THE ORGANISATION
OF RACE RELATIONS
ADMINISTRATION

Observations on the Report of the
Select Committee on
Race Relations and Immigration

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON RACE RELATIONS AND IMMIGRATION

INTRODUCTION

1. The Government welcomed the decision of the Select Committee to devote the 1974/75 session to an enquiry into the organisation of race relations administration; and was particularly grateful to the Committee for carrying out its enquiry quickly and making its Report in time for the relevant recommendations to be taken into account in the proposals for new legislation in the White Paper on Racial Discrimination (Cmnd. 6234).

2. The Government decided that it was essential to publish the proposals for legislation in time for a Bill to be introduced in the present session so that new provisions against discrimination may take effect as soon as possible. As the Committee had assumed, the Bill strengthens the present law against racial discrimination and harmonises the powers of enforcement with those provided in the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

3. The Select Committee's Report deals with many matters of administration which are not included in the Bill or appropriate to legislation. This White Paper sets out the Government's views on all the recommendations made in the Report.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS

4. The Select Committee rightly stressed the responsibility which central Government departments have for policies relating to race relations. Departments take account of race relations and the needs of the racial minorities as part of their overall responsibilities in education, in housing, in employment or in personal social services; but it is not necessarily appropriate for all departments to set up separate specialist race relations sections. The Department of Employment has a special unit concerned with race relations and a field service of race relations employment advisers. The arrangements within the Department of Education and Science are described in (4) of the Annex. The Departments of the Environment and of Health and Social Security, however, while taking into account the fact that their policies have to meet the needs of the racial minorities as well as other groups in society, do not believe that their responsibilities would be better fulfilled by creating specialist race relations sections. Their reasons are set out in (4) and (6) of the Annex.

MONITORING BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

5. The Select Committee stressed the importance of monitoring the race relations situation. The Government accepts that the Home Office should retain central responsibility for race relations policy; and as the department with this responsibility it must be in a position to form an overall view of the race relations situation and to ensure that the departments with specific responsibilities are developing their own policies on a co-ordinated basis. As detailed in the Annex, the staff concerned with race relations policies in the Home Office have been
strengthened; and with the Home Office as the focal point, other Government departments can contribute to the assessment of the race relations situation from their own resources, for example in the field of education through the experience of HM inspectors, to whose role the Select Committee rightly attached importance, through the regionally based race relations employment advisers of the Department of Employment and through the Regional Social Work Service of the Department of Health and Social Security. Such an assessment also depends on the contribution of the local authorities and other organisations such as the CBI and the TUC. The new Standing Advisory Council, proposed in the White Paper on Racial Discrimination, will be able to advise the Home Secretary on all the major aspects of race relations policy.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY

6. The Government agrees with the Select Committee’s view that the central responsibility of the Home Office for race relations policy should be exercised through the Home Secretary as a senior member of the Cabinet. In these circumstances it seems inappropriate to appoint a Minister with the formal title of Minister of State for Equal Rights since this would merely duplicate the Home Secretary’s own responsibilities. The precedents quoted by the Committee for giving specific responsibilities for certain subjects to named Ministers, do not, in the Government’s view, provide exact parallels. In accordance with the normal arrangements, the Home Secretary devolves on his Ministers the day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of both race relations and sex discrimination policies while retaining the final responsibility himself.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS ORGANISATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

7. The Select Committee emphasised the valuable role which the various community relations councils play as autonomous bodies outside the official structure. The Government made it clear in the White Paper on Racial Discrimination that it accepted the importance of the work of these councils and their officers and that after further consultations with those concerned, it would propose arrangements to enable the work to continue to be supported and developed.

8. There is considerable divergence of views on what the role of the community relations councils should be and how they should relate to central Government, the statutory Commission and the local authorities. It is natural that independent bodies, working in different areas with differing characters, should have developed along various lines; but few would deny the need for central support and co-ordination. At present the Community Relations Commission undertakes this role.

9. The Runnymede Trust has proposed a radical restructuring of community relations work which would involve central Government directly in providing specialist advice and co-ordination in addition to financial support. They have proposed that this task should be carried out by a “Community Relations Inspectorate” which would administer a community relations service from within the Home Office. This proposal would involve a fundamental change in the relationship between community relations councils and their local officers. The offices, while retaining their independence, would become more responsible to the centralised agency and the councils would assume a role more in the nature
of informed advisory bodies which would provide support for the work of the professional community relations service.

10. The Government takes the view that it cannot provide the necessary expertise which this proposal envisages and that those concerned with the work of the community relations councils would regard direct Government involvement as an unacceptable loss of independence.

11. The work of the community relations councils is by definition local. Much of it concerns matters which fall within the responsibilities of the local authorities for implementing central Government policies. The local authorities are nearest to the problems of their areas and best able to judge how their resources should be allocated to meet local needs. A case can therefore be argued for placing responsibility for supporting the community relations councils, both financially and professionally, on the local authorities—for developing the councils as an advisory service through which the local authorities could establish better contact with the minority communities in their area and thereby increase their understanding of the needs of these communities and the way in which the services which they provide can best meet these needs. It is arguable that community relations officers would be able to exercise greater influence if they occupied an appropriately senior position within the local government structure than they can ever achieve in their present detached position.

