

Building a tolerant society : the origins of New Labor's multicultural education policy

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BUILDING A TOLERANT SOCIETY: THE ORIGINS OF NEW LABOR'S
MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION POLICY

A Thesis

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BUILDING A TOLERANT SOCIETY: THE ORIGINS OF NEW LABOR'S MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION POLICY

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In 1997, New Labor embraced an ideal of multiculturalism in an attempt to foster a particular brand of open communication and respectful cooperation among different individuals and cultural groups. This MA thesis investigates the background to one aspect of this multiculturalism, New Labor's education policies. The thesis shows how New Labor's current multicultural ideal originated in the 1960s in Labor's attempts to combat racial discrimination. As its attempts proved inadequate, Labor expanded its understanding of what was necessary to create a tolerant society, including educational policies that fostered tolerance, respect for different cultural groups, and personal responsibility. During eighteen years spent in opposition to a Conservative majority government, Labor refined its ideal of multiculturalism in debates, forging a path from the idealistic and radical reforms of the 1960s and 1970s toward New Labor's middle way. This thesis describes how New Labor utilized a variety of tools to achieve the goal of a tolerant, cooperative, multicultural society, including repurposing Conservatives' policies. This thesis defends multiculturalism as an appropriate response to a changing political environment, one that attempted to deal with the exigent circumstances presented by racial discrimination, class and cultural based underachievement, and underlying cultural tensions.

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CHAPTER 1
Introduction and Historiography

Multiculturalism evolved as a response to escalating tensions between diverse racial and cultural groups in Britain. Since the late 1960s the Labor Party has pursued policies of multiculturalism, and especially multicultural education policies, as a potential solution for the problems of racism, discrimination, and inequality. Multiculturalism is not about preserving the status quo by allowing groups to do what they want as long as those actions do not disturb the majority, but about including these groups on their own merits and promoting tolerance, unity, and equality through this inclusion.

Multiculturalism is more than a tool for policy insiders. It is also a goal for how entire societies should interact, how groups and individuals should pursue equality between economic classes, and how acceptance and incorporation of different minority groups should interact at the most basic of levels. This thesis examines the origins of Labor's pursuit of multiculturalism through education. Labor's educational policy provides a window on the relative successes and failures of multiculturalism, especially in providing equality of opportunity for all students regardless of race, class, religion, or ethnic group, and the incorporation of multiple cultures' beliefs and traditions into majority cultural institutions, in this case the school system and curriculum.

I will analyze the many issues that informed multicultural education, including the initiation of curriculum standards, the balancing of racial politics, and the relative formation of cultural, religious, and ethnic identities. To do this, I have chosen to structure my analysis around the official education policies and reforms of successive governments, beginning in 1964. In addition, an analysis of the reports about individual

schools by Her Majesty's Inspectors relative to those proposed and enacted reforms will help determine responses and applications on the ground. The big question that this thesis will seek to answer is whether multiculturalism is more than just a political ideology that has run its course. What's more, if it is a utopian goal, and significantly, if it is still viable in a post 9-11, post-colonial world, what implications might this have on the pursuit of multiculturalism through education reform?

While Britain has always been a country shaped by many cultures, the 1948 British Nationality Act (1948 BNA) resulted in an increasingly diverse immigrant group arriving from the Commonwealth. The 1948 BNA codified the rights of all individuals in Commonwealth nations and all remaining British colonies, as British subjects, including the right to freely enter and live in the British Isles. In response to this generous application of citizenship, individuals from the West Indies, Near and Far East, and Africa began to arrive in Britain individually and in large groups to take advantage of the opportunity for a new life in Britain. For enthusiasts and critics alike, the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* in 1948, a passenger ship carrying a large group of immigrants and visitors from the West Indies, would later become a symbol of new immigration from the Commonwealth and the consequences of the 1948 BNA.¹ Even though the arrival was little noted at the time, the image of large numbers of black British citizens, potentially permanent residents, flooding the docks at Tilbury would lodge itself in the minds of the public and many Members of Parliament (MPs), who were either pleased at the prospect or disillusioned.

¹ Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain* (London: HarperCollins, 1999).

Ultimately, the influx of immigrants began to be associated by MPs and their constituencies with a diverse set of problems, especially in the provision of social services (particularly housing and health care) and increasing problems in social order (especially a perceived rise in violent and petty crime). Even some MPs who delighted in the new arrivals eventually acknowledged the difficulties in mounting tensions between the indigenous and immigrant populations, suggesting solutions that would curtail immigration. Henry Hopkinson, Conservative MP, for example, famously told the Commons in 1954 of his "pride in the fact that a man can say *civis Britannicus sum* whatever his color may be, and...in the fact that he wants to and can come to the mother country."² In 1956, elevated to the peerage and a seat in the House of Lords, Hopkinson, now Lord Colyton, qualified his statement. He advocated measures in the colonies to assist those immigrants who wanted to move to Britain to escape deprivation or else to deny entry to those who came to Britain to engage in criminal acts, including deporting proven criminals. Tensions stemming from ethnic minority immigration led to violence in 1958. The actions of political activists lobbying for immigration controls and repatriation partly encouraged these hostilities. The race riot in Notting Hill in 1958, and prior unrest in Nottingham, was partly fueled by fascist groups, including Sir Oswald Mosley's Union Movement, which urged whites to strike out against racial and ethnic minorities and "Keep Britain White." These initial discussions of immigration control and acts of violence gave rise to a series of legislative acts from 1962 forward that

² *Parliamentary Debates*, November 5, 1954, vol. 532, col. 827.

consistently reduced the right of entry of all groups, in practice mainly ethnic minorities, into Britain.

MPs combined strict control of new immigrants with a variety of plans to incorporate existing immigrants into British society, each with different implications for ethnic minorities. The two major choices were assimilation and integration. Those who espoused integration, mainly Labor MPs, believed that members of the minority group could retain aspects of their own culture and still compatibly fit into the majority group. Integration required active participation by both the immigrant and the native group and implied a compromise. In 2001, Labor MP Michael Wills, "the Minister charged with answering the questions about Britishness" told *The Daily Telegraph* that "the essence of being British is that you can be British and Pakistani, British and Scottish, British and Geordie," implying a synthesis, or additive form of cultural identification.³ Integration meant that ethnic minorities did not have to give up their cultural heritage to participate fully in society. Individuals espousing multiculturalism would take this idea one step further by encouraging the celebration of the positive contributions to society made by cultural differences. Assimilationists, on the other hand, desired all minorities to fully absorb and replicate the majority culture. In other words, assimilation required change by the immigrant group to match the language, cultural mores, and traditions of their new home country. Conservative Lord Robin Bridgeman in 2001 critically described "total assimilation" as a plan that would lead to the "extinction of national subcultures."⁴ The

³ Rachel Sylvester, "Getting to Grips with the National Identity Crisis," *The Daily Telegraph*, December 14, 2001, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1365383/Getting-to-grips-with-the-national-identity-crisis.html>.

⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, July 19, 2001, vol. 626, col. 1662.

divergent responses to different ethnic and cultural groups resulted in conflicting attitudes and expectations.

Initially, legislation dealing with ethnic minorities aimed to prevent discrimination; eventually such legislation shifted from being protective to being preventive. Protective legislation prohibited discrimination against racial minorities by assigning legal and civil consequences. Preventive legislation aimed to increase tolerance between citizens through changes in the education of both children and adults. The chance to enact these changes landed in the hands of the Labor governments of the 1960s and 1970s. Labor policymakers sought to prevent discrimination and reduce acts of explicit racism. The resulting race relations laws acted in tandem with a matched set of immigration acts that restricted new arrivals, to appease fearful and irritated constituents in both major political parties. The principles of Labor's race relations acts, especially the 1976 Race Relations Act, had far-reaching applications, including reforms in the state education system. Despite protections enshrined in law and preventive measures that filtered through education policy to promote tolerance and incorporate multiple cultures and religions, serious tensions remained prevalent, centered on failures in employment, housing, and quality of education.

Relations between ethnic groups often fluctuated between relative peace, despite heavy tensions (due to underemployment and social deprivation) and individual conflicts (stemming from harassment and personal racism), and unrestrained violence as racism and discrimination further divided society. Distrust flourished as indigenous communities feared the perceived threat posed by increasing numbers of ethnic minority

immigrants and as ethnic minorities doubted the local and national authorities' commitment to reducing social and economic deficiencies. Occasionally, this distrust deteriorated into rioting when outwardly small incidents touched off periods of violence.

In 1958, Nottingham and Notting Hill both erupted into violence initiated by white working class youths who resented newly arrived West Indians with whom they fought for housing.⁵ Further rioting flared up in Brixton in April 1981 when West Indians clashed with local police over a deadly misunderstanding, which was followed by mismanagement of the police investigations and mistrust on both sides. The trend of racial rioting born of ethnic and economic tensions continued in 2001, when riots between whites and Asians broke out in the Northern English towns of Oldham, Bradford, and Burnley, in part exacerbated by white supremacist and anti-immigrationist groups.⁶ In Bradford, hostilities resulted, to a degree, from the perceived deprivations experienced on both sides of the ethnic divide due to de facto segregation. The antagonism of certain whites due to the Asian population's apparent self-segregation warred with the anger of Asians at the racism and social discrimination they believed caused the segregation. Despite cessation of the immediate conflict, the wounds opened by religious and cultural segregation wouldn't have a chance to heal.

For many MPs and their constituencies, the attacks perpetrated by Al Qaeda on the United States (US) on September 11, 2001, and on London on July 7, 2005,

⁵ Roger Karapin, "Major Anti-Minority Riots and National Legislative Campaigns Against Immigrants in Britain and Germany," in *Challenging Immigration and Ethnic Relations Politics: Comparative European Perspectives*, eds. Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 325-329.

⁶ Paul Bagguley and Yasmin Hussain, "Flying the Flag for England? Citizenship, Religion and Cultural Identity among British Pakistani Muslims," in *Muslim Britain: Communities under Pressure*, ed. Tahir Abbas (New York: Zed Books, 2005), 208-221.

crystallized the need to interrogate the tenets of multiculturalism for possible unintended consequences. Would teaching tolerance and the respectful incorporation of varied cultures possibly lead to the harboring of dangerously isolated individuals by mainstream society, segregated due to economic disadvantage or racial heritage and religious affiliations either by choice or by racist design? Islamophobia was amplified by the horror and outrage felt by many in Britain because of the terrorist attacks, despite the British Muslim communities' condemnation of the attacks. In response, New Labor MPs reframed the message of multiculturalism, reaffirming the essential values at the heart of multiculturalism, especially tolerant community interaction and individual responsibility for producing a successful and unified society.

At this point, it is crucially important to understand the differences between multiculturalism and related terms, such as multicultural, multiracial, and multi-faith. While many scholars use multiracial and multi-faith in a distinct manner, multicultural and multiculturalism are invariably confused. One of its initial uses, in the *Preliminary Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* in 1965, linked multiculturalism with multicultural especially in describing "the Canadian Mosaic," referring to the French Canadians.⁷ In fact, the Oxford English Dictionary includes two definitions for multiculturalism. One definition considers multiculturalism as the characteristics of a society with multiple, and often competing, cultures. The second definition describes multiculturalism as "the policy or process whereby the distinctive

⁷ *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. "multiculturalism," http://dictionary.oed.com.proxy.bc.edu/cgi/entry/00318023?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=multiculturalism&first=1&max_to_show=10 [accessed October 1, 2007].

identities of the cultural groups within a [multicultural] society are maintained or supported."⁸ The key difference between multicultural and multiculturalism is that the latter term describes a method of dealing with the problems that arise in society with multiple cultures in a way that respects and acknowledges the unique contributions of each culture.

