

the Asian

CRE: a case to answer

Spitalfields Bengalees: 3

Ahmed Fakhruddin, Labour Party member of the Spitalfields Ward of Tower Hamlets and Barbara Powis have both criticised the leadership of the Labour Borough Council for their bureaucratic and colonial attitude towards Bengalee residents and their housing problems. Their criticisms throw light on the problems faced by an ethnic minority in one of the poorer areas of London.

Filipino labour in UK: 9

The case of cheap Filipino female labour in Britain has of late been getting attention in the national press. The Catholic Commission for Racial Justice in a valuable background report presents the facts behind this migration.

Asians and crime: 15

The Bradford experience:

Asians on the whole have hitherto had a remarkably low crime rate. But with growing unemployment and disadvantage is this about to change? This is a summary of a study of the Bradford area.

Black roots in white Britain: 8

Richard Smith reviews a remarkable exhibition of pictures and etchings on the Black presence in Britain in the last four hundred years.

Black and white in the new Zimbabwe: 2

Elaine Windrich discusses the growing pains of the Commonwealth's newest state.

Book Review: 13

Premen Addy reviews Mihir Bose's biography of Keith Miller, the former Australian cricketer.

Profile of a Chinese community worker: 6

Anne Hoose continues her series on the relatively little known Chinese community in Britain. Her first article appeared in our September issue.

The Commission for Racial Equality has just produced its long overdue document *The Nature & Funding of Local Race Relations Work: Community Relations Councils*.

The work of these CRCs is essential to the cause of good race relations; to strengthening the foundations of a multicultural society of the future. They are voluntary, grassroots bodies unhemmed by the statutory fences of their funding parent, the CRE. It was stated in October 1977 that this report would be completed within a year; instead it has taken three.

The CRE has in the past justifiably rebuked various government departments for being slow and cumbersome: the Home Office in particular, has often borne the brunt of its criticisms. But now the critic itself seems to have defaulted. However, as in these difficult days modest offerings, delays and all, fall only to the lot of the fortunate few, a measure of gratitude is presumably called for even for this late appearance.

But to the paper itself: One of its most notable omissions is the absence of any reference to the actual funding of ethnic self-help projects and the like, which is funnelled through the CRCs. The CRE indeed acknowledges this kind of work as basic to the success of a multiracial society. In part 1, para 8, it states: 'The Commission may give financial or other assistance to any organisation appearing to the Commission to be concerned with the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.' Apart from the CRCs, it would also appear from a reading of part 3, para 2 (b) and (c), that two categories of organisations qualify for CRE funding. These are 'Ethnic minority organisations and self-help groups (who) have developed rapidly over the past few years into organisations which now conduct various kinds of work on their own behalf.'

'There remain a variety of other local groups eligible for financial assistance from the Commission. Some do not have any explicit brief to work with minority groups, but may be located in areas largely populated by black people. Such groups mainly concern themselves with providing a service to the local community. Others, such as anti-racist groups, exist to educate public opinion to accept racial equality.'

What should now be made known is how such funds have been distributed and which ethnic organisations or groups have been the principal beneficiaries. We should be given details of their work and their accountability for the financial help received.

One would hope that social and educational need would be the chief criteria of such aid, yet it might be useful to mention in passing that the Bengalees of East London and elsewhere, who are perhaps the most disadvantaged of the ethnic minorities, appear to suffer from a lack of funds for urgently required community projects. The CRE, when discussing the disbursement of funds to ethnic groups in part 9, para 1, concludes: 'The Commission believes three elements are essential for the administration of this section: funding arrangements should be flexible, they should be coherently applied, and they should insist on accountability.' By its own reckoning the CRE surely has a case to answer.

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Black and white in the new Zimbabwe

by Elaine Windrich

Considering that Zimbabwe has only just emerged from a bloody and brutal seven-year civil war, the new black-ruled state is remarkably peaceful. Not unexpectedly, after such a war, there have been sporadic outbreaks of violence and killing: some of them attributed to dissident guerrillas not yet resettled or integrated into the national army; others to rival political parties (Joshua Nkomo's ZAPU and Bishop Muzorewa's UANC) not yet reconciled to their exclusion from the full fruits of political power; and still others to the criminal element which is present in any society and even more so in one conditioned to insurgency as a response to repression. Since such incidents, particularly if they involve the death of white civilians, tend to be featured in reports in the Western media, the overall pattern of a country generally at peace with itself tends to be lost in a welter of sensational reporting.

This is not to say, however, that Zimbabwe does not have an array of formidable problems, most of them in-

herited not only from the war but also from fifteen years of Rhodesian Front rule (if not ninety years of colonialism), economic sanctions and attrition and international ostracism. The task of reconstruction is a staggering one, involving as it does the rebuilding of much of the infrastructure and governmental services destroyed by the war and requiring sufficient international assistance to complete the task soon enough to meet the understandable rising expectations of black majority which has at last come into its own in terms of political power. Thus far, however, offers of outside aid have been disappointingly paltry, especially when compared with the grandiose Anglo-American scheme for a \$2000 million credit to influence an independent Zimbabwe in the direction of 'moderation' and dependence upon the West. The land distribution plan alone would require a large proportion of such a sum, let alone the resettlement scheme for the 800,000 refugees driven from their homes by the ravages of the Smith regime's security forces.

While economic reconstruction is the most obvious priority, equally important is the establishment of a non-racial Zimbabwe. Since taking office last April, the prime minister, Robert Mugabe, has spoken of the need for 'reconciliation' between the races that were on opposing sides of the civil war. However, there is still a wide divergence of opinion on what reconciliation really means in terms of future race relations. While the black majority envisage a society in which change will be in the direction of redressing the inequalities associated with white wealth and black poverty, the white minority are committed to retaining the status quo in terms of their economic domination and social privileges. For example, whenever a black majority government proposes a change to that status quo, such as Africanising the predominantly white civil service and judiciary or equalising educational and medical facilities, there is an outburst of white fury and indignation, accompanied by the allegation that the prime minister's policy of reconciliation has been violated.

The races also differ on what reconciliation means in terms of the recent past. Any reference by the black majority to the wrongs of that past — the racist policies and the police-state methods of the Smith regime — is taken by most whites as an insult to the European race and, again, as contrary to the government

pledge of reconciliation. In fact, the white minority are still living in a state of psychological shock, not quite able to believe that the parties that rule Zimbabwe today are derived from the monster of 'Marxist terrorism' created by fifteen years of Rhodesian Front censorship and propaganda. Although many thousand of the original quarter of a million have 'taken the gap' to South Africa, Britain or elsewhere, those who remain do so in an uneasy atmosphere of 'wait and see': i.e., if their privileges are challenged to an extent that their superior position is threatened with erosion, they too will join their kith and kin in exile. While they remain, however, they never cease to threaten that a withdrawal of their skills will bring down the country to a state of ruin — a highly implausible outcome with a cadre of an estimated 20,000 Africans with at least one university degree or comparable qualification. And also a convenient dismissal of the historical fact that not one of Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front Ministers had ever had any governmental experience before coming to power in 1962.

While it is now highly unlikely that these racial divisions will result in the sort of white military coup planned by Lt. Gen. Peter Walls and others at the time of the April 1980 elections that brought Mr Mugabe's ZANU (PF) to power, there is little scope for optimism that the white minority will be prepared to accept the realities of black majority rule committed to changing the status quo in terms of racial equality. Consequently, a continuing outflow of whites is to be expected as the government moves towards implementing its electoral pledges (and extracting the funds necessary to do so), particularly with regard to redistributing the land, integrating the social services and enhancing the status of an urban working class that has been largely subsisting below the poverty datum line. However, far from heralding the country's ruination, a peaceful and orderly exodus of disgruntled or disaffected whites will have the effect of speeding up the Africanisation which is so essential for the realisation of genuine majority rule and which is currently being frustrated by the provisions of a British-imposed Lancaster House constitution. Such a process will also serve to separate the proverbial wheat from the chaff, ridding the country of a focal point for South African destabilisation and leaving behind intact what has often been regarded as 'Rhodesia's other twenty per cent', the minority within the minority which consistently opposed Rhodesian Front rule and, in many cases, paid for it by imprisonment, deportation or social ostracism. Only when this process has worked itself out can Zimbabwe hope to emerge as a genuinely non-racial society.

The author is a Visiting Scholar at Stanford University and the author of *The Rhodesian Problem*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975, and *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, Croom Helm, 1978. She has just returned from a visit to Zimbabwe.

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Spitalfields Bengalees condemned to slum life

Spitalfields Project was responsible for sponsoring the Spitalfields Housing and Planning Rights Service (SHAPRS) to research into the housing needs of the area. As a result unpalatable features emerged which did no credit to the record of The Tower Hamlets Borough Council, Labour-controlled for the last three decades.

Now the Tory controlled GLC with the connivance of the Labour-led Tower Hamlets Borough Council have decided to withdraw financial support to SHAPRS because of its criticism of the Council's failure and negligence.



