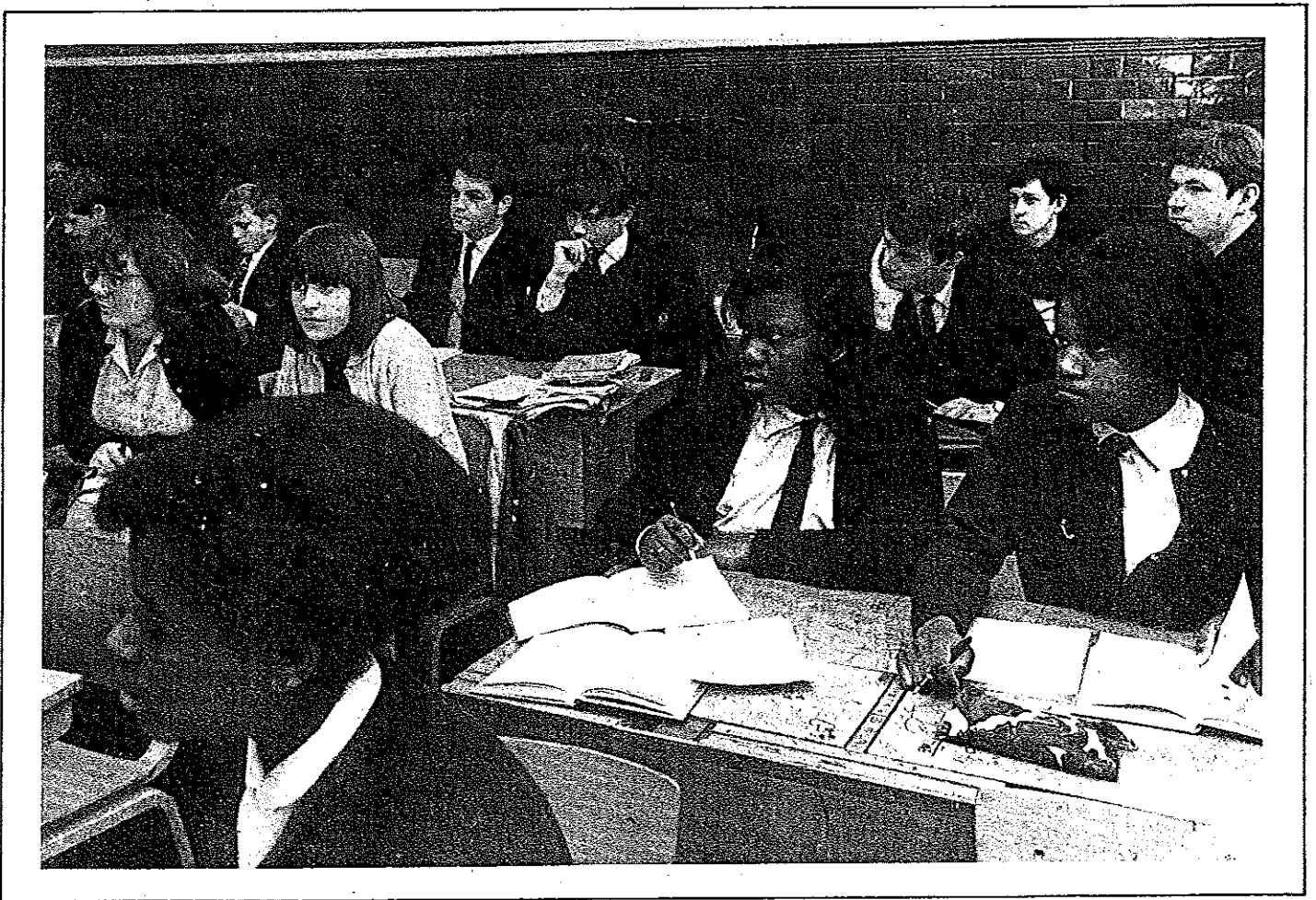


# EDUCATION RACE AND REVOLUTION

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EDUCATION, RACE and REVOLUTION

by

Antony Flew

"I want to be a man on the same basis and level as any white citizen - I want to be as free as the whitest citizen. I want to exercise, and in full, the same rights as the white American. I want to be eligible for employment exclusively on the basis of my skills and employability, and for housing solely on my capacity to pay. I want to have the same privileges, the same treatment in public places as every other person."

- Dr Ralph Bunche (The first black American to serve as, among many other things, US permanent representative at the UN)

1. The purpose of this pamphlet

The Commission for Racial Equality, as it likes to tell us in its advertisements, "was set up by the Race Relations Act 1976 with the duties of working towards the elimination of discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between different racial groups generally." These are indeed admirable objectives, which no person of goodwill could fail to share. Certainly racism is an outrage; if but only if, that is, the word "racism" is, as it should be, construed as meaning the advantaging or disadvantaging of individuals for no other or better reason than that they happen to be members of this racial group rather than that.

The purpose of that Act, like the purpose of all the 1964 Civil Rights legislation in the USA, was to answer a cry for justice, a cry such as that eloquently raised in our epigraph from Dr Ralph Bunche. This cry was, in the most straightforward and traditional understanding, an appeal for justice. It was, that is to say, an insistence that he, and of course all others, should as a matter of absolute right be accorded their own several and individual deserts and entitlements. In particular, he was demanding that he should be appointed, or not appointed, to any position for which he might choose to apply strictly and solely on the basis of his own individual merits, or lack of them; and to be neither disadvantaged in any such contests by negative discrimination against members of the racial group to which he happened to belong, nor advantaged by any positive discrimination in favour of that same racial group.<sup>(1)</sup>

Anyone who warms to such an appeal - and who does not?<sup>(2)</sup> - is bound to be pleased to read in the 1982 Annual Report of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) that in that year the Commission won only 30 of the 200 individual cases which they brought or supported before Industrial Tribunals; tribunals which have yet to be accused of any pro-employer bias.<sup>(3)</sup> Of course even one case of unjust or otherwise wrongful mistreatment is always one too many. Nevertheless 30 too many is far less than might have been feared. This low figure must incline us to hope and to believe that the actual situation is very much better than suggested by all those who are forever excoriating our people as rotted by endemic racism.