Multiculturalism is not a uniform political ideology, but a constantly shifting, utopian goal for interaction between groups, individuals, and the state. It is not a method that, once attempted, policymakers discarded in exchange for a new tactic for healing the fissures caused by inequality and difference. Neither is multiculturalism a relic of past Labor race relations initiatives that now seem limited in the face of new problems. Instead, multiculturalism evolved with each new initiative, responded to changes in the political and social climate, and incorporated new communities into an ever-expanding web involving educational reform, community interaction, and political involvement. Proponents of multiculturalism incorporated the responses to their reforms, adjusting, altering, and adapting to changing situations in effort to enact their vision of how a multicultural Britain should act.

Examining Historiography: Multiculturalism

In the historiography concerning multiculturalism, scholars maintain a strong connection between the development of theories of multiculturalism and the difficulties present in a post-colonial society. Trying to conceptualize the complexity involved in attempts to ease the anxieties and antagonisms present in a multicultural society, Barnor

⁸ *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. "multiculturalism."

Hesse coined the phrase *multicultural transruptions*, meaning recurrent disruptions that "slice through, cut across and disarticulate the logic of discourses that seek to repress...them."⁹ Hesse used this phrase to describe the troubled relations between ethnic groups characterized by identity crises informed by latent imperial thinking. Leftover imperial assumptions persisted after decolonization and created differences in political recognition (limited) and social status (lowered) of ethnic groups. The transruptions only intensified when friction between cultural groups caused fissures that burst into open violence. Hesse argued that multiculturalist discourses could defuse the explosive situation caused by "incomplete decolonization" by intervening in public discourse and incorporating disparate groups in all their diversity.¹⁰ In this sense, incomplete decolonization resulted from the identities and prejudices formed under colonization endured long after the imperial framework was gone.

Likewise, Bhikhu Parekh argued that multiculturalism in Britain formed as a unique reaction to the British multicultural society. Parekh focused on how cultures arrive at the "normative response" of multiculturalism to the reality of multicultural societies.¹¹ In the British example, specific imperial and colonial connections and post-colonial decisions directly affected how Britain faced its burgeoning multicultural reality following World War Two. For example, Parekh identified a unique British identity, bound up with imperial aspirations and ideals, and then examined how this identity incorporated different cultures in such a way as to promote diversity and tolerance while

⁹ Barnor Hesse ed., *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, 'Transruptions'* (London: Zed Books, 2000), 17.

¹⁰ Hesse, *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms*, 14-19.

¹¹ Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 2000.

maintaining traditional Britishness. Parekh argued that this Britishness retained its prior cultural notions but with the different groups in a now multicultural Britain adding their distinctive traits and heritage to the mix.¹²

Paul Gilroy applied a distinct post-colonial slant to the interrogations of multicultural theory following the declaration by US President George Bush of the "war on terror" after the 2001 terrorist attacks on the US. For Gilroy, multiculturalism is not a lost cause, despite what detractors would say. His defense of multiculturalism located racial and ethnic tensions in a deeply divided imperial past. Gilroy argued that the issues that brought Britain to multiculturalism as a solution often remain categorized as racial violence, especially in the 2001 riots in northern Britain. Commentators and politicians connected racial violence to the tensions between diverse groups who had migrated to Britain but not fully assimilated. Gilroy denounced this vision of racial politics, especially the persistence of migrant and immigrant as appropriate terms pertaining to distinct groups despite second and third generation British-born individuals falling under that category. Gilroy considered the "post-colonial migrant...an anachronistic figure bound to the lost imperial past."¹³ Instead, the proponents of multiculturalism needed to recognize and assess the impediments to its successful operation by examining its antecedent roots in racism and imperialism.

To accomplish this task, Gilroy analyzed how the problems with multicultural Britain had arisen. His argument disturbed entrenched ideas of identity and the fixity of

¹² For more interrogation of multiethnic Britishness see: Parekh, Bhikhu, ed, *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain: The Parekh Report: The Runnymede Trust: Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* (London: Runnymede Trust, 2000).

¹³ Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 149.

race, focusing instead on the interaction between individuals in the "chaotic pleasures of the convivial postcolonial urban world."¹⁴ Gilroy resituated the tensions between races and cultures and the failures of multiculturalism in a distinctly post-colonial context. Gilroy asserted, "It was racism and not diversity that made [the immigrant's] arrival... a problem."¹⁵ Gilroy believed that in order to move past significant deficiencies, multicultural politics must deal with the racism and fearful othering present in discourses following the terrorist attacks on the US and Britain. The transformation of policy could occur through assessing and incorporating "conviviality" between different ethnic groups in Britain. Gilroy described conviviality as "the processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculturalism an ordinary feature of social life in Britain's urban areas."¹⁶ This is a utopian vision of multicultural Britain that ignores significant problems and continuing intolerance but a valid observation about the successes of some areas of society in dealing with integration on a local level. From this starting point, Gilroy argued, using conviviality as proof that multiculturalism could work, in order for multiculturalism to operate successfully, policies must deal directly with the problems of racism instead of reifying racial distinctions.

The focus on multiculturalism as a strategy for dealing with post-colonial strain is a common argument in the historiography. Stuart Hall summed up the notion succinctly, arguing that multiculturalism "references the strategies and policies adopted to govern or manage the problems of diversity and multiplicity which multi-cultural societies throw

¹⁴ Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia*, 151.

¹⁵ Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia*, 150.

¹⁶ Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia*, xv.

up."¹⁷ The essential words in that statement are *govern* and *manage*. In this frame, multiculturalism is not a passive, guiding, theory but an active participant in the creation of a sociopolitical language in which diverse ethnic groups communicate. Likewise, Hall sees multiculturalism not as a grassroots strategy springing from society itself, but rather as a policy that governing bodies impose upon society and then carefully manage. Therefore, an examination of multiculturalism must include not only an investigation of how multiculturalist policies interacted with societal dysfunction, but also how policymakers intended the policies to work. Motives and intentions are especially important in evaluating the efficacy of educational reform. By examining intentions, we can track the reciprocal relationship between those who enact reform, the object of education reform, and the consequent effect of those reforms. For Labor, the object of multicultural educational reform was to remove discriminatory practices that led to inequality. The success or failure of those policies in dealing with the problem reflected back on the Labor MPs who pursued the reform, possibly leading to more reforms or increased support for the original reforms.

Detractors of multiculturalism, however, deny that there is anything to save in multiculturalism. In particular, some scholars accuse multiculturalism of promoting further segregation and highlighting difference rather than promoting equality and tolerance. In particular, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, Jonathan Sacks, has argued, "You can have tolerance or

¹⁷ Hesse, *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms*, 209.

multiculturalism, but not both."¹⁸ Sacks denounced multiculturalism as creating more intolerance than it solved, despite good intentions. Instead, Sacks argued that groups and individuals must integrate into society, bringing with them their differences without assimilating. In this manner, diverse groups work toward building a common understanding of British identity and "a felt reality of collective belonging."¹⁹ This collective feeling, Sacks argued, was missing from the current policy of multiculturalism. Sacks hinged this ideal of collective belonging on creating a society that strived for the common good. Sacks used an analogy of the home as the focus for supporting a common goal for society. With each individual assisting in building the house in his or her own way, while striving for the good of the whole, each individual is invested in the successful operation of that home. Likewise, Sacks argued that instead of accepting new individuals into the collective, allowing him or her to feel at home, multiculturalism made each individual a guest in the house.²⁰

I disagree with Sacks's interpretation of multiculturalism, especially in the description of how multiculturalism interacts with state and society. Multiculturalism, in fact, specifically intends to promote integration without assimilation, spurring on a deeper relationship between ethnic minorities and a mutable British identity. For example, in New Labor's interpretation, extending state funding for faith schools in 2001 furthered the goal of having individual cultural, religious, and racial groups act together to create loyal communities considerate of national goals, by adhering to the national

¹⁸ Jonathan Sacks, *The Home We Built Together: Recreating Society* (New York: Continuum, 2007), 203.

¹⁹ Sacks, *The Home We Built Together*, 234.

²⁰ Sacks, *The Home We Built Together*, 233.

curriculum and teaching tolerance. The Education Act of 2002 incorporated these initiatives to promote a sense of belonging to a national community that accepted and encouraged all people's individual aspirations and unique needs. Multiculturalism, in this sense, intended to produce model citizens, reduce cultural tensions, and promote a cohesive national whole from separate constitutive parts. Policymakers expected society and the state to work together, making multiculturalism into a common responsibility. Legislation and policies determined by the state would combine with a social project undertaken by individuals to encourage coexistence and cooperation between communities and individuals. This thesis argues that multiculturalism is not a system of laws and reforms that act on society, but a joint venture initiated by Labor that builds off responses from society and hopes to initiate change toward a goal of multiculturalism.

Roger Hewitt offered a unique perspective on a possible reciprocal relationship between policy and society in arguing that politicians specifically designed multiculturalism's policies to prevent a backlash from the majority community. Hewitt proposed a "dialogue between politicians and the press...brought to life only by the spectre of backlash."²¹ This focus on public opinion, and the careful considerations of politicians in keeping on the "right" side of public opinion, allowed Hewitt to analyze Labor's political compromises that juggled multiculturalism, conservative ideology, and possible white backlash in an effort to construct a policy that did the least damage to individual politician's political futures. Give and take is not a new concept; even in the nascent stages of multiculturalism in the 1960s and 1970s, Labor tempered harsh

²¹ Roger Hewitt, *White Backlash and the Politics of Multiculturalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 156.

immigration policies demanded by Conservatives and some of its own supporters with anti-racist and anti-discrimination legislation. While Hewitt argued that multiculturalism in Britain might be slowly eroding in popularity (he blithely observes that "as a movement [multiculturalism's] days may be numbered"), I believe that the evolution of multiculturalism in Britain was not, nor was intended to be, a completed process.²²

A final thought on multiculturalism's historiography concerns the proper application of equality in the face of diverse groups. In Paul Kelly's edited work, *Multiculturalism Reconsidered*, Bhikhu Parekh offered a succinct explanation of how policies should defend equality and support the inclusion of difference. Parekh's analysis defended differential treatment as part of how equality is produced. I find his example regarding a Sikh child's participation in the school of his choice a particularly compelling argument. In this case, differential treatment, such as exempting the student from the uniform obligations that would prevent him from wearing his turban, "frees [the child] from that burden and equalizes him with the rest."²³ For Parekh, equality of treatment is not the same thing as uniformity.²⁴ Equal opportunity is paramount to understanding how Parekh configured how multiculturalism should interact with diversity.

Mark Olssen mirrored this explanation of equality in a discussion that linked the deficiencies in the conception of citizenship found in the Crick Report (produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority on behalf of the Citizenship Advisory Group)

²² Hewitt, *White Backlash*, 154.

²³ Bhikhu Parekh, "Barry and the Dangers of Liberalism," in *Multiculturalism Reconsidered: Culture, Equality and its Critics*, ed. Paul Kelly (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2002), 148.

