cc Mr. Whitmore
Mr. Duguid

PRIME MINISTER

I'm afraid the report seems highly critical of the police

Scarman Inquiry

I attach Lord Scarman's summary of his findings and recommendations. The report itself, of which I have a copy, is 250 pages long. The Home Secretary will make proposals on the handling of the report and the Government's response in the next week or so.

The main points of the report are:

a) Policing Brixton has to be seen against the background of the problems the area shares with other decaying inner city areas. The blacks in Brixton have similar but more severe problems than their white counterparts. These are not an excuse for disorder, but perhaps provide some explanation.

b) The disorder in April was a spontaneous reaction to what was seen as police harassment. It was not a race riot, although there was a strong racial element.

c) The major cause of the hostility of young blacks towards the police was a loss of confidence by a significant part of the Lambeth public in the police. Both the police and the community leaders must accept a share of the blame for this.

d) Broadly, the police response to the disorders is to be commended, not criticised, although there was some harassment, and some racialist conduct by the police.

e) Perhaps most important, Lord Scarman feels there is scope for a more coherent and better directed response by the police to the challenge of policing modern, multi-racial society. Measures he suggests should be taken include an urgent study of ways of increasing the recruitment of Constables from ethnic minorities; current work on methods of avoiding selecting racially prejudiced officers to be pursued; the length of initial training for recruits to be increased, with more emphasis on the handling of ethnic minorities; more attention

to be given to management training in the supervisory responsibility of Inspectors and Sergeants; training on community relations to be compulsory for officers up to Superintendent, and training in handling of public disorders to be compulsory up to Commander; dismissal to be made the penalty for racially prejudiced behaviour.

f) On police methods, Lord Scarman concludes that "hard" policing is essential in some circumstances, but he recommends that chief officers should re-examine their policing methods with police authorities and community leaders. He suggests they concentrate on the pattern of patrolling, the role of home beat officers, the provision of opportunities for operational officers to get to know their community, and ways of ensuring greater continuity in sensitive inner city areas.

g) Lord Scarman comes out in favour of more local consultation between chief officers and police authorities, though he does not suggest any control of the police by these authorities. He recommends that a statutory duty should be imposed on police authorities and chief officers to co-operate in setting up consultative arrangements. He supports the retention of the Home Secretary as police authority for London, but recommends that the Metropolitan Police should be required to consult with the community at Borough or Police District level.

h) He acknowledges the necessity of equipping the police properly, but recommends that water cannon, CS gas, and plastic bullets should only be used where there is a real danger to life, and only on the chief officer's authority.

i) Lord Scarman concludes that his approach to policing is necessary as a response to modern social developments, and not just as a reaction to the presence of ethnic minorities.

j) Lord Scarman looks at the wider social questions behind the riots. He calls for a Government initiative in ethnic minority education. He concludes that "There can be no doubt that unemployment was a major factor in the complex pattern

/of

of conditions which lies at the root of the disorders in Brixton and elsewhere". He calls for more information to be made available about ethnic minority needs, and a clear determination to enforce existing law on racial discrimination.

k) He suggests that the role of Community Relations Councils should be reviewed, and commends the idea that the Commission for Racial Equality should be willing to intervene more positively in local disputes.

l) He reprimands the media, and urges editors and producers to accept that they have a responsibility to assess the impact on events of their own reporting, and to ensure balanced coverage.

Lord Scarman recommends the early introduction of an independent element in the investigation of complaints against police and the establishment of a conciliation process.

Finally, he makes some proposals on reform of the law. The most important is for a more selective application of the Public Order Act. He rejects the need for a new Riot Act.

WFSR

2 November 1981

PART VIII - SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

PART I - INTRODUCTION.

8.1 The problem of policing a deprived, multi-racial area like Brixton cannot be considered without reference to the social environment in which the policing occurs (paragraphs 1.2 - 1.7).

PART II - SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

8.2 In its appearance and amenities Brixton, in the central part of the London Borough of Lambeth, shares many of the features of other decaying inner city areas (paragraphs 2.1-25).

8.3 The Borough suffers from very serious housing problems (paragraphs 2.6-2.9), and a lack of sufficient leisure and recreational facilities (paragraphs 2.10 - 2.11).

8.4 The population of the area, which is declining, tends to be relatively young, working class and transient. There is a marked incidence of social problems. Some 36% of the population of Brixton are black: the percentage is higher among young people (paragraphs 2.12 - 2.15).