ALL TORIES AGAINST SHAPRS

At the GLC Policy and Resources Committee meeting Sir Ashley Bramall, GLC councillor from Bethnal Green, said he had more direct knowledge of SHAPRS as it was in his constituency. SHAPRS had been of enormous help to him. The conclusions of the GLC review showed the case for SHAPRS admirably set out. He referred briefly to the criticisms. There is an enormous amount of work which needs to be done, and which cannot be done by the JHMC; cannot be done by the statutory authorities, outside normal office hours, which was one of the advantages of SHAPRS. SHAPRS was of enormous value. It was prepared to spend very considerable amount of time with people, especially with regard to explaining things to Bengalee people, who could well be confused about the role of either TH or the GLC.

I know when I get a case from SHAPRS I have been saved hours and hours of work. The research undertaken by SHAPRS has been very valuable. It is true that SHAPRS criticised both authorities, but in an area where no two bricks had been put together for the last 17 years, it was not surprising that there was criticism; SHAPRS gave voice to that criticism. *Spitalfields is recognised as most deprived; it will be even more deprived if SHAPRS closes.* I don't believe that two extra officers will do the job needed. I have a letter from an officer who states that the JHMC does not function at officer level, despite committee meetings. The two officers, one TH and one GLC wouldn't even talk to each other. SHAPRS had done dedicated work. This proposal was totally pathetic and totally ignorant of the needs of the area.

19 Tories voted against SHAPRS.
10 Labour voted for SHAPRS (i.e. all the Labour Group)

Talks of democracy — a mockery

Talks of 'Socialist democracy and public participation in Tower Hamlets Borough are a complete mockery,' says Barbar Powis, a leading community worker and chairperson of the Spitalfields Housing and Planning Rights Service (SHAPRS), in her letter to Councillor Beasley, condemning the arbitrary manner in which the funding of the SHAPRS has been terminated. Copy of the letter has been



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192 Hanbury Street
London E1 5HU

Project Co-ordinator
Alan Hutchinson
Telephone 247 9264

Spitalfields, in the East End of London, is like many 'inner city' areas run down and neglected. It is an area without enough space, jobs, services or activities for its people. It is a multiracial area including Jews, Irish, Maltese, West Indians and Asians — mainly Bengalees — the newest arrivals.

The Spitalfields Project is a special project set up in 1975 by the local Borough Council to tackle some of the problems of a decaying area. The Spitalfields Project is one of the two in London, the other being in Islington. The Project seeks to involve local residents in its work and management and to bring together authorities and agencies around particular problems. The Project works closely with the Bengalee community in responding to needs and promoting schemes.

These include:

buying and converting of a building for a community centre (the Kobi Nazrul Centre)

promoting of a job creation project to undertake this work and give jobs and training to local unemployed youth
persuading the Greater London Council to appoint a Housing Welfare Officer to assist Asian tenants

funding a health visitor with special responsibility to the Bengalee people, and helping the local hospital fund a dietary survey

funding and setting up a law service for all local residents

funding an experimental housing project for Bengalee youths

The Project works with other local groups and organisations to achieve a greater recognition by the local authorities of the needs of a new and developing Asian community.



sent to local MPs and other leading members of the local community.

'Dear Councillor Beasley: Congratulations on your masterly stroke at the JHMC meeting of last night. You managed very well indeed to suggest that the Spitalfields Housing and Planning Rights Service had been such an outstanding success in demonstrating housing need and ways of tackling it, that the statutory authorities found it imperative to take on the work of the Service in such a hasty manner. It was unfortunate for us that Councillor Branagan was the only person to raise the "social justice" issue of due and proper consultation with the people concerned. It was also unfortunate for us that no one else on the JHMC was able either to realise or acknowledge openly the hypocrisy of your statements.

It would indeed have been miraculous had SHAPRS (of all the initiatives of the Spitalfields Project) been so successful that the statutory authorities were persuaded to take on our work. However, had that been the true situation, doubtless protracted negotiations and consultations would have occurred between our organisation, the local committee, GLC, LBTH, JHMC, etc as to how best to effect such an unprecedented move. Doubtless too, we would have been congratulated on our work, and would have been closely involved (in an advisory capacity, of course) in the talks on any new set-up. Things being as they are, however, we at least, and probably many others, recognise only too well precisely what you have assisted in doing.

The total absence of any consultation bears this out, as does the undue haste, or "out of the blue-ness" referred to by Len Bennett in the setting up of the "replacement unit". Had your scenario truly been the case, there would have been no need to cut SHAPRS now — we could have continued until March, and consultations and negotiations could have occurred until then with regard to the new proposals, which could then have been put into motion without the indecent haste which obtains in the present situation.

I would have far more respect for you if you were to acknowledge openly the political nature of this decision to axe SHAPRS — in other words, that a proportion of its work was critical, and therefore unacceptable. This action makes empty rhetoric of your statement on 19 February 1975 at the public meeting to launch the Spitalfields Project: "The future of Spitalfields depends on how well residents, people who work in the area, and Councillors work together." I am pleased that you have finally recognised — because it is now expedient for you — the need to make Section 11 appointments, when we have been asking you to make them for several years!

This action leaves me, and many others, with the firm impression that *socialist democracy and public participation in Tower Hamlets Borough are a complete mockery. Any statements you make in support of those principles are an insult to your electorate.* You may be assured that matters will not rest here. By

Spitalfields Bengalees

48% of the Bengalee population is living in statutorily overcrowded conditions, and 55% lack at least one basic amenity. 95% of all the overcrowded population is Asian.

Of the GLC's pre-1919 housing stock 62% is Bengalee-tenanted; 10.9% of the GLC's post-1964 stock is Bengalee-tenanted.

78% of all people without security of tenure are Bengalee.

Only 15% of Tower Hamlets tenancies have been granted to people of Bengalee origin, and only 26.6% of GLC tenancies, although 41% of all households are of Bengalee origin.

stifling criticism, you cannot prevent a public outcry, nor can you hoodwink the people of Spitalfields.'

Colonial attitudes of local authorities

Ahmed Fakhruddin, Labour Party member of Spitalfields Ward of Tower Hamlets, has criticised the leadership of the Labour Borough Council for their colonial and bureaucratic attitude in dealing with Bengalee residents and their problem of housing.

Following is the text of the Open Letter to Councillor Paul Beasley, leader of the Borough Labour Council.

'I am writing to you about the attempt by the GLC and Borough Council to cut the funding to the Spitalfields Housing and Planning Rights Service, as this issue raises very serious questions for the community in the area.

For years the Bengali community has been criticised for not taking an active part in local and political affairs — for not joining trades unions, for not being active in tenants' associations and so on. Perhaps some of these critics hadn't noticed just how much the Bengali community had started to participate — not just in the Housing and Planning Rights Service, but also in the Spitalfields Project where the Council has specifically encouraged local involvement.

However, the cutting of the Service, without any consultation or warning shows clearly what the authorities really think of the participation of the Bengali community — they don't want it, and when they get it they show this outright hostility towards it. It was hard work by many Bengalis which helped establish the Housing Rights Service & now which has been trodden all over by this arbitrary decision to cut its funding. With such hostility to Bengali involvement the authorities are building up pressure against them which can be used in other ways by militants, as has happened in

explosions of frustration from ethnic minorities in other part of the country.

Participation in the running of a Service like SHAPRS not only gives Bengali people the confidence which they can use to widen their participation in other public bodies, it is also the basis for greater understanding with the host community. It is through this sort of process that a more peaceful environment is developed in a place like Spitalfields.

It is important to understand why there is so much interest in the fate of SHAPRS. Through its committee, Bengalis have had a chance to express their opinions and views. But it has also been a chance for them to learn things which are necessary if they are going to make this country their home. This doesn't just mean knowing housing and planning law, but also understand practical points — like the reasons for condensation and other dampness in our flats.

Tower Hamlets Council is still full of people who have been in local government since the era of the British Empire. New and younger people with a different outlook are needed. If these sort of people, who are more understanding towards us, are not forthcoming, it will be hard for us to work with the existing elements. Instead we would only work with those who have given us real support.'

Spitalfields Local Committee condemns Council decision

At a meeting of the Spitalfields Local Committee held on 6 November the following resolution was agreed by 19 votes with none against:

1 This Local Committee condemns the decision by Tower Hamlets Council to close the Spitalfields Housing and Planning Rights Service without any reference to the members of this Committee. The Committee considers that this action has betrayed the spirit of the agreements made between local people and the Council which are contained in the constitution of the Local Committee.

2 This Committee welcomes the decision to set up three new jobs in the local GLC housing office to deal with the difficulties faced by the people of the ward; these jobs are badly needed. However, this Committee *does not believe* that these new jobs can replace the work of the Spitalfields Housing and Planning Rights Service.

(a) *Because* council officers cannot legally represent tenants in disputes against the authority which employs them. This will leave tenants without representation on repairs, compensation and other matters; and

(b) *because* council officers are not answerable to local tenants for their actions as they are not employed by those tenants. This means that they cannot represent the interests of tenants' associations and other groups on planning inquiries and other more general housing questions.

3 This Local Committee therefore con-

Spitalfields Bengalees

Spitalfields has the highest concentration of Bengalees outside Bangladesh and West Bengal of India, as well as in the UK.

Besides, Spitalfields Bengalees have a special place in the history of race relations in Britain. They are one of the first groups, from among the persecuted ethnic minority communities in Britain, to commit themselves unequivocally to the construction of a non-racist multicultural society by rejecting the 'Ghetto' proposals of the GLC in 1978.

considers the closure of the Spitalfields Housing and Planning Rights Service to be a *cut in services to the people of Spitalfields*. This is unacceptable at a time of government housing cuts.