It is perhaps just worth remarking, by the way, that the Commission itself is a quango. All its members, therefore, as well as its many employees, both direct and indirect, whether they realise it or not, have an obvious job-protection interest in making the most of the extent of the evil which they are commissioned to encounter. Our own concern here, however, is not with pruning public expenditure on this or any other quango. It is, rather, with the present and future impact upon our state educational system of certain Radical or, for those who prefer that terminology, hard left policies. These are propounded, and are to be enforced, in the name of racial equality, and in the guise of a war against racism.

Although sometimes eirenicly presented as policies to promote objectives common to people of all parties and of none, these policies are in fact derived from a new and totally different conception of racism; a conception which - unlike that which won all-party support for the 1976 Act - calls for nothing less than a revolutionary transformation of the whole of British society. Also - just by the way - it seems to license if not to require a deal of what, in terms of the original conception, may itself reasonably be rated "institutionalized racism". (Any policy of positive discrimination in favour of some is always and necessarily at the same time a policy of negative discrimination against the others who are not to be thus privileged.)

This new and totally different conception of racism, as well as the Radical policies derivable therefrom, are only now beginning to have an impact upon our state educational system. But it is a new conception which has been many years gestating. It has also, it would appear, long since begun to provide the basis for policy in some other spheres. Thus we cannot hope to understand the activities of the World Council of Churches (WCC), through what it calls its Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) save in terms of this sort of neo-Marxist conception. As is now notorious, the PCR has funded and continues to fund organizations dedicated to establishing irremovable one-party despotisms in various parts of Africa. In defiance of all protests from those speaking for their often Christian and almost always black victims, the grant list included even the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe. In Britain too the WCC has joined with the British Council of Churches (BCC) in funding the revolutionary, black power alliance Towards Racial Justice (TRJ) and its incendiary journal Race Today.(4)

Our present examination of this new and neo-Marxist conception of racism, and of its implications for education, will proceed in three stages. In the first we shall consider documents distributed to all teachers in Berkshire under the auspices of the Local Educational Authority (LEA). It is wryly remarkable that the Berkshire Education Committee, on which Conservatives have a precarious one-vote majority over a fairly evenly balanced Labour and Alliance opposition, seems later to have approved all four documents without substantial dissent; notwithstanding that at an earlier teachers' meeting their presumed author had admitted that what was advocated by the first constituted "a Marxist analysis".

The second stage will consist in a rather more abstract and general treatment of the fundamental fallacies and falsehoods either embodied in or presupposed by this "Marxist analysis". It is intended that this whole pamphlet, but especially that second stage, should provide a serviceable briefing for those suddenly confronted with the new neo-Marxist conception of racism, and with some of its educational consequences. Though often realizing at once that there is something going badly wrong, they are all too likely to lack any confidence that they can put their fingers on exactly what it is.

They will be the more likely to hold their peace for three further reasons. First: anyone daring to challenge anything proposed or done in the sacred names of racial equality and anti-racism nowadays risks abuse as an alleged fascist and racist. Second: meetings, and often meetings at which decisions are demanded, are usually of teachers tired out after hard days at the chalk face, but conducted by officials or advisers fresh from the much less exacting environment of a Shire or Town Hall. Third: although all the Berkshire and other similar documents speak of the need for the widest discussion, they also make it clear that these "discussions" are expected to be like the "Great Debate" on educational policy initiated by Prime Minister Callaghan's Ruskin speech in October 1976; a "Great Debate" in which the then Minister, Mrs Shirley Williams, took effective care not to consult contributors to any Black Papers, nor anyone else who might have challenged head-on the policies whose effects were the original cause for concern.

The third and final stage will be to look at four documents recently circulated to all its employees by the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA). These go much further and are much more explicit than their Berkshire predecessors. Appropriately to the present political control of ILEA they represent, so to speak, the full-frontal, hardcore version of Benno-Bolshevism. (But documents from Brent, which became available only while the text of the present pamphlet was being finally revised, are, as will become obvious from passages quoted in the Notes below, still more explicit in their menaces to traditional, non-political schooling.) The point of covering both Berkshire and ILEA is at one and the same time both to bring out the full policy implications of these Radical ideas and to show that no LEA is safe, except in so far as it contains members both willing to resist and properly briefed for the job.

2. What has happened in Berkshire?

The first Berkshire document is Education for Equality (EE). It was distributed to all teachers in LEA schools by the Advisory Committee for Multicultural Education, a sub-committee of Berkshire Education Committee. The three subsequent papers, in one or other of which all the ideas of EE find acceptance, were issued in the name of the Director of Education. Of these the last and most remarkable makes what it sees as just a few interim proposals for hiring extra race relations staff: "Resources to begin . . . are in principle available in the 1983/4 budget"; and "assistance from central government . . . should amount to 75% of the salary costs . . ." (pp. 1 and 5).

(i) These modest proposals are for a total of 23 posts; 18 Scale 2 teachers actually to teach (at least part of the time); 3 people on Scale 3 as team-leaders and deputy team-leaders; and another 3 at "Group 4 headship equivalent level" to advise and supervise. The cream of what we can scarcely refuse to label the black joke is that all the actual teaching proposed is to be of or in languages or dialects which are supposed to be the mother tongues of the pupils, rather than the language of the country of which they are as adults to become equal citizens.

Why, please, should any public money at all be devoted to either of these two purposes? Certainly there is a case for the public funding of the teaching of English to immigrants whose native language it is not. For the object of the exercise surely is, or ought to be, as fast as we can so to assimilate our non-white immigrants that they become English or Scots or Welsh who just happen to have skins of a minority colour? Non-white immigrants, just like white immigrants, who want either to become or to remain British citizens, and who at the same time may wish, as is entirely right and proper, to preserve and to transmit to their children something of the languages and cultures of the places whence they came, should form private associations privately to promote these entirely legitimate and welcome purposes.

We need not look so far as the USA for a model to follow. It is enough to recall that generations of Jews, whose forebears have since Cromwell been coming to the British Isles from many foreign lands, have since all accepted English as their mother tongue and have become unequivocally British. They have nevertheless privately preserved both their religion and various other elements of their traditional Jewish culture. Have Jews ever been given, have they ever asked for, public funding either for teaching in or for the teaching of Hebrew at the fully maintained schools attended by their children?