12. The Community Relations Commission and the community relations councils and officers, individually and through their representative bodies, have however urged, like the Select Committee itself, that the autonomy of the councils and community relations officers is of paramount importance if the acceptance of the minority communities is to be won. The Government therefore accepts that the present structure of independent community relations councils and officers should be continued and that central Government support should be channelled through an independent central body.

13. The Government considered very carefully whether the Community Relations Commission's responsibility for co-ordinating community relations councils should be assigned to the new Commission for Racial Equality which the Race Relations Bill will establish, or whether an alternative arrangement would be preferable. The new Commission will be a statutory body with responsibilities for enforcing the new law against discrimination and, more widely, for taking action to promote equality of opportunity. Its wide powers for conducting investigations into the policies and practices of public and private organisations clearly call for a body with an unimpeachable reputation whose advice will be recognised as authoritative and impartial. It has been argued that such a body cannot have responsibilities for local fieldwork without detriment to its law enforcement function. On the other hand the Commission will be concerned with all aspects of the situation of the racial minorities. Unlike the Race Relations Board its responsibilities will go much wider than the enforcement of anti-discrimination law. The closer its links with the minority communities at the local level the better it will be able to form an appreciation of the overall race relations situation and the greater will be its credibility with minority groups. As the Home Secretary announced on 11 December 1975 (Official Report, Vol 902, Cols 294–295) the Government came to the conclusion that, while the arguments are finely balanced, it is preferable for the new Commission
to take over the responsibilities for fieldwork at the local level which at present fall to the Community Relations Commission. The Government recognises, however, that a conflict of interests could arise and that a degree of separation in the organisation of the different functions is therefore necessary. A formal requirement for this purpose is included in the Race Relations Bill.

14. The new structure which the Government proposes does not give community relations councils and their officers a statutory role. It would not be appropriate for the Government to seek to define in statutory terms their changing functions. It will fall to the new Commission, in taking over the co-ordinating functions of the Community Relations Commission, to help the community relations councils to formulate their objectives and develop their role. Important matters concerning the relationship between the councils and their officers—and in particular the question of whether community relations officers should be employed by the councils or by the new Commission—on which various proposals have been made by the Select Committee and others, must be decided through consultations between the Commission and the councils and community relations officers and their representative bodies. The Government will, of course, take a close interest in developments.

15. The local authorities already participate in the activities of the community relations councils and the Government welcomes the support which they provide, often on a generous scale. That this relationship should be given statutory authority has its attractions; but, if it is accepted, as indeed it is by the local authorities themselves as well as by those working in community relations, that the essence of the relationship must remain that of the independence of the community relations councils, it would be inappropriate to seek to impose a statutory duty on local authorities requiring them to support the councils. The Government is confident that the local authorities can be relied upon to continue to give the community relations councils the priority they deserve.

THE MINORITY COMMUNITIES

16. The Select Committee rightly stressed the importance of the part which the minority communities themselves must play if a healthy multi-racial society is to be developed. It would be a great loss to society if the minorities did not come to play an active part in the life of the community as a whole but instead sought refuge from the difficulties which they face by concerning themselves exclusively with their own affairs. As the Select Committee emphasised the Government can encourage the participation of the minority communities; and it is highly desirable that both the Government and the new Commission should encourage the growth of minority group organisations which can help the communities to meet their own needs. In considering appointments to such bodies as the Standing Advisory Council and the Commission for Racial Equality the Government is conscious of the need to select individuals of high calibre who can speak for the minorities with experience and insight.

THE COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

17. The Race Relations Bill gives effect to the Government's proposals for a more effective attack on discrimination. A rigorous law, making discrimination on grounds of colour or race unlawful, is clearly needed; and it must be effectively
enforced. The provisions of the Bill setting up a new statutory body with wide powers to take the initiative in uncovering discrimination, both conscious and unconscious, will, the Government believes, enable racial discrimination to be tackled more effectively than at present.

18. The new Commission for Racial Equality will combine responsibilities for enforcing the anti-discrimination law and encouraging the promotion of equal opportunity with wider responsibilities for conducting inquiries into the situation of the racial minorities, for giving advice and for public education. It will thus have an important role to play not just in preventing discrimination in all its forms but in contributing to the development of policies to tackle disadvantage.

19. The Commission will be an independent statutory body with powers to conduct investigations and inquiries into the public and private sectors alike. It will naturally work closely with Government departments and will be free to scrutinise their policies and make criticisms when necessary. Ministers are, however, responsible for the policies and actions of their departments and are answerable to Parliament for them. It will not, therefore, be appropriate for the Commission to have formal responsibilities for checking the monitoring activities of departments as envisaged in the Report. As an independent statutory body the Commission must be responsible for its use of its powers and the fulfilment of its duties. While it will no doubt co-operate closely with the Select Committee and give full weight to any recommendations which the Committee may make about areas in which it could profitably use its powers to conduct formal investigations, it would not be right for it to be under an obligation to carry out such investigations as recommended in the Report.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE

20. The Committee is a source of informed scrutiny and advice on race relations issues. Its inquiries have made a unique contribution to the collection of information about race relations problems and its reports and recommendations have an important place in the development of policy. The Government is glad to pay tribute to its work and to emphasise its support for the Committee.