The Committee demands that the Council's Policy Committee meeting restores to SHAPRS its full grant up to the end of March 1981, either from the Urban Aid money which is already available, or from the budget of the Local Committee for this year.

This Committee also demands that the item of SHAPRS funding for 1981/82 be restored to the Urban Programme.

'Spitalfields is still a top priority!'

So 'Spitalfields is still a top priority' for the GLC. Spitalfields has been a top priority for both Tower Hamlets Council and the GLC ever since 1974. This has meant in practice: Not one single home completed (and only 105 even started, compared to a promised figure of 625); a prime site, part of which has been vacant for 18 years sold off by the GLC to private developers; another site zoned for housing by Tower Hamlets Council re-zoned for industrial use; family homes planned for another site have now been subsumed into the vast Whitechapel Shopping Centre plan.

Now we read that two blocks of Victorian slum tenements, when finally emptied of their occupants, will be simply left derelict, and the proposed development of the site with 94 homes has been abandoned.

All this is where 500 families are without homes of their own; where 30 per cent of the population is living in seriously substandard accommodation; where 27.9 per cent is living in statutorily overcrowded conditions — compared to a Tower Hamlets average of 2 per cent.

Barbara Powis, Spitalfields Housing and Planning Rights Service, London E1.

Extract from a letter published in The Guardian.

THE GANGES

101 PRAED ST. LONDON W.2

Bengalee cuisine in London

There are over a thousand 'Indian' restaurants in and around London but nowhere can one taste Bengalee dishes. Naseem Khan, writing in *Time Out* sadly commented: 'Subtle qualities of Bengalee cuisine are hard to find in London.' The reason she gave was the 'built-in conservatism of English diners'. Bengalee cuisine does not fit in with their idea of 'Indian' cooking because Bengalee food is delicately spiced and mildly flavoured.

To give our diners a chance to try some of the Bengalee dishes, we, at the Ganges, have decided to introduce a few famous Bengalee items as 'Weekend Specials'. They will include Rezala dishes from Murshidabad (northern Bengal), Kachcha Biryani of Dacca, Fish in mustard sauce from southern Bengal, etc.

We are offering a 5-item Bengalee meal at an incredibly low price of £2.75 per person. These will be available during lunch hours (12 to 2.30 pm) on Saturday and Sunday and as early dinners (6 pm to 7.30 pm) on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Two dishes — **Bengal Kitchere** (spiced rice, lentils, vegetables, cooked as one dish, a meal in itself) at 70p and **Dacca Kachcha Biryani** (rice, cooked with spiced chicken and served with vegetable curry) at £1.50 will be available as take-away items.

Ganges, first established in Soho in 1965, has now moved to Paddington. We are open for dinners seven days from 6 pm to 11 pm and for lunch on Saturday and Sunday from 12 to 2.30. Our nearest tube stations are Paddington, Edgware Road and Lancaster Gate.

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PARMINDER VIR: THE BLACK & ETHNIC ARTS ARCHIVE

Profile of a Chinese community worker

by Anne Hoose

Every year Mrs Shu-Pao Lim, the Chinese community worker for Camden Social Services has to file her report 'to justify my work,' she explains with a smile, but you only have to see her amidst ever ringing telephones and piles of paperwork to know that she has hardly a spare minute. Fortunately, Mrs Lim, short and friendly, and armed with an irresistible smile, is overflowing with infectious enthusiasm for her work. She was originally an ordinary social worker, but when she read an advertisement for a Chinese community worker at Camden she answered it at once. The Camden area is a huge and thickly populated expanse as the map on her office wall shows, but Mrs Lim was given no list of Chinese residents in the area, so she had to begin by trekking faithfully round schools and clinics to ferret out her sometimes recalcitrant clients. Later when she was better known, the relevant authority might refer a case to her, a school perhaps when a Chinese child had unaccountably gone absent. On such occasions where two groups of people of different cultural backgrounds and speaking mutually unintelligible languages face each other, a go-between is essential. In places like Hong Kong, for instance, parents may well keep their children at home if the weather is bad. And this is understandable when we remember that school there is not a legally enforced duty but rather a paid privilege. Until told by someone who speaks their language Chinese immigrant parents cannot even know that it is an offence to keep their children at home. And there are other reasons for truancy. A child who cannot understand what is being said to him all day long may be tempted to run away through sheer boredom, and the emptiness of truancy can lead to other thoughtless acts and trouble ahead. It is true that the Chinese are a patient and doggedly law-abiding race but, warns Mrs Lim, they have the same troubles and temptations as other people, and if their special problems are not recognised we may hear more about them in the courts in future.

Where to find volunteers?

But to return to that yearly report, Mrs Lim lent it to me, admitting that she finds it more of an effort to write a lot of English than to deal with her 'cases', and it certainly makes fascinating reading. It clearly shows how much can be achieved and, hopefully, foreshadowed in three

years unremitting work. It describes the talks which Mrs Lim has given to various groups of people, courses which she has attended, and workshops and forums and courses on community work in which she has taken part throughout the year. One of the things which stands out from the report is the obvious trouble she goes to to find volunteers to assist her in her work. English volunteers are especially welcome as they usually cannot speak Chinese any more than their new friends can speak English, thus the immigrant community gradually learn a little English, while both groups integrate with, and learn from each other.

Among the tasks and achievements of Mrs Lim are the following. She refers adults and children to suitable weekend or evening English language classes and visits these occasionally to make sure that everything is running smoothly. Apparently older Chinese children are hardly better equipped to fit into our society than their elders. The last big wave of immigration from Hong Kong was in the fifties; couples usually worked in catering and left their children behind with grandparents, even sending any new additions to the family home as well. Now they want to bring their children here and these 12 to 16 year olds, mostly from rural areas, face, as Mrs Lim graphically put it, 'cultural shock, school shock and parental shock'. That is to say, teenagers, at a critical stage in their development, who, apart from those who attended Catholic or Anglo-Indian schools, do not speak English, are coming here to live with parents whom they do not know, and to attend our informally run schools, so different from the sort of very formal education to which they are accustomed. Children who were born here and stayed, mix wonderfully in English culture and life, but they are cut off from their own, often purely Chinese-speaking, parents and from the roots of their own culture. In contradistinction to English classes for Chinese speaking young people, Mrs Lim also sends these anglicised Chinese children to Chinese classes on Saturday mornings. Here they learn their own language and also absorb some of the stories and traditions of their own people from the lesson books.

Chinese Action Group

After a One Day Conference on 15.12.1978, organised by Mrs Lim and some Chinese friends, to inform the host com-

munity (mainly friends and some professionals) about the culture of the Chinese and their needs, a Chinese Action Group (CAG) was formed to coordinate other self-help groups, provide resource material, disseminate information, identify the areas of need and liaise between various government and Local Authorities and the Chinese community. This group explained the needs etc of the Chinese to the BBC when Mrs Lim was approached to assist in the production of a BBC 'Help Programme', it also organised one afternoon conference on gambling and the opinions of the Chinese about legalising Chinese gambling. Mrs Lim invited a doctor who has done a lot of research into the consequences of gambling and a lady from Gamblers Anonymous to speak at the meeting. A Chinese lady who runs a gambling club wanted legalisation because her club, she said, is a place for socialising, chatting and resting after shopping, but Mrs Lim wondered if a community centre with recreation and advice combined might not be more suitable.

As far as the Advisory/Community Centre is concerned the Rev. Leech from St Martin's in the Fields, who has been working with the Chinese in the catering business for more than twenty years, has collected with his group over £46,000 for just such an institute. As he has been unable to find suitable property in Soho (Chinatown) he has asked Mrs Lim to help him find something in Camden. This is a project to help Chinese from anywhere, Mrs Lim is looking out for a suitable place and would be glad to hear of one.

Working Chinese girls

A rather moving story is that of a group of young Chinese girls, aged 18 to 22, working six days a week, 8 am to 6 pm, in a dress factory. Despite the long hours and four English lessons a week, these diligent girls asked Mrs Lim if she could arrange an outing for them. Accordingly, on Sunday, 18 June, 25 of them with nine brothers and sisters and a grandmother greatly enjoyed a visit to Little Hampton. Unfortunately, the rather steep entry fee made a visit to Arundel Castle impossible. Through this contact some of the children are now attending Mrs Lim's Chinese youth club and the grandmother comes occasionally to the Chinese women's group.

Mrs Lim is also busy with such varied activities as learning how to work Projector and Video Tape — she feels that such instruments are most useful in introducing Chinese-speaking and sometimes illiterate immigrants to their new society — and, since most Chinese own cassettes, she is currently recording, in English and Chinese, useful information for cases like a visit to an English doctor for the Chinese to familiarise themselves within their own homes.

Meanwhile, she, or one of her volunteers, inspired by her own enthusiasm, must undertake tasks like explaining to Chinese parents what it means when their children are ready to transfer to secondary school.

schools. Or they must be on call when people come for help with problems ranging from housing or re-housing – even one homeless family – to filling in forms (which bewilder even natives with their bureaucratic niceties!) and help concerning visits to the doctor and dentist. Volunteers can help by accompanying the elderly to the dentist or optician. Home-working women may be underpaid or they may, unwittingly, be using illegal commercial sewing machines. Mrs Lim also visited factories who requested workers but the working conditions were so bad that she was unable to recommend anyone.