A recent issue of the Reading Chronicle reports that, at the last meeting of the full Berkshire Education Committee, all the proposals listed in the last paragraph but two, went through on the nod. Their passage was eased by the sub-committee's urging that not all the 23 new appointments needed to be made in one financial year, and that 75% of their cost would in any case be recovered from central government funds. But we now have to ask by what right it is proposed - in, of all the things, the name of racial equality and combatting racism - that Berkshire County Council and the Treasury should jointly spend the money of ratepayers and taxpayers on hiring more staff for the privileged service of racial minorities. Surely it should either be allowed to remain fructifying in the pockets of the people or else be spent on the education of all our children indiscriminately, black and white together?



(ii) To such - too rarely asked - questions EE offers what the author probably believed to be an answer. For he distinguishes three "perspectives", dismissing the first two in favour of the third. These first two are "A perspective emphasising mainly Integration" and "A perspective emphasising mainly Diversity" (pp 5-6 and 6-7). It is difficult to see any force at all in the author's objections to these two approaches, until we realize that it is in terms of a quite different conception of racism that he is faulting them both as either positively racist or else inadequately anti-racist.

It is also clear that he is a faithful client of the confusion between race and culture, a confusion which itself both has been and remains a perennial source of - in the old and true sense - racism.<sup>(5)</sup> For there neither is nor could be any "black [or white, or brown] cultural identity" (p 6): there are only cultures which just happen to be common to a set of people all or most of whom are black, or white, or brown.<sup>(6)</sup> Or, if blackness or whiteness or brownness is in fact made so much of by those who share that culture that those of alien race are not admissible, then that racially exclusive culture is indeed most categorically to be condemned as being - always in the old and proper sense - racist. If this were true of our own so much condemned British culture, which it plainly is not, then "Integration" would be not so much an unacceptable option as no option at all.

(iii) The third and for Berkshire today the only permissible option is "A perspective emphasising primarily Equality" (pp 8-12). This is said to have "developed in the 1970s", but it "has so far received less official attention" (p 8). How very true that is can be seen when we study the two key redefinitions: the first of "black"; and the second of "racism".

The employment of the term "black" by the Commission for Racial Equality is loose and confusing. Sometimes they refer only to blacks, sometimes to all non-whites, and sometimes their intentions are obscure or indeterminate. But official Berkshire proposes so to redefine the word as to include, unequivocally, "both Afro-Caribbean and Asian people" (p 3: emphasis original), while simultaneously extending "Afro-Caribbean" to cover all and only those previously rated black. These manoeuvres might appear merely perverse, or a cheap concession to the vulgar, or both. Concession to the vulgar they may also be, but the prime purpose

is as straightforwardly intelligible as it is both obscurantist and sinister.

That purpose is so to collapse distinctions between different groups of non-white immigrants that it becomes possible to maintain that any relatively poor economic or educational performance by any such groups is mainly, perhaps wholly, attributable to white racism. By thus concealing relevant differences between different non-white groups, this bit of "Marxist analysis" suggests: both that they are, and equally, victims of (exclusively white) racism; and that there is nothing which they themselves can do to better their conditions. There is nothing, that is, which they can do apart from supporting the right left-wing political campaigns. "The term 'black'", we are told, "emphasises the common experience which both Afro-Caribbean and Asian people have of being victims of racism, and their common determination to oppose racism" (p 3).

It is, however, impossible to emphasise too strongly the importance of NOT thinking of all immigrants, or even of all non-white immigrants, as one homogeneous mass. For there is already a good deal of evidence to show that, especially in the second generation, Asians are reaching higher levels of achievement than blacks; and hence evidence to suggest that white racism cannot be the sole factor accounting for black failures; at least not unless we insist, in the teeth of the evidence, that white racism is exclusively or mainly anti-black.

Consider, for instance, a finding of the National Child Development Study (NCDS) or the National Children's Bureau (NCB). The NCDS has, it seems, discovered that whereas all immigrants - West Indian, Asian, and Irish too - live on average in above averagely overcrowded conditions in the first generation; and whereas with both the West Indian and the Irish a considerable disparity persists into the second generation; with the Asians the disparity has, in the second generation, disappeared completely. <sup>(7)</sup>

As a further indication both of the motivation behind, and of the vested interests in, this seemingly perverse and arbitrary redefinition of "black", let us turn again to the 1982 Annual Report of the CRE. In the body of the text the Commission asserts that "ethnic minorities have taken more than their fair share" of youth unemployment; supporting this

with the statement that "In June 1982, the Commission published a survey of inner city youth unemployment . . . which indicated that 59% of young people of West Indian origin were unemployed, as compared with 41% of their white peers" (p 9).

It is clear that the CRE believes, or at any rate would like us to believe, that this certainly "potentially explosive" disparity is due to white racism, to discrimination against non-whites as such; and, therefore, it falls within the CRE's statutory terms of reference. Yet on the very same page they present in diagram form fuller and slightly different figures. These show: that their wholesale claim extended to all "ethnic minorities" is simply false; that their suggested explanation of this 59% to 41% disparity, in terms of white discrimination against all non-whites, must be mistaken; and, hence, that the cherished corollary conclusion, that to destroy it is their own peculiar and appointed business, falls to the ground. For the diagram reveals other disparities in inner-city juvenile unemployment. Its figures are: (not 41 but) 42% for Whites, 59% for Afro-Caribbeans; and 40% - a little less, that is, than for Whites - for Asians.

(iv) There are two morals which we should draw from this sort of evidence: the first primary; and the second consequential. The primary moral is that we should now look for most of the explanation of underachievement in any underachieving immigrant group: not in white, or even in non-white, racism; but in cultural differences, in the broadest sense, between those groups and others. Suppose, for instance, that it is the case that in British schools 43% of the children from West Indian families have only one parent, as against 5% of those from Asian and 20% of those from all families.<sup>(8)</sup> Then that fact alone might be sufficient to explain most of the present scholastic underachievement of our British Afro-Caribbeans.

