary reprisal.

In 1963 a number of policemen entered No. 33 Lambert Road, Brixton, where it was alleged that a party was being held. The police knocked on the door of each room. A West Indian who lived in the top flat was aroused from his sleep. The police entered and requested to search his room. The man was in his pyjamas. The story was that the man asked for a search warrant of the police and one of the policemen replied, "Yes, here it is", whereupon a fist blow was landed on the jaw of the man. The blow was the warrant. The door of the room was locked and the three policemen who were in the locked room gave the man a proper hiding. Other policemen had to smash the door to enter the room. On top of this the man was arrested for assaulting the police. He was brought before the magistrate and was convicted. It was revealed later that the same West Indian was concerned in a misunderstanding with one of the policemen involved. It would appear that this action was a form of reprisal.

In December 1964, a peaceful party leaving for home during a dance at the Lambeth Town Hall was set upon by police and their dogs. The members of the party were humiliated, threatened, assaulted and otherwise manhandled. The writer was a witness to this episode and was surprised to find that policemen could become so inhuman and behave in such an undignified manner to decent West Indian families.

On that occasion one of the leading West Indians in Brixton and his wife were so manhandled, that a report was made to the Chief Superintendent of the Brixton Police Station about the behaviour of the policemen.

As a result of this report, the Acting Superintendent W. Frame, requested evidence from the aggrieved parties so that a full investigation could be made of the matter. An investigation was indeed held, maybe, as is the custom of dealing with complaints against the police.

On 18th February, 1965, almost two months after the incident took place a letter signed by R. G. Searman for Assistant Commissioner gave the findings of the enquiry. The full text of the letter is as follows :-

New Scotland Yard,
London, S. W. 1.

Sir,

I am directed by Commissioner to refer to your visit to Brixton

Police Station on 26th January in the company of Mr. Joseph A. Hunte and Mr. Augustin J. Thompson and to the statement that you then made, and to say that enquiries have been made.

At about 9.30 p.m. on 26th December, 1964, two patrolling police officers saw a large number of people trying to gain entry to the Assembly Rooms, Lambeth Town Hall. The doors were closed against them and some were shouting and hammering on the doors. Some fighting was seen, which ceased on the arrival of the officers.

In view of the number of people present, and because some damage to the doors was reported, the officers decided to seek assistance and a telephone call was made. As a result, a number of police officers were directed to the Assembly Rooms and among them were two dog handlers with their dogs.

The senior police officer present, having ascertained that the organizers had, in fact, refunded money to disappointed ticket holders, decided that the crowd, which numbered about sixty, was causing obstruction of the footway and should be dispersed.

It was at this point that your party emerged from the Assembly Rooms to join those on the footway who were being asked to move away, but one officer reports that a lady, now known to be Mrs. Dorothy Thompson, stood in front of him and declined to move until she had tied her head scarf. The officer quite properly told her that she must, like everyone else, move when requested to do so, and when she persisted in her obstruction, he took her lightly by her elbow to indicate that he insisted that she moved. She immediately pulled away and moved on.

Both dog-handlers maintain that their dogs were retained on close leads and were not allowed to jump at people indiscriminately. Nevertheless, if through mischance, one of the dogs did remove a button from Mrs. Dorothy Thompson's coat with its paw this is much regretted. It is not the general practice to use dogs for crowd control and the attention of the officers concerned has been drawn to this.

Throughout this operation no force was used by the police towards any person and any physical contact that occurred either amounted to no more than a hand on arms for guidance or was accidental. Miss Moore, in fact, agrees that she missed her step and slipped, thus almost falling off the pavement.

The Commissioner, therefore, while regretting that you should have felt that you had cause for complaint is unable to find that on this occasion any of his officers acted other than properly and in accordance with their duty.

It is understood that you asked for the reply to this complaint to be addressed to you on behalf of all the complainants and the Commissioner will be glad if you will be good enough to inform the other persons concerned of the terms of this letter.

I am, Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,

(Sgnd.) Roy Searman,
for Assistant Commissioner.

The above letter was addressed to Mr. Adrian Thompson, one of the complainants in the matter. As an eye-witness to this whole episode, the paragraphs describing the police action are tainted with hypocrisy, untruths and false statements intended to exculpate themselves from a situation in which they could not pride themselves of being members of a respectable and dignified institution where every human being is treated equally.