²⁴ Mark Olssen, "From the Crick Report to the Parekh Report: Multiculturalism, Cultural Difference, and Democracy--The Re-Visioning of Citizenship Education," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 25(2) [April 2004]: 179-192.

with the positive application of cultural difference and multiculturalism found in *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain: The Parekh Report*, produced by the Runnymede Trust.²⁵ Olssen argued that citizenship education, introduced by New Labor as a corollary to the national curriculum, intended to promote a "common citizenship, including a national identity that is secure enough to find a place for the plurality of nations, cultures...and religions" in multicultural Britain.²⁶ Olssen's conclusion synthesized Parekh's key principles into a cohesive argument for how citizenship education should incorporate key tenets of democratic justice. Olssen's key observation required "a commitment to a conception of democratic justice that...protects universal rights, and recognizes the distinctiveness of particular sub-cultures."²⁷ Olssen succeeded in connecting multiculturalism to citizenship education, considering the possibilities for diversity in a policy that seemed to impose universal standards. I intend to expand on Olssen's tactics, and synthesize these varied arguments regarding multiculturalism into an analysis of the overall project proposed and pursued by Labor MPs to produce a utopian society, supporting diversity without losing a conception of a coherent nation, and promoting tolerance by teaching it as a key ingredient of proper citizenship.

Integrating Muslims

The place of British Muslims within the web of multiculturalism's policies engages a parallel and multidisciplinary field of historiography that incorporates everything from the perceived threat posed to multiculturalism by an active Muslim

²⁵ The Crick Report, produced in 1998, was the final report of the Advisory Group on Citizenship, entitled *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools*.

²⁶ Olssen, "From the Crick Report to the Parekh Report," 183.

²⁷ Olssen, "From the Crick Report to the Parekh Report," 189.

minority to the process by which Muslim students receive differential treatment in an effort to better integrate them into the school system. Steven Vertovec has argued that "the establishment of the Muslim position in the public sphere...co-evolved with ideologies of multiculturalism," but that these ideologies led groups to "'essentialise' or stereo-type cultural and communal identities."²⁸ In Vertovec's opinion, the idea of a uniform Muslim community was patently untrue and indicative of defects in the political and social systems that limited the success of Muslim demands for equal opportunity and equal voice in political and social environments. Different individuals live under different circumstances and have different needs. By lumping together all Muslims into one undifferentiated group, institutions, like schools, risk ignoring the specific needs of individuals in favor of legislating for the whole group. Demands for accommodation of Muslim beliefs and practices, particularly in education, form the foundation of Vertovec's argument about the increasing capacity of Muslims to act in a political sphere that must shift to incorporate their needs. Accommodation of Muslim beliefs would allow Muslim children both to attend school and to adhere to traditional Muslim codes of dress, prayer, and action, specifically in modesty of dress for girls and *halal* options in cafeterias.²⁹

Vertovec considered it unfortunate that although Muslims "have doubtless gained greater prominence in public space," multiculturalism often "exacerbates separatist and isolationist views among Muslims and non-Muslims."³⁰ Vertovec argued that the Muslim community needed both institutional organizations that promoted greater

²⁸ Steven Vertovec, "Muslims, the State, and the Public Sphere in Britain," in *Muslim Communities in the New Europe*, eds. Gerd Nonneman, Tim Niblock, and Bogdan Szajkowski (Reading: Ithaca, 1996), 172.

²⁹ *Halal*: lawful food; to kill (an animal) in the manner prescribed by Muslim law.

³⁰ Vertovec, "Muslims, the State, and the Public Sphere in Britain," 183.

involvement in the public sphere on equal footing, with a sense of belonging and need for participation, as well as individual involvement. Vertovec, alongside other scholars of the time, retained hope that multiculturalism could work if only there was space in the public sphere that protected Muslims under the same codes and ethics as other ethnic groups. The thesis will provide an investigation of how the drive for a change that brought New Labor into power, instead of the Conservative incumbents, mutated from strategic and institutionally motivated plans into a combination of the former and a socially located utopian goal. The utopian goal that policymakers pursued included equal opportunities to participate in the dialogue between groups and individuals in the public sphere, a goal Vertovec hinted would do much to solve the problems of multiculturalism.

In a different mode, Tariq Modood assessed the complications involved in incorporating Muslims into policies of multiculturalism by deconstructing the "secular bias of the discourse and policies of multiculturalism."³¹ Modood zeroed in on the fact that as late as December 2003, race relations legislation did not protect Muslims in the same way as Sikhs and Jews because under the law Muslims were not an ethnic group and therefore not protected by the 1976 Race Relations Act preventing discrimination. Policy, according to Modood, was playing catch-up to a political reality where official secularism clashed with unofficial religious discrimination and lack of equal representation to voice Muslim concerns. Yet, Modood does not argue that the incorporation of Muslims into the political framework represented "just a recognition of a new religious diversity in Britain but [instead presented] a new or renewed policy

³¹ Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou, and Ricard Zapata-Barrero, eds., *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 37.

importance for religion."³² Modood couched his argument not within the framework of an absence of Muslim presence in the public sphere until a sudden surge of recognition, but that increasingly vocal and politically active Muslims lobbying for equal protection against discrimination succeeded in placing their needs nearer the top of the political agenda.

Modood offered a provocative explanation for the problems arising, seemingly, from the tenets of multiculturalism, namely the belief held by some analysts of the Bradford riots in 2001 that Muslims rejected multiculturalism and self segregated. In the case of segregation, Modood argued that Muslim communities were not solely to blame for de facto segregation in some cases, especially in Muslims schools that were sometimes of poor quality. Modood vehemently rejected the categorization of some schools as bad solely because they were Muslim schools, considering them "local, bottom-of-the-pile comprehensive schools suffering from decades of under-investment...[with students taught] according to a secular National Curriculum."³³ Instead, Modood connected this type of segregation to individual decisions, white flight, and inequalities in housing and employment opportunities, which were all symptoms of institutional abandonment, not choices made by Muslims. In this light, segregation becomes a problem not of multiculturalism prompting Muslim retreat into individual communities, but of structural issues that multiculturalism can, and should, reform.

Modood suggested that Muslims largely agree with the tenets of multiculturalism and believe that it can work in their favor. In an effort to drive his point home, Modood

³² Modood, et al, eds., *Multiculturalism*, 42.

³³ Modood, et al, eds., *Multiculturalism*, 49.

mentioned on two separate occasions that "Muslims believe that the Qur'ān, Islam and Muslim history are powerful sources of multiculturalism" with policies that vary between respect for other religions and tolerance of lifestyles different from their own.³⁴ An understanding of how Muslims themselves feel about their inclusion in New Labor's project of multiculturalism is important for analyzing the efficacy of the policies and the progress of society towards the goals of mutual regard and tolerance. I agree with Modood that the incorporation of Muslims into the policies of multiculturalism caused political indecisiveness and thorny ethical issues in a British political system dominated by Protestant Christianity. In this uncertain political climate, it is essential to heed Modood's advice and "recognize Muslims as a legitimate social partner" without stereotyping groups according the actions of the few, but providing acceptance based on the actions of each individual.³⁵

Along the same lines, religious education in schools, especially how (and whether) multiple religions should be presented was a major point of contention between Conservative and Labor MPs, particularly during the 1980s and 1990s. Extending state support to religious schools from denominations other than Church of England and Roman Catholic institutions involved similar concerns, such as whether schools and the curriculum should reflect the majority religious traditions of Britain (Christianity). Joel Fetzer and J. Christopher Soper defended increased religious accommodation in state schools and investigated how Muslims progressed in key areas. Fetzer and Soper argued that while individual issues arise regarding the desired shape of religious education in

³⁴ Modood, et al, eds., *Multiculturalism*, 52.

³⁵ Modood, et al, eds., *Multiculturalism*, 53.

schools the issue of whether there should be religious education in schools is largely undisputed among Muslim groups. Likewise, Fetzer and Soper recognized that there was ongoing debate concerning whether multiculturalism should promote educational policies that reinforce the diversity of religious belief in instruction or whether, as some Muslims argued, the presence of diverse religious based schools fulfilled multiculturalism's call for incorporation of diversity. In response to other scholars who consider the close relationship between Britain and its established church an obstacle to accommodation, Fetzer and Soper argued that these institutions actually "provided a context through which issues of religious accommodation were successfully negotiated."³⁶ By examining how Muslims used existing institutions to further their political and religious goals in educational policy, Fetzer and Soper established an intimate relationship between institutions, ideology, and individuals. This thesis will build upon and complicate this relationship by examining how the reverberations from the differential responses of these groups influenced one another and how that influence reprocessed multiculturalism, refining its policies.

Multicultural Education Policies

In the historiography concerning multicultural education, scholars highlight the importance of understanding communities, especially in not universalizing standards without regard to individual needs.³⁷ Commentators divide between interactive policy making, where teachers' and schools' voices are heard and responded to through reform,

³⁶ Joel S. Fetzer and J. Christopher Soper, *Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 60.

³⁷ Penny Travers and Gillian Klein, eds., *Equal Measures: Ethnic Minority and Bilingual Pupils in Secondary Schools* (Sterling, VA: Trentham Books, 2004).

espoused by Denis Lawton, and policymaking that seeks to universalize a comprehensive understanding of education, standardizing a foundation and guaranteeing a specific degree of education for all, espoused by Tony Blair in his public speeches. Some argue that policy holdovers from the previous Conservative government found in New Labor's education policies, such as not removing the National Curriculum or not striving for the elimination of grammar schools, indicated that New Labor was the Conservative Party in new clothes. These critics accused New Labor of continuing the Conservative policies it fought against while in an opposition for 18 years. As Lawton pointed out, "some of [Tony Blair's] views (including those on education) were suspiciously right-wing, even Thatcherite."³⁸ In this negative view, New Labor's education policy had some successes but also many failures and shortcomings that seemed both to continue supporting the Conservative legacy of selective educational and promoting small changes, especially in the goals of adding citizenship education to the national curriculum. Lawton condemned New Labor's backhanded methods of paying "lip-service" to the ideals of equality while in reality paving the way for an exclusive education that "represent such a betrayal of fundamental values" as to require significant overhauling.³⁹

In contrast, according to Clyde Chitty, New Labor's education policies are ideologically sound, but lack "systemic safeguards" to prevent the comprehensive education system from "becoming a selective system in all but name."⁴⁰ Further, Chitty promotes comprehensive education, though with significant reform as a reinforcement of

³⁸ Denis Lawton, *Education and Labour Party Ideologies: 1900-2001 and Beyond* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005), 124.

³⁹ Lawton, *Education and Labour Party Ideologies*, 146.

⁴⁰ Clyde Chitty and Brian Simon, eds., *Promoting Comprehensive Education in the 21st Century* (Sterling, VA: Trentham Books, 2001), 19.

the idea that "all children have talents and abilities which are there to be fostered and developed."⁴¹ Critics downplay the growth achieved by the comprehensive education system, in addition to New Labor's sound support of the system as a method of achieving education for all groups, and in some cases it is demonized. It is in this instance that an interrogation of motives and purpose drawn from careful consideration of speeches and opinions presented at the state and local level is important to understanding.

Even though comprehensive education is not perfect, New Labor's reforms were not merely Conservative ones in disguise; nor were they a damaging break from traditional values. New Labor's education reforms precariously balanced applying the ethics of multiculturalism, incorporating more diversity into state education, and moving forward from the changes wrought under Thatcher. In the case of the national curriculum, New Labor did not simply continue to implement the curriculum without significant reform. Likewise, New Labor applied policies that attempted to be both fair and equitable to the greatest number of citizens, such as including protections for freedom of religious expression in the Human Rights Act of 1998.

The motive behind New Labor's reforms is important in determining not only the structural aspects of reform but also the ideology that informed the initiatives. It is in this space that my thesis will intervene. By investigating the background leading up New Labor's education policies, I will bring together the connected strands that made up multiculturalism as it developed both during Labor governments and especially while Labor was in opposition.

⁴¹ Chitty and Simon, eds., *Promoting Comprehensive Education*, 19.