Anyone sincerely concerned, not just to plug a political or private interest line, but actually to solve some of the theoretical and policy problems in this area, should read the works of Thomas Sowell - above all his superb Ethnic America.<sup>(9)</sup> Sowell is a Columbia and Chicago-trained black economist, whose family moved during his boyhood from the Deep South to Harlem. His books are full of fascinating evidence of often quite spectacular differences in educational, economic, and political achievement as between different always immigrant minority groups.

Members of such culturally different groups may be in practice indistinguishable by even the most determined racial bigot. In the USA, for example, Afro-Caribbeans from the formerly British islands have a record in every area of achievement superior to that of native born American blacks. (In the face of the UK's very different experience of Afro-Caribbean immigrants this surely constitutes the juiciest of juicy problems for any genuinely curious and unprejudiced investigative sociologists to get their teeth into!)

The second and consequential moral is that we badly need research focussing on cultural differences rather than racial similarities. For if only our researchers - in this encouraged and supported by formidable vested interests in race relations - were not so obsessed with race and racism, we might have evidence also of significant differences in performance between those coming from different parts of the Caribbean. It was, after all, non-racial differences between inhabitants of the different islands which killed the project of a West Indies Federation. <sup>(10)</sup> Again, it was cultural rather than racial differences which led to the division of the Indian sub-continent into first two, then three, not always friendly nation states.

(v) The second obnoxious redefinition offered by Education for Equality is one which will, if adopted, license the transformation of the CRE and its local subsidiaries into instruments of revolution; and that a revolution not in education only. Under the italicized heading, "The central and pervasive influence of racism" the crucial clauses run: "There are certain routine practices, customs and procedures in our society whose consequence is that black people have poorer jobs, health, housing and life-chances than do the white majority . . . These practices and customs are maintained by relations and structures of power, and are justified by centuries-old beliefs and attitudes which hold that black people are essentially inferior to white people - biologically, or culturally, or both. "Racism" is a shorthand term for this combination of discriminatory practices; unequal relations and structures of power, and negative beliefs and attitudes"(p 9).

Look now at the implications of thus pouring new wine into old bottles. Given this redefinition of "racism", and given too that, whatever the word is to be used to mean, racism has to be eschewed and abominated, then we are going sooner or later to be asked to condemn and abandon any and every institution or practice the actual effects of which are that the racial distribution in any social group is substantially different from that in the population as a whole. If there are n% of blacks and m% of browns in the population as a whole, then there will have to be n% of blacks and m% of browns in every profession, class, team, area, or what have you. Anything, but anything, which stands in the way of this proposed ideal is to be denounced and execrated. It has to be, by definition, racist.

Now no one denies that in Britain, as no doubt in every other multi-racial society too, some racial groups are in various ways underachieving and others - if we may for one moment genuflect towards Procrustean meanness and malignancy - overachieving. Certainly in the USA blacks are heavily overrepresented in professional basketball, while Jews have been about nine times overrepresented among America's Nobel Prizewinners (27% to 3%). So if we accept the new definition, or anything like it, we shall be required to put down any such overrepresentation, as well as the necessarily consequent underrepresentations, to "institutionalized racism". And this we will be required to do notwithstanding that we know perfectly well that these overrepresentations actually result from entirely honest and racially colourblind attempts to appoint the strongest candidates. (In a business as savagely competitive as professional basketball no one could afford to indulge any racial preferences, even if they had them.)

So far, in Berkshire at least, all those concerned have repudiated (old sense) racist policies, such as racial quotas, or what is euphemistically called positive discrimination. Yet, by endorsing a redefinition of "racism" in terms of equality of outcome, they have, wittingly or unwittingly, committed themselves to denouncing as racist everything which does not in fact achieve precisely the intended effects of such intentionally racist policies.

These and further implications of this or similar redefinitions ought to have made an Education Committee one of the last rather than the first to concede. They above all others should have noticed the ruinous consequences: not only for the maintenance of any racially unbiased standards of achievement in anything; but also for the untrammelled pursuit of factual truth.

The second sinister and potentially obscurantist thing here is the introduction of references to actual or alleged matters of fact - to "negative beliefs" as Berkshire tactfully puts it. For this is to demand, irrespective of any evidence which might be turned up to the contrary, that everyone must renounce certain disapproved propositions about average or universal differences or similarities as between races and racial groups; differences and similarities, that is, either in respect of biology or in respect of culture. To concede such a demand to the often Marxist militants of race relations is to open the door to purges: not only of libraries and of textbooks and of curricula; but also of people. It is not ten years since many a campus in the USA was ringing with calls to "Sack" and even to "Kill Jensen" - Jensen being a psychologist who dared to publish evidence suggesting that there may be genetically determined average differences between different races and racial groups in respect of other than their racial defining characteristics. (11)

A third altogether unacceptable implication of any such redefinition, although this consequence too is clearly intended by our redefiners, is that the offence of racism now becomes, by definition, one which can be committed only by whites, and against victims who can only be (Berkshire) blacks; that is to say, either Afro-Caribbean or Asian. Yet tens of thousands of our British Asians - the refugees from Uganda under the monstrous rule of Amin - have the bitterest and most intimate reason to know that this cherished but malign implication is utterly false. (12)

The practical upshot of Section 2(v) is, therefore, that we need to do two things: first, to make as plain as we can the enormous differences between what we must insist to be the old and true sense of "racism" and this new neo-Marxist monstrosity; and, second, to urge that LEA's and everyone else should refuse to accept any such unacceptably tendentious redefinition. We would further suggest that the CRE must be directed, on

pain of dissolution: first to formulate its own redefinition, consistent with the spirit of the 1976 Act; and then to demand that all its agents and subsidiaries stick to that appointed brief. It is also overtime to appoint to that commission a few members fully seized of the erroneous nature of all the errors to be examined in Section 3, below.

We have to speak here of the spirit of the 1976 Act, or of the spirit behind it, because in places the parliamentary draftspersons made rather a mess of the letter. The trouble was that they never succeeded in sorting out the relations and lack of relations between race and culture. One well-remembered consequence was the at least temporarily successful prosecution of a municipal bus company, which refused to sanction any turban variant of its uniform cap. Certainly no one who has ever served alongside Sikhs in the armed forces of the Crown will have the slightest patience with such wooden bumbledom. Yet equally certainly Sikhism is a religion, and hence a matter not of race but of culture.