Marital problems

Husbands leaving wives for other women and women leaving their husbands because of the latter's gambling propensities. Mrs Lim even felt, poignantly, that maybe she shouldn't encourage the women to mix too much in their new society – one couple were having trouble precisely because the wife wanted to go to the Park in the English manner, while her husband wouldn't part company with Chinatown. But Mrs Lim hopes that joint outings for husbands and wives may help solve these kind of problems.

Mrs Lim also attends courses like 'Community Work: Management and Training' by the National Institute for Social Work at Leeds, and gives talks like that on her own work and Chinese culture to both English and Chinese girls at the YWCA Goldsmith House – after which seven Chinese girls volunteered to help with the Chinese women's group and to act as interpreters.

Elderly Chinese folk are a special problem. Those who came in the fifties and have since worked very hard in unhygienic conditions for twenty odd years are now often unemployable although not yet due for retirement. Mothers who came to help with grandchildren are no longer useful, old age brings mental confusion and children may be too busy with their own lives to do their duty towards their aged parents. The age-old disputes between mother-in-laws and daughter-in-laws also lead to parting of the ways.

A mini-commune for old folk

In these cases and others like them one of Mrs Lim's obviously most cherished plans and she accuses herself of being maybe too idealistic – is a mini-commune for old people, one parent families, young people in distress and children in need of care – otherwise destined to lose their cultural identities in British institutions. This mini-commune would be modelled on the lines of an extended big family, like 'Old People's Homes' back home, where all those able could raise chickens and ducks and grow their own vegetables etc. Old people who were still capable would watch the children, while the teenagers could look after the elderly and others could learn useful skills for the future. Old people cannot learn English or even understand the operation of our

Old People's Homes. Mrs Lim thinks of human dignity and 'freedom of choice and the right to live and not just exist'. Some concerned people are already interested in Mrs Lim's mini-commune, and

maybe in our own overinstitutionalised society we can learn something from the Chinese for our own old folk? It is not only the Chinese who dislike Old People's Homes.

East is east and West stays western

by Anne Evans

I recently attended an event on behalf of *the Asian* which made me think again about the image that the rich western nations must present to the starving millions in some of the third world countries today.

The minority ethnic press had been invited very assiduously by a promotion company – T.J.R. Ltd – to the launching of a new range of products at London's Savoy Hotel. As it was evident that the product related to cosmetics and therefore, presumably, women, *the Asian* thought it proper to send a woman to do a write-up for our lady readers and to perhaps bring a little of the lighter side of life into our pages.

Accordingly, I presented myself at the Savoy Hotel, was duly labelled as *the Asian*, and put on my spectacles to view the new range of products. I also talked briefly to the two models, imbibed a fair amount of pure orange juice and a large number of excellent canapés. I met two friends from the *West Indian* and *Asian Digest*, and various lady reporters from the National Press and magazines.

My reaction to the products, the promotion company and the American manufacturers was typical over-reaction – a feeling of nausea (not attributable to the canapés or buffet luncheon) but to the fact that new markets were being sought to sell a specially made range of cosmetics (155 items) to little girls from the ages of 5-11.

Everything was available – at a fairly hefty price – ranging from 70p for a lipstick, £1.50 for talcum powder, £3.30 for a 'hand care carry all' and £1.80 for a powder compact.

There are several factors to be taken into account. Firstly, how can people be so insensitive to the plight of children from the ages 5-11 dying by the thousand of malnutrition in the third world; how can they not realise that this one action will cause more ill will towards the west than the good will we need to slightly change our image; and – also – to push these products in our own country with over two million of our people unemployed and the figures rising. It really takes genius to be so uncaring about essential needs, and to spend a couple of thousand pounds (at least) on free drinks and lunches to launch this compendium of what?

There is also the fact of the conditioning process of little girls. All through

history women have had a hard time – some are still very much second class citizens in their countries and religions. And yet, just when things are getting a little better, and their brains as well as bosoms have become assets, the clock is put right back to deprive five year olds of their childhoods and groom them for the opposite sex; I'm not even a women's libber, but it does seem a shame to deprive them of their childhood and give them this terribly early awareness of male chauvinism.

It will be clear that the minority ethnic groups will not be rushing out in their thousands to buy this merchandise and one can only sincerely hope that other magazines and papers will express their disgust and disquiet about these products to the manufacturers.

Are you worried that the books your children read at school, borrow from libraries and buy in bookshops, are mostly RACIST books?

DRAGONS TEETH

is worried too...

Published by the National Committee on Racism in Children's Books, Dragons Teeth is a quarterly journal that is campaigning against racism in children's books. It reviews new books, publishes booklists and provides guidelines from various sources to help its readers recognise racist books at a glance. It also tries to encourage new writers by publishing non-racist and anti-racist short stories and poems and it features other articles on aspects of multi-culturalism and the anti-racist campaign.

If racism in children's books is of concern to you then join us in the fight to achieve a new awareness. Support our campaign by subscribing to Dragons Teeth.

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400 years of blacks in Britain

The London Borough of Brent has put on an exhibition at Harlesden Library, Craven Park Road, which will surprise most people who take the trouble to study it with any care. 'Roots in Britain', the exhibition of photographs and books illustrating the life of Britain's Black and Asian citizens over the last 400 years will be on show at various centres in London up to 14 February 1981. For all those associated with race relations a visit could be a highly stimulating and rewarding experience.

The photographs of paintings, etchings, drawings and newspaper cuttings provide convincing evidence that blacks have been living in Britain for at least four hundred years. Why are most of us so unaware of this? The booklet published with the exhibition points out: 'History tends to be about politicians, military men, the rich and the famous. Little is preserved about ordinary working people. As most of the Black people who lived, worked and died in these islands fell into this category, it is difficult to find details of their lives.'

Ziggi Alexander and Audrey Dewjee have succeeded in finding all sorts of details. The illustrations of negro slaves in England and Scotland date back to the seventeenth century. A Royal Proclamation of 1601 proposes the deportation of 'Negroes and blackamoors'. Some of the information about the lives of individual slaves is intriguing. Francis Barber obtained his freedom when his master died. He then became Dr Johnson's servant and, after the great man's death helped Boswell write the *Life of Johnson*. Barber became a teacher for the remainder of his working life, a profession in which he was followed by his son.

Examples such as this show that not all blacks of past centuries remained as slaves or servants. What impressed me most about 'Roots in Britain' were the illustrations of blacks in high places. Ira Aldridge was a Shakespearian actor of the nineteenth century who had to 'white up' for all his major roles except for Othello. George Bridgetower was the leader of the Prince of Wales orchestra at Carlton House during the Regency. George I brought Mustapha and Mahomet with him as his Secretaries when he succeeded to the British throne. So the examples go on.

'Roots in Britain' is not a particularly exciting exhibition visually, but it is packed with historical evidence useful to all of us who are glad to live in a multi-racial society. It's well worth a visit, particularly if you can take with you somebody who thinks that all the blacks came to London in 1955. The exhibition will be available for loan next year.

Current Schedule of showing is as follows:

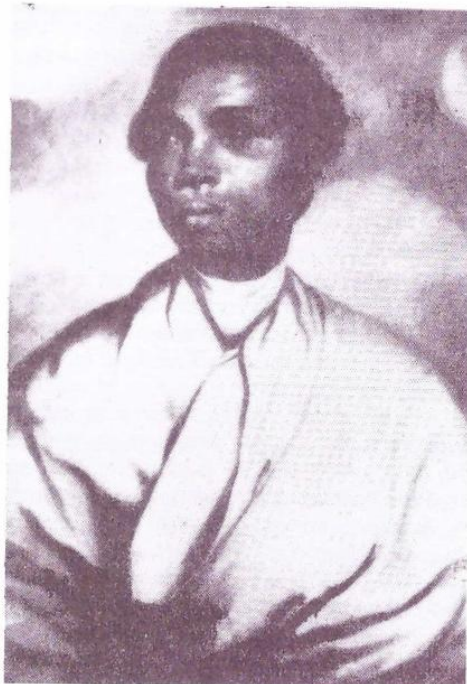
18 November to 5 December
at Brent Teachers' Centre, Ealing Road, Wembley

9 December to 3 January
at Kilburn Library, Salusbury Road, London NW6

6 January to 24 January
at Willesden Green Library, High Road, London NW10

27 January to 14 February
at Tiverton Youth and Community Centre Wrentham Avenue, Kensal Rise, London NW10

Richard Smith



Francis Barber (d. 1801)

Started life as a slave. Was servant to Dr Samuel Johnson. After Johnson's death, helped Boswell with his *Life of Johnson* and taught in a school at Lichfield. One of his five children continued the teaching tradition in the family.