CHAPTER 2
The Beginnings of Multiculturalism, the 1960s and 1970s

The first time Sir John Fletcher-Cooke introduced the word multicultural into the Parliamentary debates, in December 1964, the House of Commons was discussing whether the United Nations should take on some characteristics of a state. In the words of Conservative Member of Parliament (MP) John Tilney, the MP who initiated the motion, the most important issue at stake was the acquisition of "the means to act in areas of actual or potential conflict," or the creation of "a small peace-keeping force on a permanent basis."⁴² Deciding which states would, and could, effectively participate in this force was an important factor in the debate. The debate progressed to discussing the ethnic makeup of different states, especially the distinction between the evolution of western nation states, like Greece and Germany, and the "newly independent States of Asia and Africa," which Fletcher-Cooke described as both multicultural and multiracial.⁴³

It is important that Fletcher-Cooke made the distinction, however fine at that point, between multicultural and multiracial. Multiracial would indicate an array of individuals with perceived physiological differences, like skin color, that form the basis for a socially constructed idea of race.⁴⁴ Multicultural, on the other hand, would include any number of other factors contributing to an idea of culture, like religious beliefs and traditions. Yet, MPs would not apply the idea of a multicultural state to Britain until 1971. Descriptions of Britain as multicultural, in 1971, were mostly positive images that encouraged progression toward a multicultural society. For example, the Bishop of

⁴² *Parliamentary Debates*, December 7, 1964, vol. 703, col. 1064.

⁴³ *Parliamentary Debates*, December 7, 1964, vol. 703, cols. 1080-1081.

⁴⁴ Race, in this case, is socially constructed because each individual's personal perception of racial difference is necessarily affected by other factors, like nationality, religion, and skin color.

Coventry, Cuthbert Bardsley, wanted to supplant "the purely negative attitude to immigration" with the positive image of "a multi-cultural, multi-racial family, vibrant with life and rich with manysided culture."⁴⁵ This image of a multicultural society incorporated the culture of newcomers as a family incorporates the different beliefs and ideals of its members while remaining connected as a single body. Also, the Bishop of Coventry alluded to a project that would create a new representation of a multicultural society in the perception of its individual members. Lord Wade expanded that notion of a multicultural society to include "a respect for and a desire to learn about each other's culture and history."⁴⁶ Two essential parts of this new theory, the ideal society and the method to foster the ideal society, would lead to the multiculturalism of the late 1980s and 1990s. The ideal society envisioned by both Lord Wade and Bishop Bardsley corresponded to the principle behind reforms that Labor MPs would pursue in both anti-discrimination legislation and education throughout the 1960s and 1970s. These reforms foreshadowed the multiculturalism of the 1990s.

Breaking Down Divisions in Society—the 1960s

In 1964, Harold Wilson's Labor government proposed a reorganization of primary and secondary education that aimed to break down barriers to education and remove the tripartite system of education based on selection. Wilson's reform addressed issues resulting from the Education Act of 1944, which had modernized the secondary education system, making it free and available to all students. The system did not create equal resources for all students, however, but a tripartite system of secondary education.

⁴⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, June 24, 1971, vol. 320, col. 1060.

⁴⁶ *Parliamentary Debates*, December 15, 1971, vol. 326, col. 1159.

Three general types of secondary schools accepted students, often only those students whose exam results qualified them for admission (the 11+ exam). These schools—grammar, technical, and secondary modern—appeared to fulfill the stipulation in the 1944 Education Act that schools include "practical instruction and training appropriate to their respective needs" but did so though in an increasingly rigid hierarchy.⁴⁷ Clyde Chitty, currently Professor of Education and Head of the Department of Educational Studies at Goldsmiths College, commented on this system and identified a further elitist division. At the top of the system, the public school (independent and outside the state system) ruled followed by two separate types of grammar schools, one with primarily an admission of elite students, and the other with some meritorious advancement. The bottom of the system included mainly secondary modern schools, with some technical schools, and rural schools. Ostensibly, a hierarchy of institutions would support the different abilities of children, tailored to the advancement of the high achieving child. Labor, at that time, argued (correctly) that this system of selection denied students the opportunity to have an equal education and hardened existing divisions in society.

To break down these divisions, Labor planned to eliminate selection based on supposed innate abilities determined primarily by the 11+ exam. Students gained entrance into prestigious grammar schools by achieving a high score on the 11+ exam. On the other side, those students who did not do well on the exam found themselves in secondary moderns, county comprehensive schools, or the (relatively few) technical schools. Thus, passing or failing the 11+ decided which students received certain

⁴⁷ Education Act, 1944, c 5.

educational opportunities. Labor MP Ernest Armstrong aptly observed that "selection involves privilege" and "rejection," a process that reinforced the position of a privileged few and the lack of opportunity of the rest.⁴⁸ Embedded in this selection process was a much more insidious problem. Almost invariably, children in grammar schools came from privileged backgrounds, while children with lower class backgrounds found themselves without the necessary exam qualifications. Grammar schools were more likely to be located in higher-class areas, while secondary modern schools and the few comprehensive schools were generally located in rural and poorer urban areas. Likewise, the higher in the hierarchy of the tripartite system a school was the greater the likelihood that a school would be fee paying and thus unavailable to students who did not qualify for financial support with exceptional exam results. Labor took aim at the class divisions rooted in the selection process by setting into motion the elimination of the 11+ exams and turning toward comprehensive education as a way to provide uniform and equitable education for all students.

Comprehensive education, then available to a comparatively few students, aimed to offer a solution to this inequality and provide equal opportunity. In 1964, Labor proposed a systematic reorganization of secondary education along comprehensive lines. Anthony Crosland, Secretary of State for Education and Science, explained the proposed method of reorganizing the schools in a written answer to a fellow MP. Crosland stated that Local Education Authorities (LEAs) needed to consider "the position, but not the elimination, of all maintained schools in their areas, including grammar schools and

⁴⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, November 27, 1964, vol. 702, col. 1726

denominational schools."⁴⁹ In his approach, Crosland was clearly cautious, especially allowing some room between salvaging the grammar schools and pursuing the destruction of all grammar schools. Comprehensive education need not replace the existing system, by eliminating current institutions and restructuring from the head teacher to the staff, but should try to convert to comprehensive.

In July 1965, Crosland issued Circular 10/65, which encouraged LEAs to consider the steps necessary to convert their secondary education institutions to comprehensive. Circular 10/65 addressed all schools from secondary moderns to denominational schools. In 1965 in England and Wales, there were 3,727 secondary modern schools, 1,285 grammar schools, 185 direct grant grammar schools, 262 comprehensive schools, 172 technical schools, and 417 other maintained schools.⁵⁰ Crosland's initiative wanted to "eliminate separatism" among educational institutions to encourage equality of access to education for all children.⁵¹ While most of the proposed plan dealt with the structure of the schools and not their curriculum, the circular aimed to foster a sense of community and common purpose through comprehensive education. In particular, section 36 described a "community in which pupils over the whole ability range and with, differing interests and backgrounds can be encouraged to mix with each other...learning tolerance and understanding in the process."⁵² Instead of eliminating denominational schools, the

⁴⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 18, 1965, vol. 708, col. 299W.

⁵⁰ B. R. Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 806-807 and 810. Direct grant grammar schools took up to half of their students from the state system while the rest of the students paid fees.

⁵¹ Department of Education and Science, "Circular 10/65: To Local Education Authorities and the Governors of Direct Grant, Voluntary Aided, and Special Agreement Schools," Circular 10/65, July 12, 1965, <http://www.oldmonovians.com/comprehensive/circular1065.htm> (accessed March 7, 2009).

⁵² *Ibid.*

circular urged those schools to consider their position and evaluate the possibilities of participating in reorganization. Further, the circular supported the parents' right of access for their children to education with a particular religious affiliation. For Crosland, and his Labor supporters, the main issue with some denominational schools was their reliance on selection, not religion. Selection led to entrenched class bias and loss of opportunity, both enemies of equality.

Though the traditional position of the public school, both as an elite and independent institution, protected it, to a degree, from consideration under the comprehensive scheme, Labor proposed revisions to the catchments of public schools. Circular 10/65 certainly did not consider the 1,530 independent schools directly.⁵³ The recommendations and legislation that aimed to expand comprehensive education did not apply to the independent sector. Yet, the concern for creating equal opportunities for all students definitely applied to the public schools. The elitism of the public school was a clear enemy of the comprehensive scheme, though referred to as "integration" in a separate Department of Education and Science memorandum, not reorganization, due to a perceived lack "of any urgent problem" similar to that of the other secondary schools.⁵⁴ Semantically, integrating the public schools would not involve significant reorganization on the part of the public schools. Crosland's department demanded that public schools accept "a socially mixed entry" to help reduce the divides in society by opening schools

⁵³ Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics*, 810.

⁵⁴ Department of Education and Science, *Public Schools: Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Education and Science*, Charles Anthony Raven Crosland, CAB 129/123 C(65) 155, November 19, 1965.

"to boys and girls irrespective of the income of their parents."⁵⁵ The overriding intent was to promote a certain type of cooperation among all groups in the community, regardless of class background.

Religious schools were the odd duck of the state system. The 1944 Education Act had brought church schools more explicitly under the state's financial umbrella. The resulting voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools contained their own system of selection, though primarily on religious grounds.⁵⁶ Voluntary controlled schools, mainly with Church of England and Roman Catholic affiliation, gave up most of their control over their curriculum and administration for more financial involvement by the state. Voluntary aided schools retained some control over their curriculum by accepting only 50 percent of state support for their budget. By setting up a firmer system for religious groups and fully supporting some church schools with state funds, the 1944 Education Act opened the proverbial door to a critique of the relationship between other religious groups and the state.

For the Labor government in the 1960s, plans to ensure equality of opportunity for all members of society expanded to include attempts to eliminate racism and discrimination. The twin forces of race relations and immigration concerns intertwined to produce political effects. On one side, the working class and the Trades Union Congress pressed Labor to stem the immigration of ethnic minorities. On the other, pressure to prevent civil injustice demanded equity for the races. These pressures forced

⁵⁵ DES, *Public Schools*, Crosland, CAB 129/123 C(65) 155, November 19, 1965.

⁵⁶ Voluntary aided schools received partial funding from the local education authorities and made up the rest of their budget through charity donations and their governing body, thereby retaining administrative control. Voluntary controlled schools were fully maintained by the state and controlled by the local education authorities.

Labor to balance its efforts to legislate against discrimination and control immigration. Yet, Labor's desire to produce legislation "against racial discrimination and incitement in public places" seemed a half-formed set of conciliatory measures due to Labor's association with Conservative immigration restrictions from 1962 onward.⁵⁷ Throughout the period, Labor's efforts to promote fairness for minority communities were constrained by Tory opposition and working-class opposition that forced Labor to make compromises. Conservatives feared that a strong law would result in more violence and reprisals from the less than tolerant indigenous population. Labor supported the careful cooperation between the "conservative/expulsionist and liberal/integrationist" groups to preserve some measure of racial harmony.⁵⁸ Despite compromises that made measures appear hypocritical at worst and half-hearted at best, Labor continued to regard the immigrant community as a group contributing positively to British society and made efforts to "take action against racial discrimination and promote full integration into the community of immigrants who have come here from the Commonwealth."⁵⁹ Labor's methods of dealing with racial issues further indicate the way the party aimed to create an ideal community by eliminating divisions in society.

A first step, the Race Relations Act of 1965 (1965 RRA), created a civil process for dealing with issues of discrimination and public incitement to racial hatred. The basic institutional structure for dealing with racial discrimination included a central

⁵⁷ Zig Layton-Henry, *The Politics of Race in Britain* (Boston: George Allen and Unwin, 1984), 57.