8.5 The black community in Brixton face similar problems to those facing their white counterparts, but more severe . The family, education, unemployment and discrimination are particular areas of difficulty (paragraphs 2.16 - 2.22). As a result, young black people may feel a particular sense of frustration and deprivation. Spending much of their lives on the street, they are there bound to come in contact with criminals and with the police (paragraph 2.2

8.6 While differences undoubtedly exist between Brixton and other areas which have experienced disorder this year, the similarities are more striking (paragraphs 2.24 - 2.30).

8.7 The social conditions in Brixton do not provide an excuse for disorder. But the disorders cannot be fully understood unless they are seen in the context of complex political, social and economic factors which together create a predisposition towards violent protest (paragraphs 2.31 - 2.38).

PART III - THE DISORDERS.

FRIDAY, 10 APRIL.

8.8 The disorders followed an incident involving an injured youth. The police officers involved in this incident acted reasonably. The disorder was spontaneous. The decisions taken subsequently by the police were appropriate in the circumstances: but it was unwise to continue Operation 'Swamp '81' on Friday evening and Saturday (paragraphs 3.4-3.27).

SATURDAY, 11 APRIL.

8.9 Many young people, especially many young black people, were spoiling for a row as a result of their frustrations, fancied or real, and of their beliefs as to what had happened on Friday. An incident outside the S&M Car Hire Office, involving two plain clothes police officers questioning a suspect and subsequently arresting another man, provided the spark. The actions of the two officers concerned were not unlawful: but they lacked discretion and judgement (paragraphs 3.28-3.80).

SUNDAY, 12 APRIL.

8.10 A day of after-math. The disorders, though less intense than those of Saturday, were serious and more widespread (paragraphs 3.81-3.93).

THE NATURE OF THE DISORDERS.

8.11 On each of the three days, the disorders constituted a riot. They were not premeditated. They began as a spontaneous reaction to what was seen as police harassment: but once they had begun, an element of leadership and direction did emerge; and strangers were observed participating in the disorders. White people, as well as black people, helped to make and distribute petrol bombs on Saturday.

8.12 The disorders were communal disturbances arising from a complex political, social and economic situation, which is not special to Brixton. There was

a strong racial element in the disorders; but they were not a race riot. The riots were essentially an outburst of anger and resentment by young black people against the police (paragraphs 3.96-3.110).

PART IV - THE POLICE.

POLICE/COMMUNITY RELATIONS.

8.13 A major cause of the hostility of young blacks towards the police was loss of confidence by significant sections, though not all, of the Lambeth public in the police. The reasons for this loss of confidence included the collapse of the police liaison committee in 1979; 'hard' policing methods which caused offence and apprehension to many; lack of consultation about police operations; distrust of the procedure for investigating complaints against the police; and unlawful and, in particular, racially prejudiced conduct by some police officers (paragraphs 4.1-4.4).

8.14 The dilemma facing the police Commanders in Brixton is as simple to state as it was, and remains, difficult to resolve: how to cope with a rising level of crime - and particularly of street robbery ("mugging") - while retaining the confidence of all sections of the community, especially the ethnic minority groups. The crime problem may not have been "unique"; but it was serious (paragraphs 4.11-4.15).

8.15 Commander Adams sought to deal with the problem in a number of ways, one of which was the deployment of officers of the Special Patrol Group (SPG) to assist local officers in special operations against crime. However well-intended, the operations provoked the hostility of young black people and precipitated a crisis of confidence between the police and certain community leaders. In particular, when combined with other incidents, they led to the breakdown of the formal arrangements for liaison between the ethnic minority communities, the local authority and the police (paragraphs 4.16-4.28).

8.16 Following the breakdown of the liaison arrangements, the Lambeth Borough Council appointed a Working Party into Community/Police Relations in the Borough. The Final Report of the Working Party, published in January 1981, succeeded only in worsening community relations with the police, although it reflected attitudes, beliefs and feelings widely prevalent in Lambeth since 1979 (paragraphs 4.29-4.33).

8.17 Moves to re-establish the liaison committee followed the appointment of Commander Fairbairn to 'L' District. But the launching of Operation 'Swamp '81' in the week of 6-11 April 1981, contributed, along with other factors, to increased tension in the streets of Brixton (paragraphs 4.34-4.42).