Photo by courtesy Dr Johnson's House Trust

HERE LIE
MARY
SEACOLE
1805 - 1881

OF KINGSTON
A NOTABLE NURSE
FOR THE SICK AND
THE WEST INDIES
AND ON THE
OF THE
1854

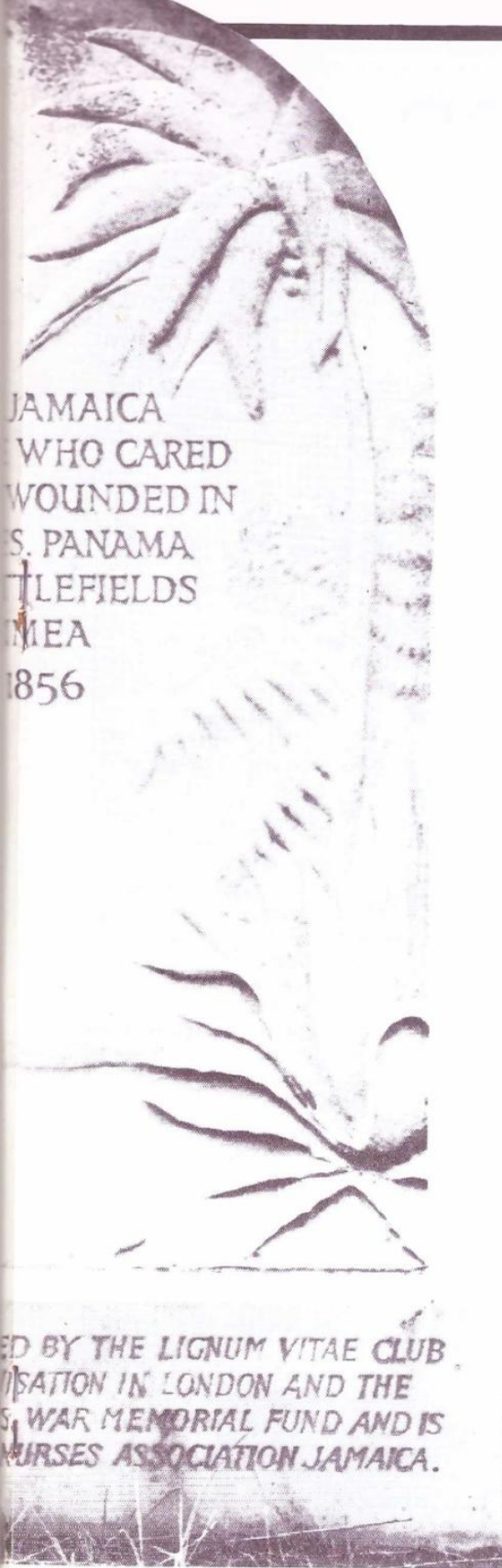


Mary Seacole, Forgotten Heroine

Born in Jamaica, she left home to fight down by the authorities in London. Florence Nightingale also refused what help she could. The British would not afford to pay. This enabled Mary to wound and the dying. Unlike Florence, she was decorated by the British government. The *Times* and she was decorated as a Jamaican national heroine.

Mary Seacole died in London, Harrow Road. Her grave was rediscovered by the Women's Organisation in London. 1981-1986

Photo by courtesy Frank Stephenson
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JAMAICA
WHO CARED
WOUNDED IN
S. PANAMA
LEFIELDS
MEA
1856

ED BY THE LIGNUM VITAE CLUB
SATION IN LONDON AND THE
S. WAR MEMORIAL FUND AND IS
NURSES ASSOCIATION JAMAICA.

The Crimean War

services as a nurse. When she was turned
ent to the Crimea at her own expense. As
Seacole set up her 'British Hotel' to offer
ld food and medicine to those who could
ute free medical aid and attention to the
ightingale, she was often to be seen on the
a hail of bullets. Her praises were sung in
ies for her work, but not by Britain. She is

and was buried in St Mary's Cemetary,
red by the Lignum Vitae Club (a Jamaican
ritish Commonwealth Nurses War Memorial

Filipino migrants in Britain

During the past 12 years, more than 14,000 Filipinos have come to work in Britain. Mostly women and Catholics, they have come on work permits to take jobs as domestics in private homes, hospitals, hotels and restaurants in this country. Their migration to Britain is part of a larger, world-wide phenomenon. Since 1975 more than a million Filipinos have gone to the United States, some 150,000 to the Middle East, 60,000 to Europe, and 75,000 to various parts of Asia. In total some 1½ million Filipinos are presently doing both skilled and unskilled jobs in more than 90 different countries; and because most Filipinos working abroad send money home, manpower export has become one of the most important dollar earners for the Philippine economy.

The roots of this phenomenon are to be found in the Philippines and in the history of their relation to the 'developed' world. The Filipino people are of Malay origin. Influenced over the centuries by Chinese and Arab traders, the islands were 'discovered' by Magellan in 1521 and named after King Philip II of Spain. They were ruled by the Spanish from 1565 until the beginning of the twentieth century, when they were 'ceded' to the United States. Occupied briefly by Japan during the Second World War, the Philippines finally became independent in 1946. Martial law was imposed by President Marcos in 1972 and remains in effect to the present.

Colonial past

The characteristics of the people today are remnants of this history. With many different local dialects, their official national language, Tagalog, is of Malay origin. English, introduced by the Americans, is the second language and the language of official documents, courts and much of the media. As a result of Spanish rule, the majority of the population is Catholic, although a Muslim minority inhabits part of the southern islands.

Filipinos are among the most highly literate people in Southeast Asia, with an educational system established by the Americans after the turn of the century. The American influence has also led to the Philippines being the only Asian country to have nearly as many women students as men, with a relatively high proportion of women in higher education. However, despite the high proportion of Filipinos who are educated, the economy cannot support this level of education

and there are often no job opportunities for qualified people.

Out of a total population of 46,000, more than half are employed in agriculture. Though the islands are rich in natural resources, they are dominated by multinational corporations and there is considerable poverty and inequality in the distribution of wealth. While more than a third of the annual income goes to 5% of the population, the average daily wage for industrial workers has been estimated at 98p, considerably less than it would cost an ordinary family to meet its basic needs.

The 33rd annual meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asian and the Pacific in April 1977 estimated that, in 1975, 48% of Filipino families were living below the poverty line.

Since that time, though the Gross National Product has increased and the wages of skilled workers risen slightly, the real wages of unskilled workers have steadily declined. It is not easy to arrive at reliable estimates of unemployment and underemployment. According to official figures, since 1972 unemployment has fluctuated between 3½% and 6½% with an additional 5%-6% underemployed. However, these figures include the country's 3½ million 'unpaid family workers' among the 'employed', and the International Labour Organisation in its economic analysis of the Philippines published in 1974 estimated a much higher rate of unemployment than official statistics indicated.

Manpower export

With foreign debts of more than £8 billion, a balance of payments deficit in excess of £500 million, and a mounting trade deficit, foreign exchange is vital for the Philippines economy. In this situation manpower export has become one of the nation's most important industries. According to the Manila Journal, 13-19 August 1979, Filipino workers abroad sent \$384.3 million to relatives in the Philippines in 1978. Remittances were projected to reach one billion dollars by 1980.

Thus poverty, unemployment, the lack of opportunity for qualified people, and the possibility of making much more money in one of the developed countries are factors which combine to provide a clear economic incentive for Filipinos to emigrate to find work. They are encouraged in this by their government, which desperately needs foreign currency.

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COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

The Commission for Racial Equality 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.

The Commission has broad powers to undertake investigations for any purpose connected with its duties. Where it finds discrimination, it may issue a non-discrimination notice requiring this to cease. It may bring proceedings against persistent discriminators and in cases concerning discriminatory advertisements and instructions, aid or pressure to discriminate. It undertakes advisory and educational work, and assists community relations councils, ethnic minority organisations, and other organisations in the promotion of equality of opportunity and good race relations.

Although the Commission is not obliged to investigate individual complaints, it has discretion to advise and assist complainants where there are special reasons for doing so.

For further information on the Commission and the Race Relations Act, contact:



COMMISSION
FOR RACIAL
EQUALITY

Elliot House
10-12 Allington Street
London SW1E 5EH
Telephone: 01-828 7022



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At the same time most Western economies, even those suffering from high unemployment, have certain industries which rely heavily on cheap immigrant labour. Jobs in these industries, even though low-paid and 'menial', can be attractive to Filipino workers because, while they are poorly paid according to the standards of developed countries, they pay considerably more than most jobs at home.

In the Philippines, Manila is the centre for recruitment to overseas jobs. Literally hundreds of legal and illegal employment agencies there offer foreign employment schemes and travel arrangements. These agencies frequently liaise with employment agencies abroad, negotiate contracts and arrange for work permits, which Filipinos coming to work in this country require. For these services, the agencies charge high fees. Often individual Filipinos do not fully understand the terms of their contracts or the rules governing work permits.

Filipino workers sometimes find themselves the victims of deception on the part of agencies, arriving in a foreign country and finding that they were misled, that their contracts were fraudulent, or that they did not possess the proper permits. In January of this year, Manila newspapers announced that the Labour Minister, Blas Ople, was bringing 43 complaints of illegal recruitment against 14 different recruitment agencies. There is some evidence that agencies in the receiving countries, including Britain, collude in the process of victimisation.

The clothing industry: the Rochdale case

The clothing industry in Britain, a labour intensive industry traditionally plagued with labour shortages and vulnerable to competition from imports from low-labour-cost countries, has always drawn heavily on low-paid immigrant labour. Whether in the form of 'home-workers' or in the 'sweatshops' or legitimate workshops of the trade, all the principal immigrant groups have been involved.