⁵⁸ Barnor Hesse ed., *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, 'Transruptions'* (London: Zed Books, 2000), 7.

⁵⁹ Home Office, *Racial Discrimination and Incitement to Racial Hatred*, Frank Soskice, CAB 129/120 C(65)23, February 17, 1965.

administrative organ (the Race Relations Board) and numerous local organizations designed to deal directly with complaints of discrimination. By utilizing an administrative structure, the 1965 RRA provided a non-criminalized outlet for dealing with tensions between different cultural groups. The 1965 RRA divided the problems of racial discrimination, racial hatred, and incitement to racial hatred into two parts, discrimination and public order, seeking to define the basic structure of these racial issues. Parliamentary debate watered down the language of the act until, thoroughly diluted and its interpretation broadened, the 1965 RRA passed as a bipartisan measure. The loopholes and many inconsistencies produced a basis for continuing debate despite the original intent of the 1965 RRA to remove racial issues from the political agenda.

Because of limitations that prevented any decisive legal action arising from the 1965 RRA, "the 1965 Race Relations Act was a whimper of a law that arrived with a bang."⁶⁰ The 1965 RRA included ethnicity and nationality, in addition to race, recognizing that the nation was multicultural as well as multi-racial. By leaving religious orientation out of protections, it set a precedent for further race relations legislation to do the same. In addition, according to the Institute of Race Relations' 1967 report, the 1965 RRA implied that race relations problems were somehow the immigrants' fault, that it was not the majority white population who had done anything wrong, but that the minority ethnic communities brought difficulties with them. Even so, it was a dramatic first step toward greater protection of the rights and interests of minority groups as separate individuals with unique needs. Most importantly, the 1965 RRA established the

⁶⁰ Erik Bleich, *Race Politics in Britain and France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 35.

precedent that "state intrusion into race relations was legitimate."⁶¹ However tentative this first step may have been, it was instrumental in opening a space in public discourse for further legislation that would have more directly beneficial results.

Activist groups and the Race Relations Board were concerned about the areas of conflict left out of the 1965 RRA, in addition to its limited effectiveness and scope. Likewise, MPs and independent groups, such as the Campaign against Racial Discrimination (CARD), examined the 1965 RRA to find opportunities for further reform. National and parliamentary debate, about issues of housing, education, and employment, as well as legal vagaries in the language of the 1965 RRA, began to increase. Numerous investigations into discrimination attempted to determine its scope and offer suggestions to ameliorate the situation. One pioneering report on discrimination was the Political and Economic Planning Report of 1967 (1967 PEP Report), commissioned in 1966 by the Race Relations Board and the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants. This report was the first systematic attempt to investigate the extent of racial discrimination.⁶² Its findings strengthened calls for further protection from discrimination in housing and employment. Still, dissent and disillusionment spread throughout ethnic minority communities due to the inconsistent effects of the 1965 RRA and the ineffectual presence of the Race Relations Board. The

⁶¹ Ray Honeyford, *The Commission for Racial Equality: British Bureaucracy and the Multiethnic Society*, Social Policy and Social Theory Series (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 17.

⁶² E. J. B. Rose, *Colour and Citizenship: A Report on British Race Relations*, Institute of Race Relations (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 414. See also: W.W. Daniel, *Racial Discrimination in England: Based on the P.E.P. Report* (Harmondsworth, London: Penguin Books, 1968).

combination of these issues furthered the campaign to amend the 1965 RRA and fix its inconsistencies, especially in the operation and scope of the Race Relations Board.

Home Secretary Roy Jenkins's intense desire to see greater changes in the 1965 RRA, accompanied with support from racial activists, independent groups, and the Race Relations Board, created space for the issue to return quickly to the legislative agenda. The 1967 PEP Report backed up the arguments of Jenkins and race relations activists. After surveying immigrants and collecting relevant statistical data, the 1967 PEP Report concluded, "that there is, without any doubt, substantial discrimination in Britain against 'coloured' immigrants in employment, in housing and in the provision of certain services."⁶³ The *Guardian* that same year reflected that the report revealed "the undogmatic, often vicarious nature of discrimination."⁶⁴ Though discrimination occurred and many considered it heinous, Labor hoped to pursue a new tolerance by assigning personal responsibility for the successful operation of the multiracial society to its citizens.

These reform efforts were set back by the controversy surrounding the immigration of Kenyan Asians that developed in 1968. Before its independence, Kenya had been a British colony. Consequently, some Kenyan Asians, primarily Indians and Pakistanis who had settled in Kenya, held British passports and, thereby, the right to enter and live in Britain. In the wake of discriminatory practices and persecution in Kenya that prevented Kenyan Asians from holding jobs, these individuals sought to claim their

⁶³ Sheila Patterson, *Immigration and Race Relations in Britain: 1960-1967*, Institute of Race Relations (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 407.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Patterson, *Immigration and Race Relations in Britain*, 105.

citizenship rights and flee to Britain. The 1968 Commonwealth Immigration Act (1968 CIA) targeted the Kenyan Asians under the guise of extending immigration control to those "who did not belong to [the] country in the sense of having any direct family connection with it or having been naturalized or adopted here" despite having legal citizenship.⁶⁵ The legislation increased the limitations on obtaining permits to enter and reside in Britain but without restricting any of the rights of those visiting and studying in Britain.

The new restrictions of the 1968 CIA continued the policy of "tough immigration controls but positive measures towards immigrants settled in Britain."⁶⁶ The importance of the 1968 CIA was not just about the legalities of immigration, but also about deepening the connections between individual and society. Though in a superficial manner, for the act primarily intended to deny citizenship to the Kenyan Asians, this part of immigration reform indicated Labor's growing concern for laws not just to accomplish *de jure* satisfaction, but also to generate a particular type of society. Labor's concern would grow into the multiculturalism of New Labor in the late 1990s, which was more than just a legal brief outlining prohibited action, but also a proposition for a way of personal and public interaction, indicating what one should do.

The second Race Relations Act strengthened anti-discrimination protections by expanding coverage and increasing the scope and breadth of the Race Relations Board's responsibilities. Both sides reaffirmed the intent of the 1968 Race Relations Act, not to

⁶⁵ Cabinet Office, *Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1 on Thursday, February 15th, 1968, at 10:30am*, CAB 128/43 CC(68)13, February 15, 1968. See also: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "*Kenya: the 'Asian Exodus' and the Commonwealth Immigration Act, 1968*": *Despatch from B. Greatbatch to Mr. Thomson*, FCO 50/329 no 349, April 16, 1968.

⁶⁶ Layton-Henry, *The Politics of Race in Britain*, 70.

replace the 1965 RRA, but to expand its institutions and scope. The 1968 RRA "made it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, ethnic, or national origins, in employment, housing and the provision of commercial and other services."⁶⁷ Still, protections against discrimination based on religious affiliation, practices, and belief remained absent from the new measures. The absence does not indicate indifference or ignorance of problems concerning religious discrimination, particularly against Muslims in Britain. During the debate many MPs, notably Labor MP Maurice Orbach, referenced the loophole provided by the 1965 RRA by arguing that without added protection individuals could claim that they discriminated "against people not because of their colour, but because they are Hindus, Muslims, or Sikhs," an act which was perfectly legal according to the letter of the law.⁶⁸

Yet, the 1968 RRA reflected the assumption, still held by most of the MPs and voiced by Conservative MP David Renton, that British society was mainly tolerant, with a high degree of racial harmony, despite tensions.⁶⁹ This erroneous belief held that religious association did not need to be an explicit part of the new reform for the new precepts to protect it. Hypocritically, many MPs simultaneously distinguished between public and private tolerance. Opposition MPs, like Conservative William Rees-Davies, maintained that the law could not intrude on private intolerance, such as a man's right to harbor prejudice in the running of his own home, however repugnant that same prejudice would be if translated to the public sphere.⁷⁰ Multicultural education, which incorporated

⁶⁷ Layton-Henry, *The Politics of Race in Britain*, 133.

⁶⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, December 16, 1966, vol. 738, col. 903.

⁶⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, July 9, 1968, vol. 768, col. 274.

⁷⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, July 9, 1968, vol. 768, cols. 339-340.

cultural differences in lessons and helped overcome language barriers, sought to fill this gap in protection. Thus, multicultural education attempted to shape reality to fit the belief in a mostly tolerant nation.

In addition, the expansion of the duties of the Race Relations Board helped create a stronger method for dealing with individual complaints of discrimination. While the Race Relations Board benefited from the new legislation, "the number of complaints the Board received was relatively small," and in many cases the RRB found that discrimination had not occurred.⁷¹ Fleshing out the argument that education could ease tensions, the 1968 RRA created the Community Relations Commission (CRC). The CRC's purpose was to educate the public on the dangers of racial prejudice and to promote understanding of different cultural backgrounds in both majority and minority groups. In this capacity, the CRC promoted an understanding of the multicultural nation and propagated multiculturalism as an ideology through the white and non-white population, hoping to reduce the amount of racial tension and discrimination. This dual focus on anti-discrimination methods and education would constitute Labor's method for dealing with issues of diversity.

While not as weak as the 1965 RRA, many criticisms of the ineffectiveness of the Race Relations Act of 1968 as an adequate response arose early after its passage. The weak Race Relations Board and the CRC could not effectively confront the massive problems stemming from discrimination. Most importantly, the RRB lacked sufficient authority to process complaints when it did receive them. The number of complaints

⁷¹ Layton-Henry, *The Politics of Race in Britain*, 134.

reported represented a much smaller number than actual offenses due to the RRB's reputation as pointless and ineffectual. In addition, the loopholes and vagaries in the anti-discrimination law led to residual discrimination and allowed what was called access discrimination meaning that in order to maintain a "racial balance" ethnic minorities could be denied work or housing based on race.⁷² The RRB, the PEP, and other independent and governmental organizations continued to investigate these weaknesses and problems through the late 1960s and early 1970s in a series of surveys and reports. These reports concluded that discrimination was a lingering problem, that the government needed a decisive commitment to equality for all races, ethnicities, creeds, and nationalities, and that the two previous Race Relations Acts were equally deficient, requiring new legislation to overcome their limitations. Among reformers, a new consensus formed around a new direction for race relations, moving away from compromises that had damaged the integrity of reform to create something new.

On the opposition benches, Conservative MP Enoch Powell embodied the renewed fervor to prevent further immigration of ethnic minorities as well as anti-discrimination reform in a vigorous, almost caricature of, resistance. Powell's sensational "Rivers of Blood" speech, introduced before the newly amended race relations bill, which became the Race Relations Act of 1968, predicted the equivalent for Britain of "the River Tiber foaming with much blood" if the tide of immigration and support for integration did not recede. Powell argued that immigrants would not integrate, as

⁷² Layton-Henry, *The Politics of Race in Britain*, 134; and Bleich, *Race Relations in Britain and France*, 86. Access discrimination, a form of indirect discrimination, related to the enactment of employee hiring or recruitment policies that reduce the acceptance of particular ethnic or racial groups.

reformers hoped, but that most immigrants would continue to live separately. Powellism, the radical opposition spawned by Powell's ideas, threatened the carefully constructed consensus between the two parties and impeded the progress of the new race relations act by invigorating the heightened emotions both for and against Powell's ideas. The Conservative front benches tried to temper the radical forces by ejecting Powell from the Shadow Cabinet. Despite this dismissal, however, Powell remained a vocal figurehead for those who interpreted race relations reform as ineffectual at best (on the grounds that ethnic minorities would never integrate) and dangerous at worst.