The most notorious conclusions are those in paragraphs 6 and 7. These reveal a most obscene and vicious manner in which complaints are investigated. They bear evidence of the fact that policemen would spare no pains to distort facts even to the extent of humiliating the aggrieved so as to exculpate themselves from situations in which they have truly mis-conducted themselves.

Eye-witnesses to an incident at Cold Harbour Lane last year revealed that when a West Indian sought assistance from two police constables, after his car was involved in an accident, one of the constables asked the West Indian, "What do you black bastard want?" This brought about an exchange of words as to the abruptness of the police officers. The result of this was that the constables took the West Indian to the police station by dragging him along the road, beat him up at the station and charged him for assault. The West Indian was fined at the Wells Street Court for assaulting one of the constables, to wit, kicking and butting him in the stomach. According to eye-witnesses, these allegations were untrue.

Another case in point was one in which a Mr. Davis, a West Indian borrowed a car from his friend and was driving it along Coldharbour Lane. He was stopped by two policemen on patrol duty. The policemen began asking him irrelevant and unnecessary questions after he had shown them his licence and other papers which entitled him to have the car on the road. Mr. Davis, feeling that the police were delaying him unduly got out of the car. The policeman thereupon arrested him and took both him and the car to the police station, charging Mr. Davis for stealing the car.

According to Mr. Davis, he had already given to the policeman the name and address of the owner of the car and had explained how he had come to be in possession of the car. Mr. Davis was kept in custody while the police contacted the owner who admitted that he had in fact lent his car

to Davis. He was then released. Mr. Davis has now decided to take the matter further.

It is enough to deduce above, the reason why immigrants, especially West Indians, have been suspicious of the police. He is regarded as a second class citizen. He has no right to ask questions, no right to own a car and can be at any time subjected to mishandling and dog attack. Talking with Chief Superintendent Norman I was able to learn the reasons for the attitude of the police towards the immigrants and from the officers at Brixton Police Station, the following points became clear.

Firstly, it is quite puzzling to the police, indeed to most members of the host community, how the immigrant who comes to this country just for a period of less than five years can own a car and a house. There must be some dishonesty in the opinion of the police.

Secondly, the West Indian is litigious and would nearly always contest a case for compensation, when he wins against a policeman, hence the police must use all methods in the book or otherwise to get a conviction.

Thirdly, the West Indian is cheeky. He must be put in his place, after all he has come from the jungle.

Fourthly, he is famous for living on immoral earnings. This type of life where coloured men use white women as prostitutes for monetary gain has always been seen by members of the host community as most loathsome and disgusting. This habit is believed to be a way of life inherent in the West Indian. To put it bluntly, this is the type of thing that has been imported to this country by West Indians, as if to say, this habit, as tuberculosis has never been practised in this country until the advent of the West Indian.

Fifthly, the West Indian is seen as a boisterous creature and does not conform to the conservative standards of his English counterpart. He is untrained and alien to the niceties of life, hence he is despised.

Well then, the police are members of the host community and as such, they too resent the alleged indignities of the West Indian, hence when the occasion arises that a policeman sees his opportunity to vent his spleen, the most likely victim is the coloured man, for he is despised.

Two cases have been brought to my notice which involved policemen in Brixton deliberately stopping cars which contained both coloured men and white girls and brought them in - one for driving while under the influence of drinks and the other for using a woman for immoral purposes.

Many more cases could be brought in to show that the police have been in some measure vindictive in their attitude towards members of

the West Indian community when the situation does not warrant it. In many cases, the hostility of the police has led many of the West Indians in this area, who are less acquainted with malicious confrontation of police and civilian, to be deliberately led into situations where, at last, the police can make a charge.

A new form of victimization has now taken root. Basement clubs are small in number, beating-ups at police stations often lead to unnecessary enquiries, so the police both in Brixton and North London are resorting to the tactics of bringing innocent West Indians before the court for "loitering with intent to commit a felony". Two cases of this kind are now the subject of technical enquiries by immigrant leaders, hence I refrain from saying much about this matter here.

It may sound unreasonable to a magistrate to believe that a West Indian could be honest when he is charged by two policemen whose evidence on any matter usually corroborates to dotted "i's" and crossed "t's". It is hard to imagine that two policemen would wilfully pounce upon an unsuspecting innocent coloured man mainly to vent their prejudice. The question is usually asked, "For what reason would a police officer bring a false charge against you?"