It was the situation of Jewish refugees from Eastern Europe working in the sweatshops of East London around the turn of the century that first aroused public concern about the problem and led to legislation controlling both immigration and employment abuses in the form of the Aliens Act of 1905 and the Trades Boards Act of 1910. Later, all the major immigrant groups — Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, West Indians and Cypriots — were involved in this industry. It was after 1968, when immigration from the Commonwealth had been drastically cut back, that employers in the clothing industry began to look further afield, to places like the Philippines, to supply their labour shortages.

During the early 1970s, the Alderglen Manufacturing Company became the centre of a national controversy as a result of recruiting Filipino women to staff its Rochdale plant. In February 1974, the Runnymede Trust published a report, 'Immigrants and Employment in the

Clothing Industry — The Rochdale Case' by Leila Maw, which looked closely at this incident.

In the face of a labour shortage and with the help of an agent in the Philippines Alderglen advertised machinists jobs at £40 a week. In 1971 and 1972 two groups of Filipino women, totalling more than 100, arrived to fill these jobs. They were soon disappointed to find that they were making only £13 a week (even this was considerably more than what they could make in the Philippines), out of which the company took £1 for an indemnity fund. The women's air fares had been financed by a loan at 8% interest from a finance company, Title Investments Ltd, which made a healthy profit out of the arrangement. (One of the directors of Title Investments was also Chairman and Financial Director of Alderglen.)

This incident was brought to the attention of the public because of the efforts of Mr John Grotton, a Liberal councillor in Rochdale who heard of the conditions in which the Filipino women were living and approached the Alderglen management concerning the matter. Dissatisfied with the answers he was given, he turned the situation into a 'cause celebre'. As a result of the Rochdale case and the publicity it received, from 1973-1975 the Government stopped issuing work permits for unskilled workers from the Philippines. This was a 'temporary measure' introduced to give the appropriate government departments time to consult with the Philippine Embassy concerning 'ways of dealing with abuses of the work permit system'.

Prior to World War I, British people did domestic work; but in more recent years, with the rise in living standards and with more middle class women going out to work, foreign women have filled the gap. A relatively high percentage of Filipinos coming to this country since 1968 have come as private domestic workers. However, the number is declining. In 1976, out of a total of 2,050 Filipinos entering the country, 856 went into private domestic services. In 1979 it was estimated that only 24% of Filipinos in the country were working as domestics; more recently the Philippine Embassy suggested that the figure might be as low as 7%.

In November 1978, Rachel Langton published an article 'Home Not So Sweet Home' (*Spare Rib*, No.76) in which she investigated the situation of the foreign domestics and au pairs in Britain and catalogued some of the complaints she heard: isolation and loneliness, long hours (as many as sixty per week) without any overtime pay, heavy housework, sole responsibility for children, demands that they do gardening and decorating, no full day off in the week, small, cold rooms, lack of food, verbal abuse, racial prejudice and even assault — leading at times to nervous breakdown and even attempted suicide.

This is a grim picture, and while we were not able to interview enough Filipino domestics to corroborate every element of it, we were told repeatedly that private domestic work was the situation which

Filipinos in this country found most difficult. We heard especially of isolation and severe loneliness, at times leading to near breakdowns. In recent years there has been collaboration between the UK government and the Philippine Embassy to help women who want to move out of private domestic work into something else to do so. Some of the hospital workers we interviewed were formerly working as domestics.

Hospitals

Over the past ten years a significant proportion of Filipinos coming to Britain have taken jobs in the health service, especially in London hospitals. 1979 estimates were that 47% of Filipinos in this country were working in hospitals or welfare homes. Julia Nash, in her report 'Philippines in Britain', records the results of interviews with 42 Filipino hospital workers. Most of the women were in their late twenties and thirties, single and childless, living in a hospital residence, and had worked as domestics, in offices, as midwives or nurses, in factories and shops, and as teachers.

We had a lengthy interview with a group of seven Filipinos working in one of the major London hospitals and living in a hospital residence. One was a cook, two worked in the dining room, and the others were hospital domestics. All of them had finished college in the Philippines. One had been a teacher for eight years, two had been secretaries, one had graduated in commerce, and one was a widow earning money to put her four children through school.

The take home pay of these women after tax and accommodation is approximately £45 for a 40 hour week. They can work an additional 16 hours a week overtime in the hospital, which most of them do with relative regularity. In addition most either have part-time jobs or do casual work in local restaurants on their days off. All of them come from large families (6-8 children) and send home between £80 and £150 a month. They said they can earn four or five times as much here as they could in the Philippines; and this was their primary motivation for coming to Britain, though some spoke of a desire for adventure and a wish to see the world.

We were told that hospitals are very hierarchical institutions, with clear divisions between different levels of staff; and it was claimed that 90% of those working as domestic staff (cooks, canteen workers and cleaners) were 'immigrants' and that the few white English people who came to work at these jobs soon tired of them and left. As you move up the hierarchy from domestic staff to auxiliaries, SEN, SRN, and senior nursing staff, there are progressively fewer immigrants and a higher proportion of white people. In the residence in which these women lived, out of a total of 28 residents, including some nursing staff, there were ten Filipinos, a significant proportion of Commonwealth nationals, and 'very few English'.

Over the past 20 years, tourism has
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become one of the more important industries in the British economy. Between 1963-67, the number of overseas visitors to these islands doubled, and in 1967 the devaluation of the pound made Britain even more attractive to tourists from abroad. The hotel and catering industry, which is the key to Britain's tourist trade, developed apace. At the same time, the industry was becoming heavily dependent on immigrant labour. Between 1947 and 1970, the share of total work permits going to the hotel and catering trade rose from one per cent to more than a third. According to 1971 Census figures, 44.7% of workers in the hotel trade and 68% of those in the catering trade were immigrants. The proportion of immigrants in the semi-skilled and unskilled jobs in the industry would be much higher (we have been told 80% to 90%). Nearly one out of four Filipinos in this country works in the hotel and catering industry. Though they are often educated and skilled people, they work as chambermaids, housekeepers, waitresses, cashiers, cooks, canteen assistants, and hall porters. It has been said that they are especially liked in 'front of house' jobs in hotels because they speak understandable English, are 'whitish' and 'happy, smiling people'.

The hotel industry is largely unionised (only 35,000 of the 485,000 workers in the industry belonged to a union in 1978) and is controlled by Wages Councils and the Wages Inspectorate, who impose and police statutory minimum wages. The industry has come to have a reputation for paying very low wages. The New Earnings Survey shows that in 1978 average gross weekly earnings were lower than any other industry in the country for both men and women; and in 1977 more than 50% of the firms inspected by the Wages Council in the licensed restaurant and licensed residential sector were found to be underpaying.

Low wages

One reason for the low average wages is the high proportion of semi-skilled and unskilled jobs. However, a paper by Liz Dronfield and Paul Soto (still in draft form) entitled 'Racial and Sexual Discrimination in London Hotels' argues that the hotel industry follows a 'low wages strategy', relying on 'keeping labour costs down by paying low wages, rather than introducing labour-saving equipment. The cost of such strategy is high turnover and recurrent vacancies. As most white male British workers are not prepared to fill these vacancies, the strategy relies upon being able to employ sections of the population like migrants and women.'

One of the Filipino women we talked to is presently working as housekeeper in a London residential establishment. She comes from a family of nine. Having completed an MA, she was working as a teacher; and, despite the offer of a job as headmistress of an infant school, she came to Britain to work, for she could not have made enough to support her family from the salary she would have received at home.

She came here first as a chambermaid, and even then she was able to earn enough

to regularly send money home. Not long after coming here, she was promoted to her present job. Though her hours are from 7 am to 1.30 pm, she has her work completed by 11.30 am and is able to take an afternoon job. She has yet another job in the evening. As a result of this concentration of work, she sends home £150-£200 a month. Apart from the education of her brothers and sisters, she has been able to buy a house for her parents with the money she has earned, which would not have been at all possible had she remained in the Philippines. She told us that the other Filipino women working with her send home £80 or more per month and have extra jobs as she does.

The emerging picture

The various people we talked to, both Filipinos and those who worked with them, were in substantial agreement, and a remarkably clear picture emerged of the Filipino community in Britain. Mostly women (76%), they come here primarily for financial reasons. Though they are well educated, they work in low-status, low-paid jobs; and they usually have two or three different jobs or do casual work on days off. In this way, despite low wages, spending very little on themselves, they can send home two, three or four times the monthly salary of the average worker in the Philippines. The arrangement is mutually beneficial for the individual, the home government which depends financially on the flow of dollars from outside, and those parts of the British economy which have become dependent on a flexible and low-paid migrant workforce willing to do jobs which British people are not willing to do.

Coming from large families, with very strong family ties, Filipinos see themselves as privileged to be able to come to another country and make enough money to support parents or send brothers and sisters through school. Nonetheless, separated from home, family and culture, they suffer very much from loneliness. Their lives are almost totally work oriented and they have little social life. Thus there is almost no opportunity for courtship and marriage.

The Philippines have been under martial law since 1972; and naturally this situation spills over into the awareness of those working in this country. Any kind of political activity or association could have serious repercussions on the family at home, or a passport or work permit could be refused renewal. Hence, there is a strong desire to keep a low profile.

Filipino women are Britain's 'guest workers', in the European mold. Residential workers, on permits which tie them to low-paid and low status work in particular industries, without families and with little opportunity to assimilate themselves into the host community, they find their lives are totally defined by their work. This guest worker pattern is no accident, it is caused at least partially by the rules governing immigrant work permit holders in Britain.