8.18 Neither the police nor the local leaders can escape responsibility for the breakdown of relations between the police and the community in Brixton. Both must accept a share of the blame (paragraphs 4.43-4.46).

THE MAIN CRITICISMS OF THE POLICE.

8.19 Six main criticisms were made of the police in the course of the Inquiry:

(1) "racial prejudice";

(2) "harassment";

(3) "unimaginative and inflexible policing";

(4) "over-reaction to the disorders";

(5) "delay and lack of vigour" (in handling the disorders);

(6) "failure to act against looting".

I consider these bearing in mind two principles of policing a free society:

(1) "consent and balance"; and

(2) "independence and accountability" (paragraphs 4.47-4.60).

8.20 I find that the direction and policies of the Metropolitan Police are not racist. But racial prejudice does manifest itself occasionally in the behaviour of a few officers on the streets (paragraphs 4.62-4.64).

8.21 Harassment does occur: and in Brixton even one isolated instance of misconduct can foster a whole legion of rumours which rapidly become beliefs firmly held within the community (paragraphs 4.65-4.68).

8.22 The Metropolitan Police at district command level and above do not lack awareness of the need for good community relations. But the police in Lambeth have not succeeded in achieving the degree of public approval and respect necessary for the effective fulfilment of their functions and duties. Attitudes and methods in the senior command of 'L' District had not become sufficiently adjusted to the problems of policing a multi-racial community (paragraphs 4.69-4.80).

8.23 Although there were sometimes instances of misconduct by police officers during the disorders, in general I reject the criticism that the police over-reacted in the handling of them. In particular, I reject the criticisms that the police should have withdrawn on the Saturday, and that the police strategy encircled the crowd so that, being trapped, it turned at bay on the police (paragraphs 4.81-4.89).

8.24 I find that the disorders did reveal weaknesses in the capacity of the police to respond sufficiently firmly to violence in the streets. The weaknesses lay not in failures of strategic conception but in the police's preparedness and ability to execute that conception (paragraphs 4.90-4.94).

8.25 I am satisfied that any delay by the police in stopping the looting on Saturday arose not from any reluctance to do so but from the fact that because of the limited resources they had available in the early part of the evening, they could not cope with both the disorder and the looting. The police commanders felt that they had to give priority to the former. They were right to do so (paragraphs 4.95-4.96).

8.26 I conclude that, while nothing can excuse the unlawful behaviour of the rioters, both the police and the community leaders must carry some responsibili for the outbreak of disorder. Broadly, however, the police response to the disorders, once they broke out, is to be commended, not criticised (paragraphs 4.97-4.99).

PART V - POLICING - PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

8.27 There is scope for a more coherent and better directed response by the police to the challenge of policing modern, multi-racial society (paragraphs 5.1-5.5).

RECRUITMENT.

8.28 I reject proposals that an annual quota of places in the police should be reserved for coloured minorities and that standards for recruitment might be lowered. Nevertheless vigorous efforts are required to recruit more black people into the police. A possible way forward may lie in the provision of special additional training for would-be black entrants to the police. This would only be effective if coupled with a more purposeful drive to get black applicants to come forward in greater numbers. Other ways of involving black people in the police - such as the cadet scheme and the special constabulary - must also be considered. I recommend that the Home Office, with Chief Officers of Police, and in consultation with Police Authorities and representatives of the ethnic minority communities, conduct an urgent study of ways of improving ethnic minority recruitment into the regular police and of involving the ethnic minorities more in police-related activities (paragraphs 5.6-5.13).

8.29 Efforts must be made to avoid racially prejudiced people entering the police service. I recommend that the work currently being undertaken in the Metropolitan Police designed to identify scientific ways in which evidence of racial prejudice can be identified should be vigorously pursued with the support of the Home Office, and that the results should in due course be incorporated into the procedures for selecting recuits to all police forces (paragraphs 5.14-5.15).

TRAINING THE POLICE

8.30 Improvements in police training are in hand. But there is scope for further improvement . In particular the length of the present period of initial training for recruits is insufficient. I recommend that it be increased to a minimum of 6 months. More attention should be given, in an extended curriculum, to training in the prevention, as well as the handling, of disorder, and in an understanding of the cultural backgrounds and the attitudes to be found in our ethnically diverse society (paragraphs 5.16-5.23).