21. Comments on each of the recommendations in the Committee's Report follow in the Annex.
ANNEX

OBSERVATIONS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
SELECT COMMITTEE

(1) There should be a Minister of State for Equal Rights.

(2) The Home Office should remain responsible for race relations adminis­
tration and the Minister for Equal Rights should be attached to the Home
Office.

As explained in the main reply, the Government accepts that the Home Office
should retain the central responsibility for race relations policy but considers
that this should be exercised through the Home Secretary and not by the
appointment of a Minister of State for Equal Rights.

(3) The Home Office should have a much improved establishment, concerned
with race relations and sex discrimination.

The Home Office is in no doubt of the importance of race relations adminis­
tration, and within the bounds of current restraints upon Government expendi­
ture intends to accord a high priority to this work. The staff engaged directly
have been increased since evidence was given to the Committee; additional
senior staff have been provided to work on the new legislation and its conse­
quences. Arrangements have also been made for the services of the Home Office
Race Relations Adviser's unit to be available to the staff engaged upon general
race relations administration. The Home Office accepts the view of the Select
Committee that there is a close relationship between work to combat sex
discrimination and work to combat racial discrimination, and its staffing
arrangements will reflect this relationship. They will also reflect the importance
of maintaining close contact between this staff and those involved in work
arising from Home Office responsibilities on urban deprivation.

(4) The other Departments mainly affected, Employment, Education and
Science, and Environment—especially Environment—should strengthen
their staffs dealing with race relations and review their efficacy in developing
more positive Departmental policies.

The Department of Employment has a small Headquarters Unit concerned
with race relations and a field service of race relations employment advisers
(RREAs) who deal with a wide range of questions which may arise in a multi­
racial workforce. Their work is kept under constant review, and the staff of the
RREA service, which in April 1976 numbered 18 including 4 part-time officers,
will be further increased as resources permit.

Within the Department of Education and Science, the Educational Dis­
advantage Unit is the focal point for the consideration of matters connected with
educational disadvantage and the distinctive educational needs of racial mini­
orities. However, those Branches of the Department concerned with the various
stages of the educational system and the supply and training of teachers have
clear responsibilities to take into account the needs of racial minorities where
these affect their work. Similar arrangements apply to the work of HM
Inspectorate. In this case the co-ordinating function is exercised by a Chief
Inspector, a Staff Inspector and a panel of Inspectors drawn from the regions who have a special interest in the education of persons of overseas origin. The Government does not therefore consider that the interests of the communities with which the Select Committee is concerned suffer because too little of the time of the staff of the Department of Education and Science is devoted to them, nor is a shortage of staff the reason for the lack of statistical information to which the Select Committee has drawn attention—see reply to Recommendation 39. The Government acknowledges, however, the need to keep its education policies under continuous review in order to ensure that they take into account the needs of racial minorities, and contribute as fully as possible to the growth of mutual respect between the races of which our society is now composed; in particular they consider it important that greater stress than in the past should be placed on training teachers, both on initial and in-service courses, to teach in a multi-racial society.

The Department of the Environment already has a Division responsible for the social aspects of housing, one of whose main tasks, with the help of the Social Research Division, is to ensure that racial minorities are taken into account in developing housing policies. The Department has recently set up a Housing Services Advisory Group and it will be considering special needs including those of minority groups. The Department has also developed closer links with the Community Relations Commission and Race Relations Board. In its observations on the Select Committee's Report on Housing (Cmnd 6232) the Government agreed with the Committee's view that "the housing of immigrants cannot be separated from housing the community at large" and although the safeguarding of good race relations is taken account of in all relevant housing activities, a specialised race relations unit would not be appropriate.

(5) The Department of Employment in their review should pay particular regard both to the recent reorganisation of the Department and to the transfer of responsibility to industrial tribunals which we have assumed will take place.

Close links exist at a number of working levels between the Department of Employment and the Manpower Services Commission and its Agencies on race relations matters and discussions are now taking place between the Department and the Commission about how best to promote equal opportunity and remove disadvantages.

The Race Relations Bill provides for complaints of racial discrimination in employment to be dealt with by industrial tribunals. The Government has asked the TUC, the CBI and other organisations which it consults about the membership of tribunals to bear in mind the desirability of including members of racial minorities amongst the names they put forward.

(6) The Department of Health and Social Security should have some staff solely engaged upon the race relations aspect of its work.

The Department of Health and Social Security accepts the need for it to be responsive to the needs of racial minorities. It already has professional staff with particular responsibilities in this area and has made arrangements for the coordination of Departmental interests on race relations matters. However, its responsibilities extend over an exceptionally broad range of activities, both
directly as a large-scale employer in the social security field and indirectly in relation to the whole of the National Health Service and to local authority social service departments. Issues concerning race relations may arise across the whole of this range and staff concerned solely with race relations work would not have the breadth of knowledge and experience to be able to deal with them adequately without reference to other staff with expertise in the particular field in question. Such an arrangement, though attractive as showing the Department’s concern, would in practice be wasteful and inefficient, and has therefore not been adopted.