The rules relating to work permits for domestics have required that the work is

'full-time and resident' and that they issued only to unmarried men, could working in a joint post, and work with no children under the age of 18. Such rules have contributed to producing a community of single and resident Filipino women workers with little opportunity for marriage or family life.

In the past, after four years, the women would be given permanent residence and they could then apply to bring fiancées from the Philippines to Britain and marry and raise a family. However, under the new Immigration Rules, after they have been given permanent residence they cannot bring fiancées to this country. Thus, given their limited social contacts here, they are likely to remain single and childless. In this way the new rules are likely to reinforce and extend the 'guest worker' pattern.

At the moment a number of Filipinos are being sent back to the Philippines on the grounds that they are illegal entrants. Having come here under Rules which demand that they be childless, some, in fact, have children back home. After four years, once they have been given permanent residence, they have applied to bring their families to Britain. They have thus revealed themselves as 'illegal entrants'. A recent case in the Divisional Court was decided in favour of the Government. Mrs Claveria, who came to the UK in 1973 with a work permit for resident domestic work, four years later applied to bring her husband to Britain. Interviews held at that time led the Home Office to the conclusion that she had children in the Philippines, though Mrs Claveria later disputed this. The case was taken to the Divisional Court in 1979 on behalf of Mrs Claveria and lost. Since then she and a number of other Filipinos in similar situations have been 'removed' as 'illegal entrants' and many others are similarly vulnerable.

It is difficult to believe that Filipinos who were consciously 'illegal' would apply to bring their families to Britain, admit having families in the Philippines, thus revealing themselves to the authorities. Aware of the important role that employment agencies in the Philippines play in arranging jobs and work permits, as well as the willingness of these agencies to 'bend the rules', it is quite possible that Filipinos come here without a full understanding of their legal status. Until recently the Home Office itself was prepared to regularise the position of Filipinos in such circumstances and admit their children to this country.

Need for compassionate approach

Present policy is retroactive application of relatively recent developments in the interpretation of the law based on particular court decisions. Under such circumstances there is every reason to expect the Government to make allowances and take a compassionate approach to such cases as in the future very few Filipinos will be coming to Britain. From August 1977 work permits for resident domestic workers were issued only to Western European nationals; and since 1 January 1980 work permits for resident domestic workers have been issued only to those who are

permits are no longer being issued for unskilled or semi-skilled work. This has for all practical purposes ended any additional migration of Filipinos to this country.

A migrant's life, perhaps more than any other group in western society, has been shaped by larger forces — by the economies of countries, their patterns of industrial development, and differing social customs. Filipinos in Britain are an instance of this. They are low-paid, low-status workers whose lives have been forced into a narrow and one-dimensional shape by a number of factors: the poverty of the Philippines, Philippine unemployment, family custom, and the need for foreign exchange which has led to the development of a manpower export industry, as well as the relative wealth of Britain, the growing dependence of some of its industries on immigrant labour, the recent unwillingness of British people to do the more menial jobs, and the particular Immigration Rules which have controlled the entry of migrant workers to this country.

There is urgent need to increase the awareness of the ordinary population of this country. For, in addition to the fundamental economic gap between the western world and the 'developing' world, it is largely the requirements of British industries and the particular nature of British Immigration Rules which have created the phenomenon of Filipino 'guest workers' in our midst.

BOOK Reviews

Keith Miller: a cricketing biography Mihir Bose

George Allen & Unwin, £5.50

The name Keith Miller is enough to pierce the chill of an English winter's evening. In this case a triumph of mind over matter, for he retired from Test cricket some twenty-four years ago; the many magical moments of Miller's virtuosity now being visible only to the inner eye.

The statistics of his career bear comparison with the giants of every age. On the strength of figures alone he ranks first among Australian allrounders, but Miller was more than the mere sum of his records. There was in him that magnetic chemistry which has been the constant pride and envy of ordinary mortals: he was able to fill a stadium with his presence just as he was the exclusive enclosures at Ascot or the seigneurial drawing rooms of stately homes.

Miller's cricket was an expression of his personal philosophy. Uncompromising

on the field, he played like all great Australians, to win; nevertheless his triumphs were not those of an honest artisan content simply with victory, but those of a man especially beloved by the cricketing gods. Challenge, honour and glory: no encounter for him could be without them. The greater the hurdle, the higher his flights of genius. A lethal burst of speed; an unplayable ball; a juggler's catch in the slips; a battle miraculously won; a somnolent crowd triggered back to life — these are the typical scenes in the Miller kaleidoscope. Not for him today's fashionable gamesmanship. He would scorn the idea of distracting a batsman in order to prise him out or confuse an umpire with a trick equally mean. If he believed he had got a touch to the wicketkeeper he would make immediately for the pavilion even when, as happened on one occasion in the West Indies, the umpire and the close field thought otherwise. If in his view he hadn't made a catch cleanly he would signal the batsman to remain: there were no half measures about his honesty.

Where does Miller stand in the hall of fame? With the ball, he formed in tandem with Ray Lindwall, the most consistently respected and feared opening attack in the post-war game. The pair were an unforgettable sight. As a fieldsman, particularly in the ships, he was capable of doing the impossible; as a batsman whose photograph adorned the walls of his prime minister's office, he recalled for Sir Robert Menzies the glories of Athenian athleticism and chivalry.

Like many a great artist Miller was moved by mood. The strings of his temperament were tightly drawn and he would bend his knee to no man. And so it was that this natural leader of men was never called upon to captain his country. The selectors chose instead Ian Johnson who, in the words of Miller's biographer, was the 'son of a former Australian selector, married to the daughter of another...educated at Wesley College which boasted distinguished alumni including the then prime minister Robert Menzies...it was said he (Johnson) could smile in seven different ways at the same time and not mean any one of them...he could be expected to say the right thing at the right time with the proper intonation, and he had the appropriate power-base, Victoria, still the final arbiter of Australian cricket.' Whether Australian diplomacy made any tangible gains is questionable; what is less in doubt is that Australian cricket was much the poorer for Miller's loss.

It is appropriate that this biography should have appeared in the centenary year of Anglo-Australian Tests. Miller could not have wished a more accomplished biographer. Mihir Bose brings to bear the right qualities on his subject. He has, first of all, worshipped regularly at the great man's shrine. He loves the game, is sensitive to its traditions and knowledgeable about its past. His touch is delicate; his appreciation of character sure but subtle. His book would be a valuable addition to any cricket library.

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PREMIER ADDY

Enoch Powell and media 'conspiracy'

by Robert Geddes

There is, says Mr Enoch Powell, a conspiracy among the media to cover up news of racial violence in Britain's inner cities. In a recent speech Mr Powell returned to a variant on his well known theme that the people of Britain are being kept in the dark about racial matters.

In a subsequent television programme Mr Powell expanded on his argument, claiming that there had been incidents in Birmingham and South London of a nature similar to those in Bristol which had not been reported. It was perhaps rash of him to claim this in a programme where the other guests were sufficiently expert on the subject to be able to demolish his theory. John Clare, the BBC's Community Relations Correspondent, said that he had phoned the police in both cities and that they had been unable to confirm the alleged incidents. Collapse of stout party you might think.

Not a bit of it. Mr Powell allowed a decent interval of time to pass and returned to the charge, dressing it up in a lot of careful and roundabout language so as to make one think he had discovered yet more crimes on the part of the press.

If he was not hauled up again by the others on the programme, that is not as surprising as it sounds. For even the most virtuous liberal journalists do have a problem with racial coverage — and one they are reluctant to admit. It is a very sensitive area, and one in which many rules and guidelines exist and wherever rules and guidelines exist the journalist is aware that pitfalls surround every word he or she writes.

In the first place there is the law — the Race Relations Act of 1976 stipulates that 'it is an offence to publish or distribute written matter which is threatening, abusive or insulting in a case where hatred is likely to be stirred up against any racial group.' This vague phrasing leaves journalists technically open to prosecution whenever they report racist speeches.

Perhaps because of its very vagueness the Act has yet to be used against journalists and remains untested. But there is no doubt that it has a moral effect on the reporter — if nothing else, it expresses society's hostility to the propagation of racist views, and is thereby a part of the framework within which the journalist lives and works. Like the Ten Commandments, there may have been no prosecutions, but they have an effect nonetheless.

Such imprecision on the part of the law means that many journalistic organisations produce their own guidelines. Most urge reporters to stick to standards of

fairness in coverage of racial matters, but don't stop there. The BBC standards, quoted in the programme on which Powell appeared, went on to say that reporters were not obliged 'to adopt a stance of neutrality. It is quite proper in some circumstances for members of staff to make clear that they personally share the BBC's corporate opposition to racialism.'

The main journalists union, the National Union of Journalists, has been more explicit in its instructions to members. 'A journalist shall not originate material which encourages discrimination on grounds of race, colour or creed, gender or sexual orientation. And the NUJ is determined that its code shall be adhered to: there have been cases of journalists being disciplined by the union for giving too much coverage to National Front events.

Certainly such rules and guidelines have had some effect — if only to make journalists think before they write. And in specific areas, there have been real advances. For example, it is now much less common to see a person's racial origins quoted in court reports where they are irrelevant to the offence in question.