### 3. Fundamental fallacies and favourite falsehoods

At this second or filling stage of our sandwich treatment it may be helpful to detach ourselves a little from hotly controversial current documents. We proceed therefore to a short, systematic, sharp review of a constellation of fallacies and falsehoods, all of which are somewhere committed or asserted, presupposed or implied, in both the Berkshire and the ILEA documents; as well as in the other literature of the "perspective emphasising primarily Equality . . . developed in the 1970's."<sup>(13)</sup>

(i) The first fundamental false assumption is that of environmental omnipotence. Society or the social system, usually hypostatized as agents capable of planning and intention, are taken to mould and confine individuals and groups - as if human beings were originally inert, uniform and infinitely malleable. This assumption is of course contrary to all our experience both as and of those diverse and peculiar creatures which we are. In particular, and most relevantly it conflicts with all such evidence as is deployed by Sowell. This evidence shows enormous differences in subsequent performance as between different immigrant groups, immigrant groups often coming from vastly different cultural traditions, yet all starting - to employ the tendentious contemporary cant - more or less equally deprived and equally

disadvantaged. What distinguished these groups, even as they were all living in similar and similarly wretched material conditions, was differences between - in the broadest sense - their cultures. It was these differences and not any decisions by Capitalism, or any other sort of hypostatized collective Society or System, which resulted in their individual members being and becoming either more or less able and inclined to see and to take opportunities.

This false general assumption of environmental omnipotence is sometimes linked with a particular fallacy of equivocation. Some educationists find it seductive. These two errors together were the main stock-in-trade of Bernard Coard's How the West Indian child is made educationally sub-normal in the British School System (London: New Beacon, 1971). This radically misguided and misleading book has a dual topical interest: both because it is now one of those most strongly recommended by ILEA; and because its author, who used to be a London teacher, later became Deputy Prime Minister of Grenada. Back in 1971 Coard was the moving spirit in founding the WCC- and BCC-backed TRJ and its journal Race Today. Most recently, along with his even more ferocious wife Paula, he was one of the leaders of the coup which, as he would himself surely say, liquidated both Grenada's Prime Minister and several members of the Cabinet. The particular present fallacy confounds causal with criterial senses of "make": we move invalidly from observing that, given certain criteria, these lads and lasses are made, or rated as, ESN; to the grotesque conclusion that it is employing those criteria which makes, or causes, them to be as they are; ie educationally sub-normal. Hence, presumably, all that we have to do in order to raise the level of their educational achievement is to jettison these, or perhaps all, relevant criteria.

(ii) Next there are the confusions between opportunity and outcome, and about what it means to say that all contestants had a fair and equal chance of success in some competition. Again and again evidence shows members of one social or racial set doing better, on average, than members of another social or racial set. These differences in outcome are then confidently construed as by themselves sufficient to demonstrate corresponding differences in opportunity. Yet we have here a valid argument only when we are in a position to supply a further premise stating that, in whatever may be the relevant respects, the members of all the sets compared were equally able, equally eager, and equally well



qualified. And this we almost never are.

Suppose that we really do want to discover where there is and is not equal opportunity, and where there is and is not actual racial discrimination in selection. Then we shall have to look at the actual selection procedures, rather than at the eventual outcomes of those procedures. What we shall certainly not do is immediately to infer: from the observation that, compared with its representation in the population as a whole, this or that social or racial set is in this or that area over- or underrepresented; the categorical conclusions that this or that social or racial set owes its over- or underrepresentation to some form of positive or negative discrimination - and, furthermore, that this is one more scandal to set at the door of White British Society and its [partly] Capitalist Social System.

We have already seen several examples of this fallacious argument applied to racial sets. Several more, applied now to social sets also, are supplied by the ILEA documents. For instance: the first speaks of "the history of our education system, with elementary schools for the children of the poor and public or endowed grammar schools for the well off, and with well-documented evidence of the scholarship bias in the days of the eleven plus" (p 9). But this "well-documented evidence" of higher success rates in the higher social classes is by itself simply not evidence of any corresponding bias or distortion in the examination system.

There is another similar, associated fallacy. It consists in inferring that, if the contestants in any competition are all treated fairly by the organizers, and thus have equal opportunities of success, then the success of any one such contestant must be equiprobable with the success of any other. To accept this argument we should have to allow that any competition in which it is most probable that the best competitor will win must, for that reason alone, be put down as being unfairly conducted. Such arguments, though perennially popular, belong not to this world but to Wonderland.

(iii) A third outstanding star in this constellation of fallacies and falsehoods is the contention that no language and no culture either is or could be superior or inferior to any other. All, it is assumed or even asserted, are equally good. Or else - presumably because this makes less clear both what is being said and that it is either false or irrelevant - they are said to be equally (sneer) "good" or equally valid.

In the irrelevant interpretation these claims amount to no more than saying that all languages, and all cultures, are equally parts of the proper subject matter of linguistic science, or of social science; and perhaps also that all scientists ought in their working hours to be impartial and detached. But such sound and sensible claims about the need for scientists of different sorts to attend - at least collectively - to the whole of their respective fields are often either confounded with, or mistaken for, warrants to place equal instrumental or non-instrumental values on all the objects to be studied.

This requires explanation. To value something non-instrumentally is to value it as good in itself, irrespective of any possible further consequences of having it, whereas to value something instrumentally is to value it as a means to the achieving of some other and further end or ends. To maintain that anything is non-instrumentally valuable is indeed to make a value judgement; which is, no doubt, an inherently contentious move. For it is to say that, regardless of consequences, whatever it is which is thus non-instrumentally valued ought to be preferred. But to maintain that something is instrumentally valuable, adding the needed indication of the presumptively good end or ends to which it is alleged in fact to be a means, is to make a purely (would be) factual, unequivocally true or false assertion. For it is to say, only and precisely, that what is thus instrumentally valuable in fact just is an effective means of achieving a presumptively good objective; and all this quite regardless of whether you or I or anyone else either wants or ought to want that particular objective.