Anyone who pretends that the inhabitants of this country hold no prejudice for the coloured man can answer the above question by saying "No reason at all". But all in all his conscience pricks him and he shudders to think why this meanness should exist. A conviction, therefore, in circumstances like these, does not remove the prejudice nor provide a remedy when such exists, it only intensifies it. The writer cries out to High Heaven asking all concerned to face the facts; police, magistrates, judges all - let us rid this country of this loathesome, cancerous disease. Let us realize that this highly industrialised society so advanced in technology with a multi-racial and multi-coloured community must create new problems which call for new approaches necessary to be used for the amelioration of old ideas peculiar to a past nation of an unmixed and conservative society with a static tradition.

THE POLICE DILEMMA

It has been pointed out to me that the West Indians to a great extent have caused a great deal of confusion and on many occasions have wasted the police time on matters which do not concern them.

At the Brixton Police Station, officials informed me that as far as they could see, the new Lambethans have found themselves entangled in the complexity of a highly industrialised society. Ever so often the police have been asked to settle a matter between man and wife; between landlord and tenant and very often they have had to explain the contents of a letter.

In one instance, I was told, a West Indian gentleman received

a letter which requested him to take the number of his policy to his insurance company. The reader mistook the content of the letter or he could not read it properly, so he brought it to the police station, asking them what they wanted him for. In fact, he read the word "policy" to mean "police".

Policemen here complain that sometimes they are at a loss to understand a West Indian when he or she talks over the telephone especially in the case of an emergency. They believe the West Indian to be an excitable person and does not take time to make himself understood. Evidently by this "trade mark", the West Indian is known and police could not be bothered when they receive a call coming from such a source, they could not care less, so instead of paying attention and trying to get to the root of the matter, they prefer to put down the receiver. This situation frequently arises more often than not in situations where the West Indian is making a complaint about a member of the white community, but just the opposite happens where a complaint is made by a member of the white community against West Indians.

On 25th August, 1965, the Brixton police received a telephone call from a member of the white community which stated that there was a West Indian riot at Angel Park Road. The police immediately found themselves in the St. John's Interracial Social and Cultural Club Headquarters at Angel Road, where it was alleged that the persons who were involved in the riot had taken refuge. The policemen, it was claimed, walked into the Club, derisively questioned the business of the meeting and requested to search all the male members present.

The strangeness of this whole exercise lay in the fact that this Club is run by West Indians, but include a small percentage of English members. The coloured male members were searched but two male members one of which was of Chinese descent and the other an English White were excluded from the search, so much so that one of them told the police that they too must be searched as they felt it was stark discrimination to only search the coloured West Indians with the exception of those two who were apparently white. In fact one of them was a West Indian.

The dilemma here is - "Would the police have acted in the same way, if the Club was run by white people and had the reputable character as the St. John's Club has?" The mere fact that there was discrimination in the search give a direct negative answer to the question - why discriminate if there is no prejudice? The police ought to be impartial. In this case they were not.

Some people in Brixton are afraid and suspicious about the police. A man who had done a brave deed had to be given a gift in appreciation of his act. The police called at the address at which the man is known to be living. On every occasion the neighbours made excuses for his absence and did not seem to care to give the police information about how to

get in touch with him. The police had to keep vigil at the door of this West Indian when it was believed that he would be coming from work so that the good news could be given to him.

The same situation arises in the case of car owners. The police complain that they encounter a great deal of difficulties when matters concerning car owners, whether good or bad had been discussed with them. The police feel that all these situations are very embarrassing and inconvenient to them and such remedies as can be worked out by voluntary bodies in the area to alleviate these circumstances would be appreciated.

It must be appreciated that many West Indians in fact do not know the purpose of the various institutions which are established in the Borough for the use of the citizens. It is the duty of the voluntary bodies to contact a wide cross-section of the immigrant population at regular intervals to put across to them, how to make full use of the present facilities and thus lighten the task of the police who in truth and fact are led to deal with matters outside of their jurisdiction due mainly to the ignorance of the presence of existing institutions which can deal with most of the matters which are now referred to the police.