Reforming Race Relations—the 1970s

Labor's view of race relations, especially the burgeoning theory of multiculturalism, filtered down through the school system, leading to evaluations of the effectiveness of protections for minority students, the effectiveness of the curriculum in teaching diversity, and especially the problems of religion and language in multicultural schools. Her Majesty's Inspectors' (HMI) reports offer insight into how the schools themselves attempted to deal with problems stemming from race relations and how the schools often went further than the legislation in incorporating Muslims in their schools and promoting community interaction. The actions of these schools, in addition to the advice given by HMI, reflected multiculturalism at work. In other words, analyzing the reports submitted by HMI illustrates how the policies of the central government filtered down to the educational system and indicates how race relations and educational reform affected people on the ground.

In 1968, a parliamentary committee defended the independence of HMI, especially considering its role in inspecting schools, offering advice for improvement, and later publishing its reports. Subsequent committees argued that the objectivity of HMI derived from their ability to act without interference from MPs or ministry departments. HMI existed as a relatively independent investigative arm of the Department of Education through many permutations and reformations of both the department and HMI since the nineteenth century. John Dunford aptly describes these inspectors as two general types, with the best inspectors making "their judgements on the basis of what they saw, in the context in which it was taking place" and the worst inspectors coming in "with a predetermined view" of correct instruction.⁷³ Some HMI reports reflect a tenuous initial teasing out of the different needs of individual minority groups for educational success, their relationship to their school community, and individual schools successes and failures in integration and fulfillment. The inspectors who came into a school and allowed the situation to speak for itself mirrored the methods of Labor's race relations, and then multiculturalism. Labor's policies attempted to deal with the reality of a multicultural society considering each individual separately and not foisting assumptions on society as a whole. Judgments based on a minority community as a distinct whole rather than as a set of interconnected individuals with community ties did not appropriately assess the needs of a successfully functioning society.

In 1971, two separate HMI reports focused on minority communities analyzing the difficulties found by multicultural and immigrant groups, especially West Indian and

⁷³ John Dunford, "Inspection: from HMI to OFSTED," In *State Schools: New Labour and the Conservative Legacy*, Clyde Chitty and John Dunford, eds. (London: Woburn Press, 1998), 109.

Asian children, in their education and proposed solutions to these problems. One report covered the problems found in teaching in schools with a highly multicultural population in the Nottingham County Borough, while the other report covered a similar set of issues in the old Trafford area of Stretford in Lancashire.

The Nottingham report outlined several key areas of stress for members of minority groups, namely integration into school life, the effect of community issues on the school community, and the accomplishments of the school in promoting multicultural themes and alleviating stresses. The report described personal contact between teachers and the families of their students as necessary to overcoming the specific barriers relating to both the Nottingham area (high unemployment and transitory living arrangements) and the minority groups in particular (multiple languages). In both cases, inspectors highlighted personal contact between teachers and families in primary schools as important for the students to participate successfully in school and to counteract the unsettled nature of work and life in the area. In the secondary schools, that same understanding and contact helped secondary students who were more likely to face issues of a greater responsibility in the home and the fragile maintenance of individual motivation. Inspectors concluded that social integration and conflicts between different groups did not appear to be a problem in many of the schools that the inspectors visited. In the secondary schools, West Indian children appeared more integrated than did Asian children. In particular, the report argued that the minor nature of these problems in

primary schools stemmed from the "attitudes of the teaching staffs."⁷⁴ A peaceful school climate, therefore, derived from active participation by the teachers in promoting good social interaction between the races.

The Nottingham report identified several areas of difficulty between groups, including differences in physical prowess and emotional distress. The report described the more physical West Indian children compared to the relatively less formed Asian and white children and identified certain emotional issues distinct to each group. Whereas the "causes would appear to be fundamentally the same – insecurity, rejection and retarded emotional development," the reactions of different cultural groups "from the violent physical reaction of a West Indian boy to the complete withdrawal of the Asian child or the temper tantrum of a white child" were different.⁷⁵ These identifications reflected a very simplistic, racialized, analysis of different cultural groups, but offered a key insight into the different responses of these groups to similar stresses. Differential responses demanded individual consideration. The report proposed that rather than having students slowly integrate into the general school community, the teacher should become more apt at teaching students in a multicultural class, while acknowledging and addressing their individual needs. Arguing for adapting the classroom to fit the children, rather than adapting the children to fit the classroom reflected a distinct form of integration in line with the general trends filtering through race relations legislation.

⁷⁴ Department of Education and Science, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on a Survey of the Problems of Teaching in Multicultural Schools, with Particular Attention to Language Difficulties in Nottingham County Borough* (London: Department of Education and Science, 1971), 6.

⁷⁵ DES, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on ...Nottingham County Borough*, 7.

The HMI report on Nottingham went further in identifying the progress of certain schools in integrating multicultural themes in their curriculum, especially in religious education. The report outlined the importance of multicultural education not just for the development of minority students, but also for the recognition of "the value to all children of experiences that can be gained from contact with other cultures."⁷⁶ This idea directly evolved from similar commentary in the House of Lords of the same year by the Liberal Lord Wade. The reasoning behind multicultural education was not just "teaching Asians English" or "in the sixth form [teaching] something about the Hindu religion, Sikhism and the Moslem faith" but to help integrate the knowledge and experiences of individuals in the multicultural society into all levels of schooling from primary schools' assemblies to secondary schools' history lessons.⁷⁷ A lack of materials to support multicultural education in the curriculum was the main obstacle for schools integrating multicultural themes more readily into their curriculum. Likewise, despite the desire to increase the presence of different religions, in particular those of the Muslim faith, into the curriculum on more equitable terms, certain barriers remained. In particular, legislation supported either a non-denominational religious education or that of a Christian nature. The furor was far from over concerning religious education.

Like the Nottingham report, the Lancashire report reflected a desire to address changes within the whole of society, not just within the boundaries of the school. Yet, while the Nottingham report referred intermittently to the labels of immigrant and indigenous students the Lancashire report outlined a hard division between the two

⁷⁶ DES, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on ...Nottingham County Borough*, 12.

⁷⁷ *Parliamentary Debates*, December 15, 1971, vol. 326, col. 1159.

imagined groups of immigrant children and indigenous children. The assumption that these two groups existed without any subsequent divisions, like second-generation children, ran counter to any positive evaluation of the "wealth of interest the pupils of overseas origin can bring to the life and work of the schools."⁷⁸ MPs and HMI situated schools at the frontline of the battle against discrimination, or as Lord Auckland argued in the House of Lords, "if racial harmony does not exist in the schools it will not exist on the shop floor."⁷⁹ Indeed general harmony and cooperation among "immigrant" and "indigenous" children characterized the analysis of Lancashire's report on its particular situation.⁸⁰ The proposed additions and expansions to the curriculum hoped to increase its relevance for multicultural students, and even offered a suggestion that history classes "investigate the reasons for Asians and West Indians finding themselves in this country."⁸¹ Yet, ethnic minority students are referred to as immigrants without any regard to how long those students had been in Lancashire, or even whether those immigrant students might be indigenous themselves. Oversimplifying ethnic minorities into different groups of immigrants did not accurately assess the differential incorporation of students into the school community. If a student was an immigrant because of racial or cultural characteristics, even if he or she had been born and raised in Britain, what message did that send?

⁷⁸ Department of Education and Science, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on a Survey of the Education of Immigrants in the Old Trafford Area of Stretford, Lancashire* (London: Department of Education and Science, 1971), 5.

⁷⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, December 15, 1971, vol. 326, col. 1202.

⁸⁰ DES, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on...Lancashire*, 2.

⁸¹ DES, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on...Lancashire*, 9.

A key notion put forth by the Lancashire report was the "considerable and successful efforts [by teachers] to get to know their immigrant pupils and...to assimilate them as full members of the school communities."⁸² Despite the use of assimilate, a loaded word in race relations debate, the inspectors who put forth this report offered a misguided attempt to apply certain tenets of multiculturalism, while ignoring the importance of differentiation and specificity implied in the process. The focus on social harmony and deeper connections between minority groups and the greater society on equitable terms reflected trends in legislative and administrative reform not just to correct discrimination, but also to promote a new kind of society through deeper understanding and interaction between groups.

The non-white immigrant, as opposed to the white European immigrant, traditionally faced a different set of arguments concerning his or her usefulness to society. Roy Jenkins, returning as Home Secretary, introduced the bill heralding the 1976 Race Relations Act with a declaration that "racial discrimination and the disadvantages experienced by sections of the community are morally repugnant" and "also a form of social and economic waste."⁸³ Not many disputed that immigrant workers played an important economic and industrial role. In fact, throughout the parliamentary debate pragmatic voices denounced racial discrimination as an economic waste. Labor MP Barbara Castle argued succinctly "that immigrant workers have a vital contribution to make to [British] national production."⁸⁴ The emphasis on the positive

⁸² DES, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on...Lancashire*, 10.

⁸³ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 4, 1976, vol. 906, col. 1547.

⁸⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, December 4, 1969, vol. 792, col. 1695.

economic impact of immigrants waned as the economy went through recession and inflation, but the general belief in the benefit of immigrant workers never completely fell away. Following World War II, for example, many had looked on immigration from European countries and indeed from Commonwealth dominions as a perfect solution to increasing problems of production. The view of immigration as a problem arose when non-white Commonwealth members took advantage of their citizenship to come to Britain. Nonetheless, Jenkins's recognition in 1976 of a connection between ethnic minorities and social and economic progress can be viewed as multiculturalism beginning to affect the rhetoric of race relations.

Further, the 1976 RRA was a superseding, all-inclusive, act that took the place of both previous acts, eliminating the confusions arising from conflicting legislation. Many contemporaries, like Liberal Democrat MP Alan Beith, considered the 1976 RRA able to stand on its own merit, as a distinct progressive reform, because no strict immigration control immediately previous made it seem like a conciliatory measure.⁸⁵ A degree of bipartisanship colored the 1976 RRA as it acquired some of the momentum of the larger, Conservative backed, Sex Discrimination Act that it followed through Parliament, including debates that proceeded with similar language.

The 1976 RRA provided coverage that was more comprehensive and a redefinition of discrimination that included direct and indirect discrimination. The 1976 RRA established an explicit definition of discrimination against individuals of different races, ethnicities, and backgrounds in the workplace, in housing, as well as access to civil

⁸⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 4, 1976, vol. 906, cols. 1604-1605.

programs and services.⁸⁶ By defining indirect discrimination, it also became illegal to apply a requirement or condition that would exclude a portion of the population due to their inability to comply with that requirement.⁸⁷ In addition, the expanded scope of the act included direct access to the courts and legal system, providing the opportunity for the complainants to apply directly to the civil courts rather than relying on overseeing institutions to refer them.

In addition, the administrative institutions, the RRB and the CRC, combined into the Committee for Racial Equality (CRE). The 1976 RRA gave more power to the CRE than that of either previous body in the investigation of complaints and enforcement. Thereby, the CRE became more effective at dealing with investigation and issues of compliance. The CRE kept its informative and educational role to prevent future racial and ethnic conflict through education on mutual respect. This function aimed to enact deep societal change using legislative and legal changes as well as education to alter the social interactions between cultural groups. Roy Jenkins expressed this dual purpose of the CRE by proposing that the "success of legislation depends on the one hand upon the leadership of Government and Parliament and on the other hand upon the response of society as a whole."⁸⁸

Concerning the effectiveness of the 1976 RRA, it was the last of a series of legislative actions that intended to put to rest racial issues in Britain, a goal that did not succeed due to significant oversights. The 1976 RRA was certainly the most

⁸⁶ Harry Goulbourne, *Race Relations in Britain since 1945* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1998), 103-104.

⁸⁷ Muhammad Anwar, Patrick Roach and Ranjit Sondhi eds., *From Legislation to Integration?: Race Relations in Britain* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 10.