8.31 The period spent by a recruit on probation after the initial training course is an essential and integral part of the recruit training process. It should include practical training and supervision in the handling of people in situations of potential conflict such as stops in the street, training provided either through a 'street duties' course or, preferably, through a tutor or parent constable scheme. An officer's period on probation should include a period in a city area where ethnic minorities form a substantial proportion of the population. Probationer constables should not, however, save in an emergency, go out alone on foot patrol in an inner city or any other racially sensitive area (paragraphs 5.24-5.26).

8.32 As for in-service training, courses designed to develop the understanding that good community relations are not merely necessary but essential to good policing should, I recommend, be compulsory from time to time in a police officer's career up to and including the rank of Superintendent. Training in the handling of public disorder should be provided for all ranks up to and including Commander (Assistant Chief Constable). The Home Office, together with Chief Officers of Police, should seek to establish common programmes and minimum standards for in-service training in both these areas (paragraphs 5.27-5.30).

8.33 Above all, the central theme in all training must be the need for the police to secure the consent and support of the public if they are successfully to perform their duties (paragraphs 5.31-5.32).

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING.

8.34 Young police officers are an unavoidable, indeed valuable, part of the modern police service. The need is not to remove them from sensitive areas but to ensure that they receive proper guidance and supervision (paragraphs 5.33-5.35).

8.35 As far as supervision is concerned, the role of Inspectors and Sergeants is crucial. I recommend that greater attention be given to management training in the supervisory responsibilities of officers of these ranks. Close supervision is particularly important in stop and search type operations (paragraphs 5.36-5.37).

8.36 The continuous monitoring of performance as a check against which policing policy and approach can be judged is equally essential. I reject, however, a proposal made by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) as to how this

might be improved (paragraphs 5.38-5.40).

DISCIPLINE.

8.37 I endorse a proposal by the CRE that racially prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour should be included as a specific offence in the Police Discipline Code. I also recommend that it should be understood throughout the police that the normal penalty for racially prejudiced behaviour is dismissal (paragraphs 5.41-5.42).

METHODS OF POLICING.

8.38 I discuss some of the issues raised by the debate about community policing. I find that there will continue to be circumstances in which the use of 'hard' policing methods, including the deployment of the Special Patrol Group, is appropriate, even essential. Nevertheless, I conclude by recommending that, in consultation with their Police Authorities and with local community leaders, Chief Officers of Police should re-examine the methods of policing used, especially in inner city areas, with particular reference to:

(1) the pattern of patrolling, especially the mix of foot and mobile patrols;

(2) the role of the Home Beat Officers, with particular emphasis on ways in which they can be integrated more effectively into the mainstream of operational policing;

(3) the provision of opportunities for operational officers to get to know the community they are policing;

(4) ways of ensuring greater continuity and a balanced spread of officers of different ages in more sensitive inner city areas, and of ensuring that officers transferred to work in such areas are given an effective introduction to the problems and needs of those areas (paragraphs 5.44-5.54).

CONSULTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

8.39 Community involvement in the policy and operations of policing is perfectly feasible without undermining the independence of the police or destroying

the secrecy of those operations against crime which have to be kept secret. There is a need to devise means of enabling such involvement. Outside London, Police Authorities can use their existing powers to set up local consultative or liaison committees. Chief Officers of Police should take Authorities fully into their confidence , and should co-operate with Police Authorities in establishing consultative arrangements in their police areas. I recommend that a statutory duty should be imposed on Police Authorities and on Chief Officers of Police to co-operate in the establishment of such consultative arrangements. I also recommend that meanwhile Police Authorities and Chief Officers of Police should act at once under their existing powers to set up such arrangements (paragraphs 5.55-5.66).

8.40 In London, I do not recommend any change in the law substituting some other body for the Secretary of State as Police Authority. I do, however, recommend that a statutory framework be developed to require local consultation between the Metropolitan Police and the community at Borough or Police District level. The possibility of an Advisory Board or other consultative arrangement between the Home Office, the Commissioner and the London Boroughs at force level should also be studied (paragraphs 5.67-5.71

POLICE HANDLING OF DISORDER.

8.41 I suggest that the experience of the disorders in Brixton and elsewhere reveal the need for a number of improvements in police arrangements for handling disorder. Many of these are already in hand. I recognise the importance, and necessity, of your decision that such equipment as water cannon, CS gas, and plastic bullets should be available in reserve to police forces. I recommend that such equipment should not be used except in a grave emergency - that is , in circumstances in which there is a real apprehension of loss of life - and then only on the authority of the Chief Officer of Police himself (paragraphs 5.72-5.74).