The purpose of that brief and, I hope, not too technical excursus into the philosophy of value is to begin to bring out the full outrageousness of the contention that no language and no culture may be said to be in any respect, or with regard to any possible objective, either superior or inferior to any other. A ban on the investigation of all such questions of instrumental efficiency, or on the publication of

the findings, must constitute an intolerable restriction upon the freedom of inquiry, or of speech and writing. Yet exactly this is what is demanded when "negative views" are embargoed, and everyone is required to allow that all cultures and all forms of linguistic expression are equally "good" or equally valid.

Here we need a distinction between two senses of "culture". In the more traditional understanding only some of the (higher) activities of any people or group count as cultural, while some people or some group could conceivably be wholly lacking in any (higher) culture at all. The list of particular activities rated as in this sense cultural varies from one language-user to another. But it will always include, surely, music, art and literature? Granted some list on these lines, then at least those miserable and unfortunate Ik - Colin Turnbull's The Mountain People (London Cape, 1973) - must be said to lack all culture, in this (higher) sense. But in the second - that of the anthropologists and other social scientists - even the Ik must have a culture. For now a culture is a matter of every kind of preference, disposition, social practice, and what have you; and not only those involved in activities which are, in the first sense, specifically cultural.

Whatever we may want to say about culture in the first sense, where attributions of value will normally be non-instrumental, we cannot but concede that cultures in the second sense may be, in certain respects and with reference to certain ends, superior or inferior one to another. Take first the case of languages. Whatever might be said about the attribution of such non-instrumental values as euphony or elegance, it would be - it is - simply silly to insist that every language is equally good for every possible practical purpose. (Silliness is compounded into academic pretentiousness when this insistence is then supported by appeals to the apparent findings of uncited research. <sup>(14)</sup>)

Waiving all questions about complexity or redundancy, it is sufficient to indicate how ill-advised it must be to attempt to employ a language lacking a vocabulary for discussing what you want to discuss. Of course it is true that, had the history of these islands been very different, we might all be speaking and writing a language other than English, or some other dialect might have achieved the status of Standard English. In that event we might have found that language, or that dialect, in every way as serviceable as English, or Standard English.

Nevertheless none of this speculative historical linguistics has the slightest tendency to show, as things in fact have been and now are, that it is not imperative for anyone proposing to make their home and their career in the United Kingdom to master English, and Standard English, rather than Urdu or Creole. If we were all proposing to live our lives in Japan and to be Japanese then the imperatives would be different, yet no less imperative: Japanese it would have to be, and Standard Japanese at that.

With appropriate alterations the same applies to cultures. One culture may be well, even perfectly, adapted to the requirements of one form of life. The better that original adaptation, the more likely it is that some features of that culture will constitute handicaps to achievement in another and in many ways very different social environment. Other features may perhaps turn out to constitute positive advantages. For examples of cultural features of both kinds we can again turn to the writings of Thomas Sowell. Here and elsewhere it is impossible to emphasize too strongly the need to emancipate ourselves from blinkering obsessions with race and racism, and to draw deep on the accumulated experience of a country which has in the last hundred and fifty years accepted and assimilated the largest and most various immigration in the entire history of the world.

(iv) The final case for treatment in this constellation of errors and confusions is the assumption that, in order to legitimate a repudiation of racism, it is necessary to maintain: both that no culture is either superior or inferior to any other; and that no race or racial group differs in any substantial way in respect of any physiological or physiologically based characteristics from any other. The exception, although it is remarkable how rarely this obvious exception is remembered, must be their racial defining characteristics. (That contrast between races and racial groups is introduced to allow for possible differences and distinctions between the whole race and one or more of its subsets.)

To feel a need to substantiate these two contentions must, surely, be a burden to any realistic and open-minded person? For we have already seen that the first, in any relevant understanding, is false. And, given that no one is so rash as to dispute the genetic determination of the racial and hence biological defining characteristics, we can have little

reason for confidence that there is no significant difference in the distribution of the other genes in the relevant gene pools. We might hope, therefore, that clients of the assumption that these contentions have to be substantiated would be glad to be relieved of it.

We shall, I fear, be disappointed.<sup>(15)</sup> Nor will those clients be much mollified if it is also pointed out that the possibility of differences between the gene pools of different races and different racial groups constitutes a further reason for rejecting inferences from inequalities of outcome to corresponding inequalities of opportunity. For most of them are committed to arguments presupposing the far less probable assumption that there are no significant differences between the gene pools of different societies and different social sets (or classes).

So let us press on, abandoning all hopes of popularity; pausing only to point out that such differences must result if any genetically different sets happen to achieve different net reproduction rates.

Relief will be found in two directions. First: any relevant genetic differences which may eventually be discovered are going to be differences solely on average. There seems absolutely no reason to anticipate that any genetically determined characteristic of talent or temperament will turn out to be peculiar to members of any particular races or racial groups. Yet the only conceivable grounds for eliminating candidates on the basis of their racial group membership would be knowledge that no members of their particular groups could possess whatever are the relevant kind of merits. Even then, these rejections would not really be rejections on grounds of racial group membership as such.

Second: the situation could, however, be transformed if we were to accept the new, neo-Marxist conception of racism. For that condemns as racist any disproportionate representation of any racial group anywhere. But, if there are even average differences in the genetic endowments of such groups, then this will most likely result in several over- and under-representations. That undermines the practicability of the racial quota ideal of non-racism. This perhaps is a main reason why such Marxist scientists as Professor Steven Rose of the Open University appear to be so committed to the two contentions explained earlier in the present subsection.

4. ILEA unmasks its Final Solution

The ILEA documents were also distributed to all teachers employed by that authority, but Berkshire acted one term earlier. Whereas Berkshire was concerned explicitly with race alone, all four ILEA documents share the significantly extended title Race, Sex and Class. Their subtitles follow: (1) Achievement in Schools (AS); (2) Multi-ethnic Education in Schools (MEES); (3) A Policy for Equality: Race; and (4) Anti-Racist Statement and Guidelines. We are nowhere told either that or why (3) and (4) contain nothing not previously included as, respectively, Appendix A and Appendix B of (2). (Could it be that ILEA is resolved to maintain its record of achieving some of the poorest educational results for the highest spending per pupil; a record to bear in mind when reflecting that the present Chairman of CRE was previously ILEA's Director of Education?)