(7) The Civil Service Department should create a special Equal Opportunity of Employment Unit.

It is the Government’s policy that within the Civil Service there shall be no discrimination against any person eligible under the nationality rules, whether in recruitment or promotion or in any other way, on the grounds of colour, race, ethnic or national origins. Responsibility for implementing this policy lies with the Permanent Secretary of each Department, operating through the Principal Establishment Officers, but the Civil Service Department has a central responsibility for overseeing the operation of the policy and ensuring its effectiveness.

The Select Committee’s Report states that the Civil Service Department has “neither a special unit nor any staff concerned with race relations”. This is only partially correct. Work on race relations occupies a substantial part of the time of a Principal with supporting staff, and of an Assistant Secretary and an Under Secretary to whom the Principal reports. These staff, who are located within the Personnel Management Divisions of the Department, advise Ministers on the implementation of race relations policy and legislation within the Civil Service; they are responsible for promulgating the Government’s policy to other departments and for ensuring its effectiveness; and they maintain a general oversight of procedures for the investigation of complaints against Government departments under the Race Relations Act 1968. The same staff have for some time had similar responsibilities in relation to the employment of women within the Civil Service and the implementation of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. These arrangements work well and sufficient resources are available to perform the functions effectively.

The Government considers, therefore, that within the Civil Service Department satisfactory arrangements have been made for the administration and general oversight of race relations policy within the Civil Service and for equal opportunity of employment generally.

(8) The Race Relations Board and the Community Relations Commission should be merged in a single Agency to be known as the Equal Rights Commission.

The Government proposed in the White Paper on Racial Discrimination that the Race Relations Board and Community Relations Commission should be replaced by a new Commission and this has been provided for in the Race Relations Bill now before Parliament. In the light of discussion during the Standing Committee stage of the Bill, it provides for the new Commission to be called the Commission for Racial Equality. This Commission will have entirely new statutory responsibilities parallel to those given to the Equal Opportunities Commission by the Sex Discrimination Act but it will in general terms cover the same range of issues as the present Board and Commission.
Provision should be made for the appointment, in addition to the Chairman, of a small number of full-time executive members to the Commission.

The Race Relations Bill provides for the appointment of members to the Commission on a full-time as well as a part-time basis.

Subject to the provision of common services, enforcement (the direct responsibility of a full-time Commission Member) should as far as practicable be distinct and separate from the other functions of the Commission.

The Government accepts that, so far as possible, the law enforcement role of the Commission should be kept separate from its responsibilities for coordinating local community relations work. The Race Relations Bill accordingly provides for the establishment of a separate committee to exercise the Commission's fieldwork functions.

The Commission should be directly represented on any Whitehall official Committee on race relations.

The Government will keep in close consultation with the Commission. Like the Race Relations Board and the Community Relations Commission, the new Commission will be represented on the new committee which is to advise the Home Secretary on race relations research (see reply to Recommendations 31 and 32). While departments will associate the Commission with their consideration of race relations issues, it would not be appropriate for the Commission to have a place as of right on official committees.

The Commission should have a strong regional organisation with regional officers; and there should be adequate staff of the high calibre required.

The work of the community relations councils should not be transferred to the local authorities and they should remain as local autonomous bodies with— as at present—some of their activities selectively grant-aided.

The Community Relations Officers should assist as advisers but not be employed by the community relations councils.

The Community Relations Officers be employed and paid by the Equal Rights Commission.

The essential character of Community Relations Officers being field officers working in an individual capacity in very differing circumstances should be recognised by the Equal Rights Commission and it should not inhibit their local independence.

The Government accepts that community relations councils should retain their present autonomous status. The Race Relations Bill will empower transfer of the fieldwork responsibilities of the Community Relations Commission to the new
Commission, but the Government does not propose any change of relationship between the community relations councils, their officers and the new Commission. This relationship must be worked out in discussions between those concerned when the new Commission takes over its responsibilities.

(16) While the Community Relations Officers should be employed and paid by the Commission, their activities should be supported jointly by the Government and the local authorities, and increased resources be made available for this purpose.

(17) To facilitate the funding of local race relations activities, a statutory obligation should be placed on local authorities to promote equal rights and, paying attention to the new structure of local government with its division of responsibilities between counties and districts, the funding should be on a county basis either through county precepts or agreed sharing between the districts or indeed through both.

The Government accepts that the work of community relations officers must continue to be supported out of public funds, but cannot contemplate any general increased resources in present circumstances.

In providing the services for which they are responsible, local authorities in whose areas the racial minorities have settled must be sensitive to their special situation and the needs to which this gives rise. Full co-operation between the local authorities and community relations councils is essential if community relations policies are to be fully developed.