GENERAL

It is quite difficult to make a general statement of fact that members of the white community when confronted by the police are treated in any way different from members of the immigrant population, but from the cases stated above, threads of objectionable prejudice seem to be inter-woven into the fabric of police and immigrant relationship. It must be maintained, that many instances have proven that the police are malicious and sometimes exceptionally hostile to members of both the host community and the immigrant population alike.

Cases like the Thurso Boys Case, the Challenor episode, the Sheffield detectives assaults on prisoners, the police handling of demonstrations in Trafalgar Square, the Lucky Gordon's injustice - all these together with other individual incidents involving particular policemen and women confirm the fact that despite training and instructions through the Judges' Rules and Administrative Directions to the Police 1964, do not deter individual police crack pots to allow their tempers and human spitefulness to overshadow their duties to the Community whether it be the white community or immigrants.

A House of Commons debate in March 1962, revealed where a police sergeant allowed a hose to be turned on at Bow Street Station on some Trafalgar Square demonstrators while a woman police sergeant used such remarks to which objection could be taken.

Nothing, however, has been ever brought to light of members of

the police force calling members of the coloured community "black bastards", nothing has ever been said nor a cry raised about policemen who leave their stations to go on the beat claiming that they go out "Nigger hunting".

This last phrase is one frequently used in the North London police area and it is no less a favourite expression in the Lambeth police district. It has been confirmed from reliable sources that sergeants and constables do leave stations with the express purpose of going "nigger hunting", that is to say, they do not get orders from superiors to act in this way, but among themselves they decide to bring in a coloured person at all cost. Many of these sergeants and constables meet many of their kinsfolk on the rifle range and in drinking clubs and they chat about their exploits during the course of their duties. In many instances they have revealed the fact that they really and truly go out on these missions.

It is very disheartening to hear members of the white community who are much more reasonable towards assimilation and integration of the coloured immigrant in the host community give an account of how members of the police force set about their work in this respect. They really go out "nigger hunting". It has been revealed that many a time when young lads are a bit cheeky, the police say "We'll get that black bastard." It is this information that has got me puzzled as to the mentality of these policemen who boast about their being "nigger busters".

The difficulty to apprehend the policemen who indulge in these hunts, lies in the fact that most of them go out in plain clothes, they use their own cars and in many instances, persons who are threatened or assaulted cannot get their numbers. Even when a coloured man attempts to take a policeman's number he is apprehended for obstruction.

This situation has arisen on diverse occasions and has been a practice for many years now. In 1959 at Paddington, two coloured men were drinking in a pub. It would appear that the black-white tension was high. Without provocation one of the coloured men was struck on his mouth by a white man. The police came to investigate. When the policemen arrived, the licensee of the pub ushered the sought-for man to the back of the pub. This action was seen by the friend of the attacked coloured man. The friend told one of the policemen that the attacker was in the building. The policeman told him to shut up or he would be taken to the station and charged. On this admonition the coloured man took out his diary and was about to take down the number of the policeman. He was thereupon arrested. He was charged for obstruction and disorderly behaviour. The licensee and his wife were witnesses for the police. The man was charged five shillings.

As recently as December, 1964, in the incident at the Lambeth Town Hall previously referred to in this report, during the abominable be-

haviour of the policemen, the Secretary of the West Indian Standing Conference (London Area) attempted to take the numbers of some of the hostile policemen. He was rudely accosted for doing this and immediately the policemen involved tried to conceal their numbers while the others simply disappeared. Although in the letter from Mr. Roy Searman, he said that the police acted in no way "other than properly", they scampered from the scene as soon as their numbers were being taken. Within five minutes of our attempt to take their numbers all the policemen left everybody on the pavement in front of the Town Hall and disappeared. If their actions were proper, why did they disappear? There was one very aggressive policeman - L. 197, who rudely exposed his number to the Secretary saying "Take the number and see how far you can get with it".

The general attitude of police officers to the coloured community is strained and the sooner the authorities can realise this distasteful situation and adopt ways and means to get through to those who now serve as police officers that as peace officers, human relations are essential when dealing with all people, the clarion call to the populace to assist policemen will not fall by the wayside.