(i) AS opens with an unusually long introduction by the Leader, Mrs Frances Morrell. It is most remarkable for compressing into a thousand or two words tokens of every type of fallacy and falsehood treated in Section 3, above. But she also manages to squeeze in a comprehensive threat to standards in higher education, a misunderstanding of the present Minister's concern about the unmeasured under-achievement of the bottom 40%, as well as an apparently unsupported claim that "the last decade . . . has seen a measurable year-on-year improvement in the performance of London's children" (p 5).

Certainly their performance must be measurable. But if it has in fact been measured, why are the measurements not published? Notice too, here and everywhere else, that never, never must it be suggested that there is anything which children or sets of children could or should do for themselves - like, for instance, stopping truancing or starting to pay attention.<sup>(16)</sup> No, the Leader explicitly disowns any concern "with remedying deficiencies in children . . . we are in fact concerned to improve our institutional arrangements" (p 5: emphasis original).

The main body of AS is "a seminar paper . . . prepared jointly with Jo Mortimore", his or her collaborators remaining anonymous. It contains a good deal of material suggesting - though not, apparently, to its authors - that the most educationally relevant fact about our non-white children is NOT that they are non-white; or, as ILEA would have it,

black.

(ii) MEES too has an expansive Introduction by Mrs Morrell, urging us to understand "issues of race and especially of immigration ....in the wider framework of colonialism" (p 6). A predominantly yet not exclusively Marxist reading list is provided. The main text starts with more about colonialism and the slave trade: nowhere is there any mention of the parts played in its development and continuation by blacks and by Arabs, or in its abolition by whites.<sup>(17)</sup> "A Black Perspective" commends the bizarre contribution of Bernard Coard, analysed earlier; and more of the similar. All this may be accounted red. Yet the real meat is in the Appendices.

The most astonishing thing about Appendix A is that it is almost all, word for word, the same as parts of Berkshire's Education for Equality. Thus the three introductory paragraphs on "Adopting an Overall Perspective" are identical. Then "A perspective emphasizing mainly "Integration" becomes "A perspective emphasizing mainly Assimilation" - a modest improvement, I think. However the texts of both the misdescription and the official rejection remain identical. In "A perspective emphasizing mainly [not simply Diversity but] Cultural Diversity" and in "A perspective emphasizing primarily Equality" there are some changes, both in the ordering of elements and in the precise wording, but no significant or substantial alteration. Presumably both documents derive from some common source. Certainly we expect after the present pamphlet has been published to hear of other LEA's which have received and, one fears, endorsed a similar "Marxist analysis".

The one substantial difference is in the "Note on Terminology" where, after omitting "white" we have a whole supplementary paragraph added to the definition of "black". It reads, "Other groups . . . usually referred to as "ethnic minorities" also suffer varying degrees of prejudice and discrimination. These include Chinese, Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Turks, Vietnamese, Moroccan . . . Irish . . . Jews . . . In using the term "black" in this paper it is not the Authority's intention to exclude any minority group"(p 19).

(iii) Appendix B is ILEA's "Anti-racist Statement". This makes still more explicit the all-pervasive, revolutionary implications of adopting the new, neo-Marxist conception of racism. That, it will be recalled, is defined as including all, repeat all, "practices, customs and procedures whose consequence is that black people have poorer jobs, health, housing, education and life-chances than do the white majority". If, for instance, there are not at this time any black or brown MPs it cannot but be, by definition, a case of "institutionalized racism".<sup>(18)</sup> It thus becomes imperative to revolutionize our political system. For is it not one of "relations and structures of power from which black people have been and are excluded" (p 21)? No matter that blacks and browns are excluded for exactly and only the same reason as the overwhelming majority of the white majority - namely, that we have so far failed to get ourselves elected. No excuse: from sentence of liquidation passed by Benno-Bolsheviks there is no appeal!

Appendix A tells us: "It is necessary to remove those practices and procedures which discriminate against black pupils/students and their families. These include courses, syllabuses, schemes of work, topics, textbooks, materials and methods which ignore or deny the validity of black experience, perspectives and culture; some of the tests and other criteria, including teachers' expectations, which govern access and admission to particular schools or post-school courses, or are used to allocate pupils/students to particular sets, streams, classes or bands. ." (p 21).

The tests etc which it is thus necessary to remove are - note well - not those which, in the traditional senses, discriminate unfairly and irrelevantly. On the contrary: it is now sufficient condemnation simply to show that some racial (or "ethnic") group performs worse than whites. Lower black (or "black") performance has thus become the criterion of such discrimination. But what if, like the (American) Japanese-Americans and the (British) Ugandan Asians, the minority group performs better?<sup>(19)</sup>

All this already adds up to the launching of a revolution of destruction against traditional, colour-blind public education in inner London. Yet even that is not all: "Other factors - the system of knowledge, the curriculum, media, books and learning resources that have been developed in this country present negative, stereotypical and distorted images . . . " (p 24). Everything too is mandatory: "It has



been made clear . . . by the Authority, that a policy on racism is not one that anybody can ignore or opt out of" (p 27).

The NUT has, predictably, responded with "strong support".<sup>(20)</sup> (Especially in inner London that industrial union is under similar political control, while some of its militants perhaps hope to replace more sober and traditional Heads driven into premature retirement.) But the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NAS/UWT) produced an Initial Response objecting mainly to the tone of the four documents, and questioning the constitutionality of such all-pervasive interference with the curriculum. No doubt, after further reflection, they will become seized of the central and crucial significance of that neo-Marxist redefinition of "racism". Certainly NAS/UWT has already seen, and strongly recommended, the only hope of saving the schools of inner London. It lies in reviving the old, directly elected London School Board, with candidates running on purely educational policies, and elected under some fairly representative system - not, that is, first-past-the-post.<sup>(21)</sup>

NOTES

1. Regrettably our 1976 Race Relations Act does seem to open the door, as I am assured that the 1964 American legislation did not, to what has come to be called - in a slimy euphemism - "positive discrimination". To any genuine and consistent opponent of racism positive discrimination must be as repugnant as negative. The questionable clauses are 35-8 in Part VI. These provide for exceptional exemption from the mandates of Parts I-IV, allowing that it shall not be unlawful to make special provision for special needs "in regard to their education, training or welfare, or any ancillary benefits."