The Government accepts the view that the involvement of local authorities should stop short of formal responsibility for community relations councils. The independence of these councils, provided it is based on close co-operation with the local authorities, can only foster a healthy dialogue. The extent to which local authorities support their community relations councils varies greatly; some are notably generous; others less so. The Government believes that local authorities have an important part to play in tackling the problems of race relations and welcomes the support which they give to local voluntary community relations effort. The Race Relations Bill, which has not yet completed its passage through Parliament, has a new clause added in the House of Commons Standing Committee which gives effect to the Select Committee's proposal that local authorities should be under a general duty in respect of race relations.

(19) There should be regional staffs dealing with enforcement matters and, to assist them, Complaints Boards: these boards would be appointed by the Commission and would include members of each executive committee of the community relations councils and each sizeable ethnic minority within their area. They would be directly under the full-time Commission member responsible for enforcement matters.

The Commission will, like the Race Relations Board, have regional offices. Under the new legislation there will be no statutory role for local committees to exercise in relation to individual complaints of discrimination. The Commission will, however, no doubt wish to draw on the experience and knowledge of local people active in race relations especially those who have served on the Race Relations Board's conciliation committees.
The membership of the Commission should be of a sufficient number to include members of the main ethnic communities.

There should be a statutory obligation on the Secretary of State in making appointments to ensure that the Commission includes an adequate number of members from the ethnic communities.

There should be similar obligation on the Commission in making appointments to the Complaints Boards, to include members from the various ethnic communities in the area.

The Commission will represent the public interest as a whole. Its members must be selected on individual personal merit and it would be inconsistent with its role to provide for fixed quotas for persons from particular groups. The Government has not therefore thought it appropriate to provide explicitly in the Race Relations Bill for the appointment of minority group members; but paragraph 108 of the White Paper makes clear the Government's intention to ensure that the racial minorities are substantially represented.

The Commission will no doubt also ensure that the racial minorities are adequately represented on any bodies which it establishes to assist it.

The Equal Rights Commission in promoting grant aided projects, should pay especial regard to neighbourhood and self-help developments directly affecting individual local ethnic communities. Further we strongly recommend that, to encourage these communities to be more self-reliant, the active participation of these communities should be sought both in the formulation and implementation of these projects. In doing this, the Commission should concentrate upon, and give priority to, the needs of young persons, particularly West Indians.

The Equal Rights Commission should supplement the work of the Home Office by supporting local voluntary or unconventional projects.

The new Commission will no doubt take account of the Select Committee's views when it comes to exercise its powers for grant aiding local projects.

A study be made of the action being taken by the Dutch Government and consideration be given to the setting up of a centre on the Dutch model perhaps with a Community Relations Officer being seconded to be in charge and responsible, through an appropriate organisation, to a local community.

The Dutch Government has provided detailed information which has been supplemented by a visit to Holland by Home Office officials. It is evident that the problems facing the Dutch Government and the circumstances in which they operate are markedly different from those in Great Britain. The Government will, however, continue to take account of such Dutch experience as may be relevant.

To avoid the repetition of the frustrations, such as that caused by the neglect of the Department of the Environment to reply to the Committee's Report on Housing, the Government should declare its general support for the work of the Committee.

The Government is glad to take this opportunity to emphasise its support for the work of the Select Committee. The enquiries which it is able to carry out in
depth into specific areas of concern, with the range of evidence obtained and the
analysis and recommendations to which they lead, form a valuable contribution
to the development of race relations policy and informed discussion.

Special factors, which were explained to the Committee in a memorandum by
the Department of the Environment, caused serious delay in the preparation and
publication of the reply to the Committee's Report on Housing. The reply was
published in September 1975 (Cmnd 6232).

(26) **The observations of the Departments in reply to the Committee's Reports
presented to Parliament should be supplemented by the observations of the
Equal Rights Commission.**

The Government does not consider that it would be appropriate for comments
by the Commission to form part of the departments' formal replies to the reports
of the Select Committee. These are White Papers setting out the views of the
Government. The Commission will, of course, be free to comment on these
replies, but this should be done separately from the White Papers themselves.

(27) **To improve the effectiveness of the Committee, there should be a modest
increase in the Clerk to the Committee's staff and the provision of better
accommodation.**

This recommendation is a matter for the House authorities who are giving it
their careful consideration in the light of available resources.

(28) **The Committee should be empowered to require the Commission to make
inquiries relevant to the Committee's current activities.**

The Commission will be an independent body with statutory responsibilities.
It will no doubt wish to work in close co-operation with the Select Committee
and be happy to assist with the Committee's inquiries, but it cannot be made
subject to a Select Committee. It must have discretion in fulfilling its duties and
in deciding on its own priorities.

(29) **A day should be provided each Session for debate on the Committee's
Reports and activities.**

The Government has taken note of this recommendation.

(30) **The Home Office should discuss with the Department of Employment,
which has general responsibility for EEC social policy, means of improving
communications with the Commission of the European Communities and
ensure that the local authorities and others are kept informed of the nature
and extent of the aid being provided.**

There has been full consultation between the United Kingdom Government
and the Commission of the European Communities about the application of the
European Social Fund to migrant workers. With the help of advice from the
Community Relations Commission the Government has also been playing its
full part in discussions about the migrant workers' action programme which was
prepared by the European Commission and about the preparation of the resolu-
tion on action in favour of migrant workers which was adopted by the Council of
Social Affairs Ministers at a meeting on 18 December 1975. The Government will continue to play a full part in further work in this field.