I acknowledge the fact that there are law-breakers in the immigrant community and there are also those persons who are very arrogant to the police. In both Jamaica and Trinidad many of the inhabitants resent the action of the police whether they are acting properly or improperly. There are those of the immigrant population who habitually come into conflict with the police at home and this attitude has been imported into this country. I do not condone this behaviour. The police must bring these people to book by all means, but the methods used must be just, after all, justice must not only be done but be seen to be done.

REMEDY

In July this year, Mr. Rose asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training or educational methods are employed by the Metropolitan Police to promote a greater understanding of the problems of immigrant communities, with a view to securing better relations between the police and all sections of the public.

Sir Frank Soskice pointed out that the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis has made special arrangements to promote greater understanding of the problems of immigrant communities. These arrangements include a series of talks given last year by a member of the Staff of the High Commissioner for Jamaica to the teaching staff of the two metropolitan police training schools, and the inclusion of this subject in the regular talks on current affairs given at the schools. The attendance at one of the training schools of numbers of overseas students from all parts of the Commonwealth, he maintains, also helps greatly to promote understanding.

A Chief Superintendent has been given special responsibility for liaison between the Metropolitan Police and representatives of coloured immigrants and is active in promoting closer contacts.

The Commissioner's plan is not comprehensive enough. It does not embrace the broader basis for better understanding in this multi-racial society. Talking is not acting. The problem must be tackled in real terms, but the political timidity of the party in power prevents it from dealing with problems that now confront the British Society in a less dramatised manner.

Despite the fact that the powers that be harp and carp about multi-racialism, yet they treat one part of the "multi" in a racial manner, thus denying them the rights and privileges as everybody else. In almost every other country in the World except Australia and the U.K., there are coloured policemen where there is a multi-racial society, even in South Africa and Rhodesia where there is apartheid or pro-apartheid practices, there are coloured policemen. In Australia there are no coloured policemen because of the colour bar and in U.K., because of colour prejudice. A start must be made in this country to break the ice.

Firstly, coloured policemen when appointed should be employed at all levels. They should not be stationed in predominately coloured areas only, but should be dispersed over the entire respective areas.

Secondly, there should be a modest movement of policemen to the Commonwealth Countries with a coloured population. This country must make sure that they enter into the ranks and not as officers. By this method the British policeman would learn the background of the immigrant, his attitude to policemen in his own country and how problems are tackled in the country in which he is posted. The way the miscreant is dealt with in his own country could be then related to those in this country in terms of U.K. standards and so adapted in this country.

This system would not mean that the immigrant would be dealt with in one way and the members of the host community in another way but since a fixed standard cannot be set to deal with human problems, each case involving any member of our non multi-racial society would be dealt with according to the circumstances.

Thirdly, policemen should be urged to become members of voluntary liaison committees in their own right at least one officer as its member. In this way, police will be able to understand and most probably appreciate the behaviour pattern of the immigrant and so be able to deal with him free of any prejudice or preconceived notion of superiority of nationality or race.

Fourthly, frequent film shows of the way of life and living standards of the immigrant in his country should be a practice of the staff in the two police training schools.

Ever so often, films from the colonies are showed in this country, to bring out the worst side of West Indian life. This practice is now anachronistic. A realistic approach is necessary and a new type of audio-visual aid programme should be instituted so that the true values of the West Indian in his own setting would be brought out.

Fifthly, Members of the West Indian Standing Conference should be invited from time to time to address cadets in training schools and other police conferences on the West Indian - Police relationship.

CONCLUSION

I am convinced that the police force is reeking with pressure on its creaking joints and miracles could not be expected of it. It is a known fact that the authorities cannot always recruit the best talent for the force because better jobs exist in other places, but the police potential would be greatly enhanced if proper training along the lines suggested above are put into operation.

There is no doubt that the police are still doing a good job and their responsibilities are great and varied, but this should not be the cause for mass complaints against the police, and methods of police investigation of complaints against them should not be one so organised as to have the tendency to condone the disgusting actions of some members of the police force, just because they cannot get the necessary recruits.

An impressive police image could be projected if only each member of the force realised that he as a person is an ambassador of good will in a most efficient, highly organised and necessary institution in this democracy, but when incidents occur as those described in this report, a mutual climate of bitterness is created and it is this climate that must be eradicated, rather than the establishment of the rights or wrongs of the cases themselves. The acts of one or two policemen may wrongly cast suspicion and mistrust on the whole force by the group which suffers from them.