2. Well, not quite everyone in fact. Not, for instance, the members of that deplorable National Socialist organisation, the National Front, in so far as that still exists as a body; and most certainly not the presumably Soviet socialist sociologist Sidney Willhelm who, for entirely different reasons, attacks Bunche's statement as an expression of what he himself assails as "Equality: America's Racist Ideology". See D. Colfax (Ed) Radical Sociology (New York: Basic, 1971), pp 252-3. The whole volume is a sourcebook for the new, perversely politicized conception of racism, to be examined below.

3. (London: Commission for Racial Equality, 1983), p 11.

4. See, for instance, The Fraudulent Gospel: Politics and the World Council of Churches by Bernard Smith (Richmond: Foreign Affairs, 1977); and compare Ernest Lefever Amsterdam to Nairobi: The World Council of Churches and the Third World (Washington: Georgetown University, 1979).

5. This important distinction is well made in, for instance, the 1952 Unesco memorandum on "The Race Concept". This supplements and corrects the recognized inadequacies of the 1950 Unesco statement. It is a point worth making since Steven Rose, who was commissioned by the National Union of Teachers (NUT) to compose their manifesto on race and racism, makes much of the earlier without noticing the later work. Rose is a member of the Communist Party (Muscovite) as well as Professor of Biology at the Open University. Anyone curious as to why the NUT should have commissioned a Marxist to do this job for them may be referred to Fred Naylor and John Marks "The National Union of Teachers - Professional

Association or Trade Union or . . . ?" in Caroline Cox and John Marks (Eds) The Right to Learn (London: Centre for Policy Studies, 1982).

6. I use the term "set" in order to avoid the social implications of "class". By Cantor's axiom for sets the sole essential feature of a set is that its members have at least one common characteristic, any kind of characteristic.

7. See K Fogelman (Ed) Growing up in Great Britain (London: Macmillan, 1983).

8. These figures are drawn from an ILEA pre-school survey, mentioned at p 17 of the first document to be considered in Section 4, below.

9. Ethnic America (New York: Basic, 1983); but compare Race and Economics (New York and London: Longman, 1975), Markets and Minorities (New York: Basic, 1981), Pink and Brown People (Stanford, Ca: Hoover Institution, 1981), and The Economics and Politics of Races (New York: William Morrow, 1983).

10. I have recently been told, by someone who taught in Reading before the Flews arrived, the sad story of several Afro-Caribbean girls coming straight from an excellent, very traditional, girls' grammar school in Barbados. Instead of being admitted to Reading's still surviving maintained girls' grammar school, Kendrick, these unfortunate Barbadians were drafted into neighbourhood schools, there to astonish teachers with their knowledge of and desire to continue with, Latin!

11. See my Sociology, Equality and Education (London: Macmillan, 1976), Chapter 5. Whatever the truth of this bitterly contested matter, the fact that no one can bring themselves to deny that the racial defining characteristics are genetically determined should prevent us from ruling out apriori the possibility of correlations with other genetically determined characteristics.

12. The only pupil whom my wife has ever had to dress down for racism was a male chauvinist black boy. He had cruelly insulted an Asian girl in the most racially offensive way. It was made worse by the fact, of which the boy was probably not aware, that the girl's father has never recovered from his sufferings when the whole family were driven from

their Ugandan home.

A happier tale is that of the white pupil striving to find a tactful way of supporting his disbelief that his black companion was on one side of his family French. The black was right. His white friend had yet to learn that the Caribbean contains an all-black Department of France.

13. For much fuller treatments of these and of other related matters see, again, Sociology, Equality and Education; also The Politics of Procrustes (London: Temple Smith, 1981).

14. Compare John Honey The Language Trap: race, class, and the "standard English" issue in British Schools (Kenton, Middx: National Council for Educational Standards, 1983). The Brent Education Committee in its Book I: Education for a Multicultural Democracy quotes an official Council policy statement: "The recognition that all people and cultures are inherently equal must be a constant from which all educational practice will be developed", and the Committee adds in its own account that this "is not a negotiable principle" (p 7). No one has noticed that it commits Brent to insist - and in the name of anti-racism and anti-sexism, at that - that male-chauvinist macho cultures and racist cultures are, when compared with sexually egalitarian and non-racist cultures, equally good or "equally valid" (p 10).

15. See, again, the chapter cited in Note 12, above.

16. It appears that under ILEA rates of actual absenteeism rise above 25% - an incidental finding of the Institute of Mathematics survey republished in The Right to Learn. (See Note 6, above).

17. Brent in Book II: Education for a Multicultural Democracy both objects to "the active presentation of African, Asian and Caribbean people as being poor, underdeveloped, undernourished, . . ." (p 6); and demands to be told whether Humanities Programmes include "study of how Britain caused the underdevelopment of its colonies" (p 39). We must await with impatient interest Brent's revelations of explosive economic growth and technical progress in Africa before the arrival of the Europeans. (The Brent Benno-Bolsheviks will find on this naught for their comfort in the collected works of Marx and Engels).

18. "Not at this time" - surely in the twenties the first Communist MP, Mr Saklatvala - was an Indian?

19. See for the Japanese-Americans Ethnic America, Chapter 7. About the Ugandan Asians I make only an informed guess.

20. See the ILEA house organ Contact for 14/X/83.

21. Let us here, for want of any better place, some further specimens of what Brent says today and what, if no firm lines are drawn, other places may be saying tomorrow. Book I says, "The importance of colour in Brent can be illustrated by the widespread practice of referring to Asians as brown, and Caribbean people as black". This seductive piece of verbal nicety is condemned: it "is not just a matter of distinction, it implies a hierarchy of status" (p 20). Book II asks: "Given that it is not possible for black people with brown skins to be assimilated into a white society, what is the schools' concept of a cohesive multicultural democracy?" (p 26): "Do teachers make a point of bringing to the attention of examination boards the ethnocentric and implicitly racist nature of their present examination syllabi?" (p 30); "Should children be taught our "truth" in History or should pupils be presented with evidence and be taught the skills by which they could ascertain [not the but] their truth?" (p 41).

Just about the only viciously loaded question which, it seems, Brent teachers have not been asked is that oldest favourite: "When did you stop beating your spouse?"