⁸⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 4, 1976, vol. 906, col. 1548.

comprehensive and explicit of the three acts but significant flaws and institutional discrepancies threatened its effectiveness.

One significant problem was the widely cast net of responsibilities of the CRE. On the one hand, the amalgamation of the two administrative institutions provided efficiency and allowed all decisions to funnel through one bureaucratic institution. Yet, the cultural differences between the RRB and the CRC made it difficult to set goals and directives.⁸⁹ Some contemporary historians, like Brian Jacobs, and educators, like Ray Honeyford, argued that the CRE was incoherent and missing a set sense of priorities or objectives and that it was "quagmired in intellectual and conceptual confusion."⁹⁰ Likewise, the enforcement aspect of the organization was slow in operation and had relatively few secure successes in enforcing anti-discrimination in its initial stages. Despite all of its shortcomings, the CRE produced some notable success in promoting a closer working relationship and cooperation with ethnic minority groups in order to enact changes in police relations, housing, and local government.⁹¹ It was the closer relationship between the CRE as the legal governmental body and activist groups that MPs hoped would benefit the production of a relatively peaceful, equal, and coherent society.

It is important to note that in all the debate concerning the coverage of race relations legislation and enforcement of these laws, Labor MPs, generally, never intended to force the white and non-white immigrant populations to conform and assimilate to a

⁸⁹ Anwar et al, *From Legislation to Integration?*, 11.

⁹⁰ Brian D. Jacobs, *Black Politics and Urban Crisis in Britain*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 88; and Honeyford, *The Commission for Racial Equality*, 300.

⁹¹ Jacobs, *Black Politics*, 94-97.

predetermined cultural norm, such as that of white, middle-class, English consumers. Instead, the socio-economic and political atmosphere shifted to include different cultures and races in hopes of creating a successful multicultural society and equal opportunity for all its members. The pressure to control ethnic minority immigration pushed at Labor on one side from the working class and the Trades Union Congress, while on the other, pressure groups and internal dissension pulled at policymakers to prevent civil injustice. Labor tempered the restrictions and limitations on the rights of citizenship and immigration, introduced by the Conservatives, by creating space in anti-racist discourse for equal opportunity and treatment for those non-white, non-English, and increasingly non-Christian, immigrants already settled. This push and pull characterized the building of race relations policy. Yet, the limitations of successive reforms encouraged reformers to seek other outlets, like education, to promote diversity. The protection of diversity and different racial groups became the cornerstone of the ideology of multiculturalism.

CHAPTER 3

Parent's Choice and Schools' Diversity, Conservative Education Policy in the 1980s

Under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher the Conservative government, elected in 1979, aimed to lower inflation by reducing spending and debt, to privatize industries (like British Telecom), and to increase the power of the central government over the local authorities. These policies, which some dubbed Thatcherism, dominated the decade. The Falklands War, which led to a reinvigorated special relationship with the United States, solidified the Conservatives' hold on parliamentary power and a nation newly refocused on nationalism and pseudo-Victorian values of work and home. The Victorian values attached to Thatcherism included supporting self-help and competitive achievement and distinguishing between the deserving and undeserving poor. These Victorian attitudes directly attacked the perceived permissiveness of the 1960s and 1970s, which many Conservative MPs believed had led to economic decline, threatened social order, and created moral ambiguity. Thatcher believed that eliminating socialist Labor policies that supported failing industries and a large welfare state would help reassert a proper social, political, and economic order. Thatcher's policies deepened divisions in society, especially by widening the gap between classes. Concurrently, the Labor Party's continual failure to win in the polls over the next 18 years led it to reorganize and reinterpret its ideals while it languished in opposition.

In the early 1980s, the question arose of what the hostilities of certain foreign Muslims meant for British Muslims, including how Muslims would be, if they could be, incorporated into politics and society. Militant Islam and its attacks against the United States marked the opening of the decade. American hostages held by Iran raised

important issues concerning the effects of intolerance upon a modern global community. In the words of Conservative MP John Stokes, "the rise of Islam in recent years and the fanaticism of some of the modern Muslims present a tremendous challenge, not only to the West but to the whole world."⁹² There were many obstacles to the recognition and integration of minority religious and ethnic groups in society. Race relations legislation did not deal specifically with the diverse religious communities present in Britain and new immigration rules in 1981 strictly revised the terms of British citizenship. Further, plans for education reform increased the presence of Christian beliefs and worship in state supported schools. Yet, allowances for other religious groups, including special assemblies for other religions in some schools and halal compliant meals, acknowledged the existence of a multicultural society although the new curriculum imposed in 1988 propped up the traditional majority religion.⁹³ A major sticking point in the ensuing debate and later reforms concerned the acceptable character of religious education in a multi-faith community.

During its eighteen years in opposition, the Labor Party evolved and reapplied its ideas to a changed political environment. Without majority control, Labor MPs lacked the power to push forward further reforms for multiculturalism. Instead, Labor fought for its interpretation of education reform, gaining and losing ground in debate. Uncertainty about the Conservative government's commitment to multicultural education, including the continued funds necessary for multicultural programs, forced Labor MPs to clarify how multicultural identity and multiculturalism fit into solving key issues, like religious

⁹² *Parliamentary Debates*, December 18, 1979, vol. 976, col. 333.

⁹³ *Halal*: lawful food; to kill (an animal) in the manner prescribed by Muslim law.

education, racial tensions, and curriculum reform. Still, Labor's voice in opposition forged a path from the radical and idealistic reform of the 1960s and 1970s toward New Labor's middle way.

Reversing Multicultural Education, Conservatives in the 1980s

One can track the continued formation of multiculturalism as a plan of action through Labor's participation in debate, especially the idea that the tenets of multiculturalism would help all of society. For example, in 1983 Neil Kinnock, leader of the opposition, argued in Parliament that "developing multi-cultural education [was] to the advantage of all children."⁹⁴ Multiple education reforms and shifting alliances shaped the growth of multiculturalism from an ill-defined designation for a diverse set of interlocking racial and cultural concerns into a distinct plan for the future of the British community. The idea of multiculturalism changed in response to failures and successes, but retained a combination of ethical, social, and cultural characteristics. Specifically, debates concerning curriculum reform, racial and religious disadvantage, and multicultural education in both Houses of Parliament illustrated the slow maturation of what would become New Labor's policy in the 1990s. Labor's policy in the 1960s and 1970s focused on providing protection and a minimum of education for all, a policy which expanded to pursuing equality of opportunity, encouraging community relations, and understanding individuals' contributions to a tolerant society.

By analyzing Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) reports in conjunction with Parliamentary debates, one can ascertain achievement in various schools as well as the

⁹⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 22, 1983, vol. 39, col. 711.

progress of education reform in a range of primary and secondary schools. The reports show the actual effects of Conservative reforms inside schools and indicate MPs' intentions behind policy along with information on how those policies affected the condition of schools. The findings presented by HMI differ according to the political leanings of individual inspectors, despite efforts to standardize investigative efforts.

Reports by HMI from 1979 aptly illustrate the range of provisions for multicultural education at the beginning of the Conservatives term in power. The HMI report on the Whetley First School in Bradford described a particularly shameful failure of multicultural sensitivity in its multi-faith community. In 1979, the Whetley First School utilized a segregated lunch schedule for those students with particular dietary needs based on religious observance, specifically those Muslim children who needed halal compliant meals. The investigator condemned this decision suggesting a need to pay greater attention to the self-esteem of ethnic minorities in educational decisions. The better systems, like the Haworth Road First School in Bradford, inspected by HMI in 1979, had lessons that compared and contrasted different belief systems and customs, such as marriage, and utilized festivals, besides Christmas, as teaching opportunities. The only concern with these early examples of multicultural religious education was who actually was responsible for, and directing, these assemblies, lessons, and festivals. Appropriateness and quality of the information provided on multiple cultures was vital to passing on a coherent message, instead of a hodgepodge that mentioned everything without educating students on anything.

When the Conservatives took office in May 1979, the new Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, brought with her an idea for education reform that aimed to bolster the institutions threatened by Labor's previous reforms. Almost immediately, the Education Act 1979 revoked Circular 10/65, which had charged Local Education Authorities with composing plans to convert to comprehensive schools. A corollary to this plan, although admittedly not yet a priority for Thatcher's new government, hoped to increase scholarships for disadvantaged, though able, students in the upper echelons of the education system. In this way, the new Tory government partially traded privilege created by birth for meritorious achievement but also reinforced a hierarchy of schools. Shuffling high-achieving students into independent schools reinforced the idea that fee-paying institutions provided a higher quality of education than state schools. The 1980 Education Act created the Assisted Places Scheme that seemed positioned to attack the comprehensive education plan of the Labor government. Labor MPs resented the Assisted Places Scheme as a further erosion of the position of comprehensive schools that "indicated a belief that comprehensive schools were not suitable for 'able' pupils."⁹⁵ Selection remained a major concern for many Labor MPs. For them, in order to combat disadvantage and provide opportunities for students to achieve their full potential, reform needed to take into account the situation of individuals and communities in society, not just remove high-achieving students. The removal of these students, funneling them into the upper echelons of the education system, fostered a hierarchical and predominantly class-based system of selection.

⁹⁵ Denis Lawton, *Education and Labour Party Ideologies: 1900-2001 and Beyond* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005), 101.

Improving teacher education was a point of agreement between Conservative and Labor MPs. By providing adequate teacher training, qualified teachers could take charge of providing multicultural education. Student-led lessons were the norm in some schools, like a Haworth Road First School's assembly seemingly directed by two Sikh boys, where in other schools certified teachers provided instruction. In Oldham, for example, schools could draw on teachers from the Multicultural Education Center, a newly established (in 1980) asset and important resource attached to the local authority. For members of both parties, the uneven depiction of minority religions needed standardization of teaching and comprehensive reform of the syllabi to facilitate a coherent message.

Initially, Conservatives seemed undecided on the fate of multicultural education. Conservatives grappled with the vague notions of a multicultural society and the precepts supporting multicultural education bequeathed by the previous Labor government. At first, Conservative MPs attempted to judge the general state of multicultural education and seemed amenable to maintaining its forward progress with certain changes. A blended policy, proposed by then Under-Secretary of State for the Department of Education and Science (DES) Dr. Rhodes Boyson, argued that while the school curriculum should "reflect the presence of ethnic minority groups in our society" lessons should support "the history, culture and traditions of the United Kingdom."⁹⁶ What this meant, precisely, would take many forms during the Conservative government's time in office. In fact, expenditures on multicultural education by the Schools Council, which had been responsible for curriculum and examination research and development since

⁹⁶ *Parliamentary Debates*, May 12, 1981, vol. 4, col. 246W.

1964, fluctuated during the initial years of the Tory government's first term in office. Also, Rhodes Boyson supported continued and increased spending on teacher education in-services.⁹⁷ Rhodes Boyson's description of multicultural education in-service courses, given in July 1981, illustrated the type of classes supported by the Conservative Department of Education and Science, with titles such as "Language problems in multi-ethnic schools" and "Towards a multi-cultural education."⁹⁸ Still, some Conservative MPs wanted to eliminate multicultural education in favor of a less divisive policy and reforms eventually succeeded in pushing multicultural education into the background.