CONCLUSION.

.42 I conclude that the approach to policing I have suggested is not necessary merely as a response to the presence of ethnic minorities in our cities: it would be necessary as a response to modern social developments even without the presence of such groups. Differing standards must not be allowed in the application of the law. But the law must be applied sensitively, as well as firmly (paragraphs 5.75-5.77).

PART VI - THE DISORDERS AND SOCIAL POLICY.

8.43 Any attempt to resolve the circumstances from which the disorders of this year sprang cannot be limited to recommendations about policing but must embrace the wider social context in which policing is carried out. As a Judge conducting a quasi-judicial inquiry, it would be inappropriate for me to make specific suggestions or proposals in the fields of Government financial or economic policy. I do, however, consider it part of my duty to comment on those aspects of policy which touch on the social problem which is inextricably bound up with the matters referred to me under Section 32 (paragraphs 6.1-6.4).

THE INNER CITY.

8.44 The failure of the many attempts over the last three decades to tackle the problem of inner city decline successfully is striking. One of the reasons for this, I suggest, is the lack of an effective co-ordinated approach to tackling inner city problems. I conclude that much could be done to achieve a better co-ordinated and directed attack on inner city problems, and I recommend action to achieve it. I also recommend that local communities must be fully and effectively involved in planning, in the provision of local services, and in the management and financing of specific projects. The private sector and the police must also be more effectively involved in the attempt to tackle inner city problems (paragraphs 6.5-6.9).

THE ETHNIC MINORITIES.

8.45 I draw attention to three particular areas of need:-

(1) Housing;

(2) education;

(3) employment (paragraphs 6.10-6.11).

8.46 In a discussion of housing policies, I refer to the increasing recognition of the value of rehabilitation and to the need to involve the community in housing management and development. I also endorse the finding of the Home Affairs Committee of the House of Commons in its Report on Racial Disadvantage that there is a strong case for local authorities reviewing their housing policies in order to ensure that they do not, wittingly or unwittingly, discriminate against minority groups (paragraphs 6.12-6.15).

8.47 I discuss the criticisms of educational provision made during the Inquiry and draw attention to four areas for potential improvement. These are the provision of facilities for under-fives; the training of teachers in the particular needs, the cultural background, and the expectations of minority group children and parents; the teaching of English; and the involvement of parents, and of black parents in particular, in the work of the schools. I suggest that the time has come for a Government initiative in ethnic minoritiy education, particularly in the four respects I have mentioned. I also refer to the importance of police involvement in schools, and to the need to educate children in the use of leisure (paragraphs 6.16-25).

8.48 Unemployment is a problem which faces both white and black people, but there is evidence that its weight falls disproportionately heavily on black people. The encouragement of black people to secure a real stake in their own community , through business and the professions, is of great importance if future social stability is to be secured. There can be no doubt that unemployment was a major factor in the complex pattern of conditions which lies at the root of the disorders in Brixton and elsewhere. The solution, of course, depends on a successful outcome of current economic problems. But the structural causes of unemployment are deeper and more complex. In order to secure social stability , there will be a long term need to provide useful, gainful employment and suitable educational, recreational and leisure opportunities for young people, especially in the inner city (paragraphs 6.26-6.29).

THE RESPONSE TO ETHNIC MINORITY NEEDS.

8.49 I suggest that if alienation among the black community is not to develop, there should be a more ready recognition of the special problems and needs of the ethnic minorities than hitherto. I endorse the proposals of the Home Affairs Committee for improving the extent of the information available

about ethnic minority needs, including the Committee's call for the inclusion of an ethnic question in the Census and for ethnic monitoring by local authorities of the services they provide (paragraph 6.30).

8.50 I suggest that there is a lack of a sufficiently well co-ordinated and directed programme for combating the problem of racial disadvantage. It is clear from the evidence of ethnic minority deprivation I have received that, if the balance of racial disadvantage is to be redressed, positive action is required (paragraphs 6.31-6.32).

8.51 I endorse the Home Affairs Committee's view that reform of Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966 must not be long delayed (paragraphs 6.33-6.34).

DISCRIMINATION.

8.52 I call for a clear determination to enforce the existing law on racial discrimination, and a positive effort by all in responsible positions to give a lead on the matter (paragraph 6.35).