When the Council of Ministers decided in July 1974 that certain activities designed to help migrant workers should be eligible for assistance from the Fund, the Department of Employment, in consultation with the other departments concerned and in particular the Home Office, submitted applications in respect of relevant expenditure in the second half of 1974 and in 1975 by the Community Relations Commission and the Race Relations Board and grant-aided expenditure by local authorities under section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966 and the Urban Programme. The total of about £26m allocated to the United Kingdom from the Fund for 1974 included some £2.6m in respect of migrant worker applications. The United Kingdom was the only member state to submit a substantial application in respect of 1974. Applications for 1975 have also been considered by the Commission of the European Communities and allocations to the United Kingdom in respect of migrant workers amount to £5.1m. Applications for 1976, which were submitted in the autumn of 1975, are currently under consideration by the Commission.

Before payment can be received, detailed claims have to be submitted to the Commission based on actual expenditure incurred on the activities for which the Commission has allocated money from the Fund. Local authorities are assisting the Government in mounting claims. A payment on account of just over £2m in respect of the 1974 migrant worker claim has been received. Receipts from the Fund are credited to the appropriate Departmental Vote or to the Consolidated Fund.

The Government has considered that the most effective method of covering the activities of local authorities and others is by central applications dealing with the Government's financing of those activities. Activities by non-public bodies are eligible for support from the Fund only if they are financially supported by a public body and the qualifying conditions are complex. So far no applications have come forward from voluntary bodies in the migrant workers field for separate submission to the Fund.

(31) The Equal Rights Commission should have the main responsibility for the Advisory Committee on Race Relations [see Research].

(32) Greater attention and meaningful resources be devoted to research.

The Home Secretary announced on 23 May 1975 (Official Report, Vol 892, Col 648) that he had decided that his Advisory Committee on Race Relations Research should be superseded by a new advisory committee, under Home Office chairmanship, with membership drawn from nine Government departments, the Race Relations Board, the Community Relations Commission (later, the Commission for Racial Equality) and the Social Science Research Council, together with a number of experts from outside Government. The task of the new committee will be to review research in progress relevant to race relations and to the efficacy of policies to promote equality of opportunity for coloured minorities in Great Britain, to consider the needs for further research of this kind and to make recommendations.

The Government decided to make these changes primarily to strengthen the links between policy and research and believes that the effectiveness of the contribution which the new committee will make to achieving this would be
much reduced if the committee is responsible to some external agency and not directly to Government itself. It recognises the need, however, to involve any new race relations body as closely as possible in the revised arrangements for research; and also to enable it to undertake or sponsor, of its own initiative, research relevant to its own activities. As indicated above, the Commission for Racial Equality will be represented on the new research committee and provision for the Commission to undertake research has been included in the Bill now before Parliament.

The Government's intention is that these revised arrangements should lead to a new assessment of research requirements in the race relations field and in the preparation of a balanced research programme more strongly orientated towards the needs of departments and paying regard to the priorities recommended by the former Advisory Committee.

The Select Committee has recognised that the relatively modest funds so far made available under section 26 of the Race Relations Act 1968 have not been the only, or indeed, the main source of money for race relations research. Other Government departments besides the Home Office have research budgets from which they can fund (and have funded) research in the race relations field; and there are other organisations, such as the Community Relations Commission and the SSRC Research Unit on Ethnic Relations, at Bristol University, which are also active in this field. No accurate assessment is available of the total amount of money spent in this country on race relations research; but it is estimated that in 1970-71 just under £150,000 was spent on research into topics with a substantial race relations component, and that in 1974-75 the corresponding sum was of the order of £290,000. The Government nevertheless acknowledges that in the absence so far of a co-ordinated programme of race relations research less has been spent under section 26 of the Race Relations Act 1968 than might otherwise have been the case. However, future expenditure on race relations research, as on other highly desirable matters, must depend on the general level of public expenditure and the priorities within that amount.

(33) The Government should review the Urban Programme, its relationship to expenditure under section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966 and generally its effectiveness in implementing race relations policy.

The Urban Programme is authorised by the Local Government Grants (Social Need) Act 1969, which empowers the Secretary of State to pay grants to local authorities who in his opinion are required in the exercise of any of their functions to incur expenditure by reason of the existence in any urban area of special social need. The Programme has acted as a supplement to the main social programmes in urban areas. Assistance has been given to a wide range of social, educational and community projects. Public expenditure on the Programme in England and Wales in 1975-76 is estimated at £24.6m.