And the press today does seem to feel some sort of responsibility for the effect of the words they write — an unspoken assumption behind many journalists' work is that they must write responsibly. It was best summed up by Lord Devlin, when, as Chairman of the Press Council, he said that 'News values cease to be the only criterion. The normal test becomes whether publication will or will not significantly raise the temperature.'

It is that judgement that Mr Powell claims is dishonest. And it's true, it raises a moral problem for the press — journalists do not have a duty to encourage good international relations of good labour relations, so why should they have a duty to encourage good race relations?

The only plausible answer to that must be that as the journalist has a duty to tell the truth fairly and objectively, so he or she also has a duty to abide by the values of a tolerant democratic society which has put into the statute book a law expressing its hostility to statements of a racist nature.

The duties of the journalist become particularly difficult when confronted by the excesses of the National Front. The Front needs publicity to survive as its electoral record is so poor, and only the media can provide it. Should the media ignore the antics of the Front, or should they be reported? It could be argued that

the Front should be neglected by journalists — and thereby reduced to what it is, an empty shell of rhetoric, where madman talks to madman.

What is certainly true is that there is no conspiracy of silence among journalists, determined to keep news out of the papers. If that rather negative statement is all that can be said, at least it is something. But it would be nice to be able to report that there is a positive reverse side of the case — that journalists are combining in racial coverage their duties to be fair and objective with their duty to sustain the values of a tolerant and open society.

Lawyers attack proposals

A report published by the all-party lawyers' group, Justice, strongly criticises proposals for a two-tier system of citizenship. The idea, it said, 'reflects political expediency and an abandonment by Britain of its responsibilities.'

The Conservative Party's Anglo-Asian Society also demanded major reforms of the nationality laws. It suggested that United Kingdom citizenship should be based on birth, descent and a seven-year residential qualification.

The last major government study of nationality and citizenship, the Green Paper of 1977, suggested two categories of citizenship — British Citizens and British Overseas Citizens.

British Overseas Citizenship would entail fewer privileges. It would be conferred on those who had close ties with a dependency, as well as to other British subjects overseas, such as British Protected Persons (some 275,000 — mostly Solomon Islanders) and about 250,000 British subjects without citizenship. The latter live mostly in the Indian subcontinent.

'Such a citizenship,' says the Justice report, 'would not itself identify the holder with a particular country; it would not in all cases give him a right to enter or reside in a particular territory; it would not always be transmissible and could lead to statelessness for many children.'

It would leave the holder with an amorphous status, the unfortunate casualty of Empire, in a void as regards his national identity, and swept up into a second class category of citizenship.'

A document published by the Anglo-Asian Society called for UK citizenship for people with 'a clear and genuine connection' with Britain. It also proposed an end to dual nationality for Commonwealth citizens.

'Citizenship would automatically convey the right of abode in the UK. This right of abode would include, in statute, the right to look after one's dependants in this country and the right to marry anyone and bring in the spouse to live in Britain,' the pamphlet says. 1986

Asians and crime

The Bradford experience

Relatively a lower rate of crime among Asians is a welcome feature. But with rising unemployment, bad housing and government's failure to alleviate conditions which generate frustrations, it may all change for the worse. This is the poignant conclusion arrived at by Dr Rob Mawby and Mr I.D. Batta, joint authors of the highly illuminating book *Asians and Crime*, published by the National Association for Asian Youth at £2.00 from 46 High Street, Southall, Middx.

The twin issues of crime and immigration are each areas of emotive potential. Consequently, statements about or research on crime among racial minorities are always liable to arouse strong feelings. Until the last few years it has generally been the case that while some politicians have expressed concern over immigrant crime rates, detailed research has shown immigrants to have crime rates as low as, or lower than, those of the indigenous population.

However, there are signs that this situation may be changing. For example, the disturbances in Bristol earlier this year illustrated the frustration felt by many in the West Indian community both with the general economic and social conditions and with the role of the police. Further, research conducted by the Home Office Research Unit in the mid-1970's and published last year showed that official crime statistics for West Indians, but not Asians, were well above average.

The research reported in this short book is more directly concerned with crime rates for Asians. However, it is important to put this in the context of

the crime rates of other immigrant and racial minority groups and so Chapter 1 of the report is a detailed analysis of earlier studies, in Britain, Europe, Israel and America. The evidence here suggests that while crime rates for most migrant groups are relatively low, and crimes tend to be intra-racial (rather than inter-racial), variations are related to the experiences which the migrant groups encounter, on both an economic and a social level. Thus, in situations where migrant groups experience high rates of unemployment, and rejection, the possibility of escalating crime rates, especially for the second generation, is strong.

This point is particularly apt when we turn to the situation in Bradford at the present time. In Chapter 2 we review the migration of Indians and Pakistanis to Bradford over the past twenty years, and note that they were primarily encouraged by employers seeking cheap labour in unmodernised and labour intensive industries. However, with a rising unemployment rate, Asians tend to be particularly badly affected, despite their willingness to move into self-employment.

Nevertheless, our evidence on crime,

which we discuss in Chapter 3, shows quite clearly that *throughout the 1970's Asians had lower crime rates than the non-Asian population*, and this was true of the younger age groups as well as adults. Of course, recorded crime rates are no perfect guide to actual involvement in crime, but since they have tended in the past to present the *least* favourable picture of crime by racial minorities, compared with other crime measurements, we are confident that the low recorded crime rates for Asians is a true reflection of the situation.

Why then do Asians have low crime rates? In the report there are suggestions to a number of reasons for this which relate to the subcultural and structural levels. For example, there are arguments that the strength of family and community ties are important, and that a sub-culture which focuses on success *despite all the odds* is likely to encourage its members to try alternative ways to success if they fail at first. The importance placed on education, and the possibility of employment in Asian businesses, moreover, provide cushions against the ravages of the economy.

However, it would be too easy to accept our findings with complacency. The writers have argued that *Asians have been able to maintain low crime rates despite the social and economic conditions they face*.

It should not assume that, with rising unemployment and evidence of more explicit inter-racial antagonisms, this situation will continue. Evidence of high crime rates among West Indians who face severe hardships in the job and housing markets has not noticeably been followed by government measures to alleviate the conditions which generate frustration. The writers argued that in the case of Asians a similar failure to act may result in higher crime rates in the future, which could not only be avoided, but which may accentuate racial tension.

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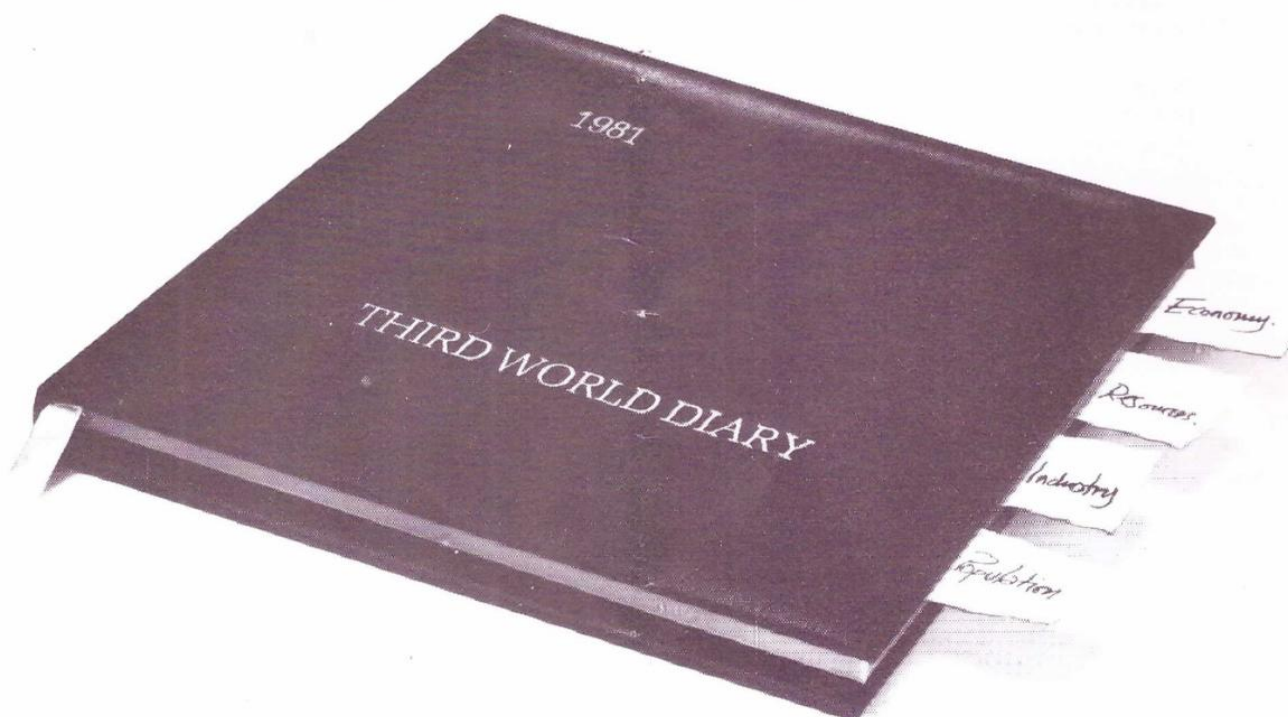
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