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCILS, AND THE COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY.

8.53 I note the criticism of Community Relations Councils made in evidence to the Inquiry and suggest that the time is right for a review of the role of CRCs (paragraph 6.36).

8.54 I commend for consideration by the Commission for Racial Equality and by the Home Affairs Committee in its current inquiry into the CRE the suggestion made by Assistant Commissioner Gibson of the Metropolitan Police in evidence to the Inquiry that the CRE should be prepared to intervene more positively as mediator in local situations, like that which arose in Brixton, where a breakdown of relations between the police and the community has occured (paragraph 6.37).

THE MEDIA.

8.55 I discuss questions about the role of the media raised by the disorders. I urge Editors and Producers to accept that they have a responsibility to assess the likely impact on events of their own reporting of them, to ensure balance in the covering of disorder, and at all times to bear in mind that rioters, and others, in their exhibition of violence respond alarmingly to what they see (wrongly, but understandably) as the encouraging presence of the TV camera and the Reporter. I suggest that the matters to which I

have referred deserve, if they have not already received, the fullest consideration by the Press Council, the Board of Governors of the BBC, the Independent Broadcasting Authority and newspaper editors (paragraphs 6.38-6.41).

CONCLUSION.

8.56 I conclude that the themes I have mentioned in this Part of the Report must be kept constantly in view if the social context in which the police operate is not to continue to breed the conditions of future disorder (paragraph 6.42).

PART VII - LAW REFORM.

8.57 In this Part of the Report, I discuss a number of proposals for the reform of the law made to me in the written and oral evidence presented to the Inquiry (paragraph 7.1).

STOP AND SEARCH.

8.58 I conclude that the power of stop and search is necessary to combat street crime. The state of the law is, however, a mess, as the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure has shown. I respectfully agree with the Commission's proposals for the rationalisation of the law and for certain additional safeguards (paragraphs 7.2-7.3).

THE "SUS" LAW, AND ITS REPEAL.

8.59 I recommend that a careful watch be kept on how the Criminal Attempts Act 1981 develops (paragraph 7.4-7.6).

LAY POLICE STATION VISITORS.

8.60 I recommend provision for random checks by persons other than police officers on the interrogation and detention of suspects in the police station (paragraphs 7.7-7.10).

REFORM OF THE POLICE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE.

8.61 On the basis of the evidence I have received, I find that there is a lack of public confidence in the existing system for considering complaints against the police. I discuss a number of possible reforms of the system and conclude that if public confidence in the complaints procedure is to be secured, the early introduction of an independent element in the investigation of complaints and the establishment of a conciliation process are vital (paragraphs 7.11-7.29).

A NEW RIOT ACT?

62 I discuss the proposal that a new Riot Act is now needed. I conclude that the existing law is not inadequate and that there is therefore no need for the proposed reform (paragraphs 7.31-7.40).

"SELECTIVE" BAN ON PROCESSIONS - SECTION 3 OF THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT, 1936.

8.63 I recommend that the Public Order Act 1936 be amended:-

(1) to include a requirement of advance notice of a procession to the police;

(2) by deletion of "serious" from the public order test.

8.64 I suggest that it should be possible to ban "racist" marches or processions in racially sensitive areas by the use of the existing power to prohibit a specified class of procession. But if for practical reasons this proves difficult, I would also recommend an amendment to the Act to enable one specified march to be banned (paragraphs 7.41-7.49).

PART IX - CONCLUSION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A - CONCLUSION

9.1 The evidence which I have received, the effect of which I have outlined in Part II, leaves no doubt in my mind that racial disadvantage is a fact of current British life. It was, I am equally sure, a significant factor in the causation of the Brixton disorders. Urgent action is needed if it is not to become an endemic, ineradicable disease threatening the very survival of our society. It would be unfair to criticise Government for lack of effort. The real question is whether the effort, which is undoubted, has been properly directed. Funding (eg. grants pursuant to section 11, Local Government Act 1966, the Urban Programme and the Inner City Partnership schemes) has been made available on a substantial scale. The administrative effort of central and local government has been equally substantial: an illustration is to be found in Lambeth itself where the work done by the Borough Council and central government to relieve racial disadvantage deserves high praise. And, though the Race Relations Act 1976 and the CRE have their critics, they are clear evidence of the will and the commitment of Parliament and government to the cause of racial equality. "Institutional racism" does not exist in Britain: but racial disadvantage and its nasty associate racial discrimination, have not yet been eliminated. They poison minds and attitudes: they are, and so long as they remain, will continue to be, a potent factor of unrest.