The Programme has enabled local authorities to initiate a very wide range of projects. These include nursery classes; other specialised education projects; day nurseries and other child care projects; community centres; advice centres; special accommodation projects; play projects; and projects for the care of the aged. The Programme has thus helped to meet a wide range of social need, including the special needs of particular groups such as racial minorities.
As stated in paragraph 52 of the Select Committee's Report the Home Office has always borne in mind in administering the Programme that many areas of special need in our towns and cities have large numbers of Commonwealth immigrants and their families, and local authorities have been reminded of their needs in the Circulars inviting applications for grant. Because of the variations in the numbers of Commonwealth immigrants in the places which have received grant-aid under the Programme, and because of the wide variety in the nature of the projects grant-aided, it is not possible to say precisely what part of the assistance channelled through the Programme has been directed towards improving race relations or to relieving social need in areas of high immigration. But the greater part of approved expenditure has been in areas that have also qualified for grant under section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966.

Section 11 of the 1966 Act empowers the Secretary of State to pay grants to local authorities who make special provision in the exercise of any of their functions in consequence of the presence of substantial numbers of immigrants from the Commonwealth whose language or customs differ from those of the rest of the community. Grant is payable only on expenditure in respect of the employment of staff. Section 11 grant thus offsets the costs to local authorities of employing staff to deal with the special needs of Commonwealth immigrants, but the appropriate level of such provision is for the local authorities themselves to determine. The grant is available for all expenditure incurred by local authorities within the terms of section 11.

Local authority expenditure in 1975–76 attracting grant-aid under section 11 is estimated at £20.4m. Most of this expenditure has been incurred on the salaries of additional teachers. Grant has also been paid, however, on the costs of employing ancillary helpers in schools, educational welfare officers, social workers, public health inspectors, liaison officers, interviewing staff and interpreters, and clerical staff. Grant is also paid on additional staffing costs in services such as children in care, day nurseries and maternity and child welfare.

Grants under section 11 and under the Urban Programme are both administered by the same Unit in the Home Office. This arrangement allows the planning and administration of the two grants, and the relationship between them, to be kept under review. Because of the wide range of expenditure assisted through both forms of grant, the Home Office naturally acts in consultation with other interested Government departments in administering them. The Urban Programme is reviewed regularly as part of the inter-departmental preparation of the Circulars which invite local authorities to apply for grant. These Circulars advise local authorities to bear in mind the availability of grants under section 11 when considering possible applications under the Urban Programme.

The Government agrees with the Select Committee that the Urban Programme has proved its usefulness and intends to keep the Programme under review, so that it may be adapted to keep in touch with the development of social policies generally and in particular its relevance to the special needs of the racial minorities.

(34) The Home Office should remain the Department responsible for the co-ordination of the Urban Programme, but to avoid planning difficulties, closer regard should be given to local authorities budgeting cycles.

The Government notes the Select Committee's view that the Home Office
should remain the department responsible for the co-ordination of the Urban Programme. The Home Office recognises the importance of enabling expenditure under the Urban Programme to be integrated into local authorities’ annual planning and budgeting cycles so that proposals for expenditure under this head can be considered together with all the other proposals competing for the authorities’ financial and manpower resources.

(35) To encourage a sense of participation by the ethnic minorities themselves the Home Office should set up an Advisory Committee including members from the various ethnic communities.

As explained in the Government’s reply to Recommendation 33, the Urban Programme assists projects covering a wide range of social need, and has not been restricted to the special needs of particular groups such as racial minorities. The Home Office is always ready to receive advice from the many bodies with an interest in the Programme, but does not consider that it would be appropriate to establish a formal Advisory Committee. In so far as the Programme has included assistance for the special needs of racial minorities, the Home Office has taken advice from the Community Relations Commission and hopes to benefit from similar advice under the new arrangements for race relations administration.

(37) The special Equal Opportunity of Employment Unit of the Civil Service Department, to avoid racial and sex discrimination in the Civil Service, should keep necessary records and survey and monitor the recruitment, promotion and establishment policies of the departments.

The Government agrees that a vital ingredient of an equal opportunities policy is a regular and effective system of monitoring. It has decided that to record racial or national origins on personal files would be inconsistent with its policy that racial origin is in no way relevant to membership of the Civil Service or to advancement within it.

Within the limits which this decision imposes, the question of monitoring the effectiveness of Civil Service procedures and practices in the fields of recruitment, career development and promotion has been discussed by the interested parties. At the invitation of the Civil Service Department and with the agreement of the Staff Side of the National Whitley Council and the Trade Union Side of the Joint Co-ordinating Committee, the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations is at present engaged in a study of equal employment procedures and practices in the Civil Service with special reference to racial discrimination.

(38) The special unit of the Department of Employment to which we have already referred should have responsibility for giving guidance and advice to the Nationalised Industries and other public authorities and for the supervision of the provision of information and the enforcement of the non-discrimination clauses in Government contracts.

The Department of Employment already gives guidance to employers in the public and private sectors and discussions are now being held with those concerned about the way in which work to promote equal opportunity may be better co-ordinated.
As stated in paragraph 20 of the White Paper on Racial Discrimination, the Government intends that, when the new legislation about racial discrimination is enacted, an undertaking to comply with its provisions should be a standard condition of Government contracts. It is also intended that it should be a standard condition that a contractor will provide on request such information about his employment policies and practices as may reasonably be required.

The Departments, in particular the Departments of Education and Science and of the Environment, in strengthening their staffs dealing with race relations, should make the requisite provision for monitoring in particular, the education and housing authorities, and seek to make more effective use, for instance, of Her Majesty's Inspectors and the regional officers of the Departments.