9.2 The role of the police has to be considered against this background. As I have said in Part VI, the police do not create social deprivation or racial disadvantage: they are not responsible for the disadvantages of the ethnic minorities. Yet their role is critical. If their policing is such that it can be seen to be the application to our new society of the traditional principles of British policing, the risk of

unrest will diminish and the prospect of approval by all responsible elements in our ethnically diverse society will be the greater. If they neglect consultation and co-operation with the local community, unrest is certain and riot becomes probable.

9.3 A new approach is required. I am satisfied, as Mr Hazan QC submitted in his final speech on behalf of the Metropolitan Police, that it has already begun. But determination and persistence in the formulation and application of the necessary policies will be required. I would add that an equal persistence in striving to the same end is also required of all sections of the responsibly minded public.

9.4 On the social front, I find myself broadly in agreement with the House of Commons Select Committee. The attack on racial disadvantage must be more direct than it has been. It must be co-ordinated by central government, who with local authorities must ensure that the funds made available are directed to specific areas of racial disadvantage. I have in mind particularly education and employment. A policy of direct co-ordinated attack on racial disadvantage inevitably means that the ethnic minorities will enjoy for a time a positive discrimination in their favour. But it is a price worth paying if it accelerates the elimination of the unsettling factor of racial disadvantage from the social fabric of the United Kingdom. I believe this task to be even more urgent than the task of establishing on a permanent basis good relations between the ethnic minorities and the police. Good policing will be of no avail, unless we also tackle and eliminate basic flaws in our society. And, if we succeed in eliminating racial prejudice from our society, it will not be difficult to achieve good policing.

9.5 I end with the quotation from President Johnson's address to the nation, which appears at the very beginning of the US Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (1968):-

" .... The only genuine, long-range solution for what has happened lies in an attack - mounted at every level - upon the conditions that breed despair and violence. All of us know what those conditions are: ignorance, discrimination, slums, poverty, disease, not enough jobs. We should attack these conditions - not because we are frightened by conflict, but because we are fired by conscience. We should attack them because there is simply no other way to achieve a decent and orderly society in America ....."

These words are as true of Britain today as they have been proved by subsequent events to be true of America.

B - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANKS

9.6 Finally, I wish to acknowledge, and in doing so to express my gratitude and great appreciation for all the help I have received in the conduct of the Inquiry and the preparation of the Report. My thanks include all those who submitted evidence to the Inquiry: I was greatly impressed by the quality of much of the evidence I received.

9.7 I have already expressed my appreciation of the assistance given me by those who were instructed on behalf of the represented parties. But I have not yet mentioned the impressive and immensely valuable role of Counsel to the Inquiry. Theirs was a very difficult task calling for adroit and skilful handling of witnesses, a mastery of the voluminous written evidence and the exercise of independent judgment both in advising me and in conducting, on my behalf, the proceedings of the Inquiry. I thank them most sincerely for their great help to me and for the successful discharge of their onerous duty.

9.8 I wish also to place on record my appreciation of the services of the Treasury Solicitor, and to pay a personal tribute to those in his office

who handled the business of the Inquiry. The office has acquired an expertise in the work of public inquiries, which is an asset of great value to the nation. This expertise, to which must be added energy, skill and a calm determination to overcome all difficulties almost before they arise, was put unreservedly at my disposal. My thanks are great, indeed.

9.9 I leave to the last the expression of my profound respect and gratitude for the services of Philip Mawer, Secretary to the Inquiry and Nicholas Montgomery Pott, the Assistant Secretary. I cannot adequately express my admiration, or the magnitude of the debt I personally owe them, for their great services. They faced many formida challenges in the organisation of the hearings and of the visits which together constituted the proceedings of the Inquiry: they overcame them and the progress of the Inquiry is the best evidence of their skills and patience. In the preparation of the Report they have exhibited the ability to analyse and master complex and voluminous evidence and to present it lucidly for consideration, which is the mark of a fine civil servant. They were admirably supported by Mr Ted McCormick and Miss Melissa Grant of the Home Office. I offer my most sincere thanks to the whole team.

SCARMAN

P J C MAWER
(Secretary)

30 October 1981

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