Within the Department of Education and Science, the establishment of two new units—the Educational Disadvantage Unit and the Assessment of Performance Unit—was announced in the Government's Reply to the Committee's Report on Education (Cmd 5720). It is within the terms of reference of the Educational Disadvantage Unit to inform itself of the extent and distribution of educational disadvantage and of the Assessment of Performance Unit to promote the development of methods of assessing and monitoring the achievement of children at school. The joint work of the units will in time equip the Department and the local education authorities with appropriate ways of monitoring where, in the interests of extending the educational opportunities for the disadvantaged (including those who are members of racial minorities), this is necessary.

The Government feels that the comments of the Select Committee in paragraphs 14 and 56 of the Report attach undue importance to statistics and underestimate the amount and value of the information available to the Department and shared with those concerned outside it. The panel of HM Inspectors referred to in the comment on Recommendation 4 co-operate with their colleagues to inspect schools and colleges in multi-racial areas, to advise local education authorities and the Department, to contribute to the in-service training of teachers and to keep in touch with the voluntary organisations. They work very closely with the advisers which most LEAs in multi-racial areas have appointed to their own staffs. In the last academic year the panel has carried out a special programme of inspections on selected topics relevant to the education of racial minorities to discover the best practice current in various parts of the country. The Educational Disadvantage Unit has taken part in a number of seminars held with a range of local education authorities having substantial proportions of racial minority pupils on their school rolls. Steps are now being taken to collate information about good practice in the education of immigrants and in education for race relations which will be available to authorities and schools through the new Centre for Information and Advice on Educational Disadvantage. The contribution of educational research is illustrated by the Report on "Language Proficiency in the Multi-Racial Junior School" which the National Foundation for Educational Research published last year. This study was funded by the Department of Education and Science.

So far as statistics are concerned, the Government remains firmly of the view set out in "Educational Disadvantage and the Educational Needs of Immigrants" that a count of pupils of overseas origin, however defined, would serve
no educational purpose and believes that the case against such a count holds good for post-school education as well. The Department of Education and Science is, however, consulting the interested parties on what information might usefully be collected or collated and on the possible application of research techniques to acquiring a better understanding of the factors which have a significant effect on participation and performance at various stages in the system.

The Government’s view on keeping records in relation to the housing of coloured people were set out fully in the White Paper “Race Relations and Housing” (Cmnd 6232). The Committee’s recommendation will be further considered in the light of the discussions the Department of the Environment is to undertake.

Consideration is being given to a consultation paper for issue to local authority associations, representatives of racial minorities and others about the keeping of records by local housing authorities.

(40) *The Equal Rights Commission should be entitled to receive Departmental records and reports, relating to monitoring, and should inform the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration of any matters to which they think it proper to call their attention.*

The Government will work closely with the Commission but it would not be appropriate to give it a right of access to departmental papers over and above that which it will have under the Race Relations Bill to require the production of documents. The Commission will no doubt wish to carry out investigations relating to equal opportunity in the public as well as in the private sector, and the Government will co-operate fully with such investigations.

(41) *The full-time Commission Member with direct responsibility for enforcement should also have a special responsibility for promoting neutral employment practices in the private sector.*

The Race Relations Bill makes provision for the appointment of full-time Commission members, but the responsibilities of individual members will be a matter for the Commission to decide.

(42) *In the exercise of its own investigatory and enforcement powers, the Equal Rights Commission should concentrate on cases where the incidence of discrimination has general significance and make it clear that it is so doing.*

The strategic role of the Commission will be to concentrate on situations of general importance. The new legislation will enable the Commission to take the initiative in carrying out investigations into such situations without being dependent, as the Race Relations Board is at present, on individual complaints of discrimination brought to it.

(43) *The Minister of State for Equal Rights in discharging his responsibility for both the Equal Rights Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission should ensure liaison between the two bodies.*

(44) *The specific duties and responsibilities delegated to the Equal Rights Commission should correspond to those delegated to the Equal Opportunities Commission.*
There should be close co-operation between the two Commissions in research and educational activities; interchange of staff should be encouraged and wherever possible, regional staffs should share the same premises.

The Race Relations Bill provides that the new Commission should have powers and duties similar to those of the Equal Opportunities Commission. The Government has proposed that the codes of law against racial and sex discrimination should be as similar as the different subjects warrant and the two new Commissions will no doubt wish to co-operate closely. The Home Office will encourage this. Considerable benefit will derive from co-operation on the interpretation of the law, on methods of investigation, research and public education. Sharing regional accommodation, where possible, will facilitate co-operation. Whether discrimination and disadvantage in race and sex is sufficiently similar to make the exchange of staff fruitful is something which the two Commissions will have to consider in the light of experience but they will no doubt bear in mind the recommendation of the Select Committee.

The Home Office should consider making "pump-priming" grants to organisations representative of ethnic communities.

The Government recognises the problem to which the Select Committee refers and the Home Office is conscious, in the grants it makes to minority group organisations, of the need to foster community organisation and self-reliance.