Easing Racial Tensions: Immigration Law and Reporting on Race and Education

The Tory government also took the opportunity presented by their majority to alter the terms of citizenship in order to limit immigration. Immigration restriction, in this case, operated without pacifying race relations and continued to shape policies aimed at ethnic minorities. The packaging of the restriction was important. Conservatives passed legislation that changed the terms of British citizenship, leading to a re-evaluation of who could and could not be a British citizen. Unlike previous immigration crackdowns, this revision aimed at secondary immigration, in other words, those members of the family, fiancés, and spouses, who could accompany a British citizen back to the mother country. Like past immigration reform, potential immigrants encountering resistance were passport holding British citizens who resided in Commonwealth

⁹⁷ In-services are workshops designed to provide teachers with continuing education courses, developing specific skills and incorporating new teaching methods.

⁹⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, July 24, 1981, vol. 9, col. 257W.

countries, and British colonies. In the best of cases, resistance necessitated intense paperwork and in other cases immigrants faced wholesale rejection.

The debate polarized around who should, and should not, be allowed to gain British citizenship and how the identities of those deserving individuals could be recognized without prejudice. Conservative MPs argued that the British Nationality Act of 1981 (BNA 1981) would protect Britain from those individuals who had no legitimate reason to reside in Britain, those who misused visitor status to settle in Britain illegally and reap the benefits of citizenship. Labor MPs, in particular Roy Hattersley, voiced disbelief at the notion that Conservatives would deny those who had "legitimate applications in order to frustrate a handful of bogus applicants."⁹⁹ There was also a discrepancy in the increasing number of immigrants Conservatives deemed illegal, and those applicants who were proven to have any malicious intent when applying for citizenship, especially since the statistical increase was due to other reasons.¹⁰⁰

For Labor, the problem with the BNA 1981 was in the type of community that it produced. Labor responses focused on the "civilised society" that Britain should be, where spouses "who married their nationals [could] join their nationals" in Britain.¹⁰¹ Arguments also referred to the implied gender discrimination in the new legislation. For example, British women holding citizenship, and a right to residence in Britain, found difficulties in having their fiancés and spouses join them unlike men who could have their wives and children join them in Britain. In fact, Labor MP Alfred Dubs presented a

⁹⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, June 28, 1982, vol. 26, col. 635.

¹⁰⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, June 28, 1982, vol. 26, cols. 660-693.

¹⁰¹ *Parliamentary Debates*, June 28, 1982, vol. 26, cols. 634-635.

petition collected from the Action Group on Immigration and Nationality that declared the BNA 1981, and the Immigration Act 1971, "unjust" and demanded "immigration law to conform to international standards on human rights, respect family life and respect racial and sexual equality."¹⁰² Labor MPs roundly criticized the BNA 1981 because once again the main focus of the legislation intended to disadvantage the racial and ethnic minorities in Britain and that its precepts would only affect minority groups to any real degree. Subsequent revisions of the BNA 1981 softened the divisive racial tone perceived by the Labor opposition but did not fully eliminate the need for concern. Immigration restrictions that seemed bent on preventing ethnic minorities from joining their families did not promote a tolerant community nor encourage minority communities to feel that their government respected them.

At the same time, both the Rampton Report and the Scarman Report considered the interconnected reasoning for racial and ethnic tensions and underachievement in education, offering education reform as the appropriate method to soothe racial tensions. In March 1979, the Labor government had formed the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups to examine the education of ethnic minorities, especially West Indian children, determine the disadvantages faced by those children, and offer suggestions.¹⁰³ In June of 1981, Anthony Rampton, Committee chairman, presented an interim report to Parliament concerning the achievement patterns of West Indian children. The findings of the Rampton Report considered the

¹⁰² *Parliamentary Debates*, March 2, 1984, vol. 55, col. 509.

¹⁰³ The Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups was commonly known in Parliament as the Rampton Committee until Anthony Rampton's resignation on May 20, 1981. Lord Swann subsequently replaced Rampton as chairman.

multilayered causes of West Indian children's underachievement in schools. Rampton offered a provocative understanding of racism and discrimination. Even if schools and teachers professed innocence, Rampton argued that racism and discrimination could still be present, especially in teachers' assumptions that ethnic minority children were less able even before those children had been assessed.

In particular, the Rampton Report tackled the problem of defining British-born West Indian children as immigrants. A report by HMI on Whetley First School in Bradford illustrated this tendency by describing the actual presence of "very few 'immigrant' children" despite the school's "frequent references in discussion to 'immigrant' children and 'English' children."¹⁰⁴ The Rampton committee identified this behavior as "'unintentional' racism" developed individually, which may "subconsciously affect...behavior towards members of those groups."¹⁰⁵ In this way, teachers who considered their actions tolerant exhibited racist tendencies that negatively influenced the performance of their students. Discrimination, even implicit stereotyping, caused students to lose self-esteem and reduced the effectiveness of important relationship ties between teachers and students. Likewise, Rampton dismissed the idea that insufficient language skills played a part in West Indian children's underachievement. This idea was associated with the prejudicial notion that all children of West Indian origin were immigrants although many were British-born. The real problem, identified by Rampton,

¹⁰⁴ Department of Education and Science, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on Whetley First School Bradford* (London: Department of Education and Science, 1979), 2.

¹⁰⁵ *Interim Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups: The Rampton Report: West Indian Children in Our Schools*, Cmnd. 8273 (London: HMSO, 1981), <http://www.dg.dial.pipex.com/documents/docs1/rampton02.shtml> (accessed December 24, 2008).

was in the dismissal of the language skills of West Indian children by teachers who did not recognize the hallmarks of a different dialect of English. The major findings of the report illustrated how West Indian children needed emotional support based on an understanding of, and support for, the demands of their self-esteem.

One significant correlation that the report investigated was between teachers who harbored differential expectations for West Indian versus white children and those teachers who sought uniform instruction without recognizing the different needs of ethnic minorities. The "self-fulfilling prophecy" of "low expectations of the academic ability" of ethnic minorities identified the key expectation that West Indian children do disproportionately well at non-academic subjects at the expense of their academic subjects.¹⁰⁶ When teachers expect their students to underachieve, their students would likely fulfill that expectation.

Equally damaging, according to Rampton, were teachers who taught all children in the same way without reference to their individual needs, desires, and motivations.¹⁰⁷ A multicultural curriculum would solve the problems associated with this "color-blind" approach by responding to the multicultural nature of society and adjusting the whole of the curriculum to reflect the needs of that society. The belief that the pursuit of multicultural education needed to occur at all schools regardless of multicultural catchments and that truly effective multicultural education affected all aspects of the curriculum were two of the most provocative ideas put forth by the Rampton Report. Multicultural education was not a single subject that could be added on to the curriculum.

¹⁰⁶ *The Rampton Report*, Cmnd. 8273.

¹⁰⁷ *The Rampton Report*, Cmnd. 8273.

Instead, the curriculum needed revamping on all levels to incorporate the disparate stories, histories, and cultures of ethnic minorities. The provision of multicultural education for all schools, especially those with an all white population, reflected the desire to produce a certain type of community for all members of society. In this way, the multicultural curriculum proposed by the Rampton Committee was not just about making school accessible for ethnic minorities, but also about producing a truly tolerant society by combating the unintentional racism recognized by the inquiry.

The Conservative government's response to the Rampton report was divided. One problem was that the committee's findings reflected part of the multicultural education proposals left over from the Labor government, which had created the committee, compiled its membership, and furnished its mission. Critiques pointed to supposed facts. Lord Swann, the new committee chairman who had replaced Rampton in 1981, reiterated some of these criticisms, including "the IQ of blacks being some 15 points lower than the IQ of whites," and that Asian students had more success when faced with similar unintentional racism as Black students.¹⁰⁸ Lord Swann expressed agreement with the latter supposition at the same time that he pledged the committee to expand on the findings of Rampton. Many Conservatives, including Dr. Rhodes Boyson, preferred to reserve judgment on the Rampton Report until the committee completed its research under Lord Swann. Rhodes Boyson argued that the report should locate the "schools and areas where West Indian children are succeeding and...find the formula and transfer

¹⁰⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, December 16, 1981, vol. 426, cols. 265-257.

it."¹⁰⁹ Rhodes Boyson promoted a policy that would attempt to solve the problem by grafting the precepts of successful programs onto unsuccessful ones.

Later that year, the Scarman Report, published in November 1981, dealt with the fallout from the Brixton riots, drawing important ties between the Brixton riots, education, and community policing. The Brixton disorders, a series of riots that occurred during April of 1981 had further pushed the issue of improving race relations to the front of political concerns. The Scarman Report assessed the disadvantages for ethnic minorities in education, community policing, and "inner city decline."¹¹⁰ According to Scarman, the Brixton riots arose from a misunderstanding born of distrust between the police and the ethnic minorities in Brixton. When the police attempted to implement the best course of action, the people of the community, misreading the situation, responded with violence. The confusion of the disorders resulted from the socio-economic deprivations found in the Brixton community relating to, but not solely dependant on, inner city decline. The report identified education, unemployment, and poor housing as key areas of deficiency affecting all members of disadvantaged communities, and ethnic minorities in particular. Yet, ethnic minorities displayed more difficulties than the problems of the inner city could explain, especially since not all ethnic minorities experienced disadvantages to the same degree and not all minorities lived in the inner city. Unlike the Rampton Report, the Scarman Report identified deficient language skills as an important feature in future reforms, in addition to "basic training in the skills

¹⁰⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, July 6, 1981, vol. 8, col. 243.

¹¹⁰ *Report of an Inquiry by the Right Honorable Lord Scarman, OBE: The Brixton Disorders, 10-12 April 1981: The Scarman Report*, Cmnd. 8427 (London: HMSO, 1981), 161.

necessary to obtain work," and helping every member of the community "understand each other's background."¹¹¹ Thereby, with an implicit nod to multicultural education, the Scarman Report validated the Conservative preoccupation with preparing students for participation in the market economy. Likewise, the report argued that the government needed to provide support for ethnic minorities based on established need and assess the whole of an area's weaknesses, not just those of ethnic minorities. Scarman also focused on building better relationships between the community and the police with an attention to fairness and understanding. These relationships would respond to the changing needs of the society and demonstrated a desire for a type of ideal community.

Multicultural education policies remained a high point of contention between Labor and Conservative MPs. Debates centered on whether section 11 funding for language classes and other multicultural projects should continue and how long the government would maintain such special assistance for ethnic minorities.¹¹² The focus on special assistance for minority students was to provide English language support for children coming "from non-English-speaking backgrounds," offering the same access to the curriculum for those students as English speaking students.¹¹³ The spotlight on special assistance for minority children eventually was replaced by Conservative MPs desire for more general education reform that would help all children, presumably including minorities. Conservatives, led by Secretary of State for the DES Keith Joseph, turned to an attack on underachievement itself, identifying the differential causes for

¹¹¹ *The Scarman Report*, Cmnd. 8427, 6.

¹¹² Section 11 funds refer to section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966, which allowed local education authorities to apply to the Home Office for reimbursement for special provisions made to accommodate groups and individuals within the multicultural society.

¹¹³ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 22, 1983, vol. 39, col. 711.

underachievement among majority and minority students, but attempting to solve a broader problem. In turn, Joseph argued that section 11 funds were "designed to change attitudes" on spending for multicultural education but not "increase...local authority expenditure as a whole."¹¹⁴ This was a tricky policy. The government presumably encouraged spending on multicultural education needs, but did not support any increase in the overall budget to accommodate such expenditure. As Labor MP Giles Radice groused, these were "bricks without straw" or a policy that intended to produce change without providing adequate resources to accomplish it.¹¹⁵

Further reports confirmed the need for an overhaul of the educational system in favor of multicultural education. The Swann Report, presented in 1985, was the final report from the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups and represented the culmination of the inquiry. Arguments presented in the Rampton Report were expanded and recommendations for curriculum change were couched in a new policy described as "Education for All."¹¹⁶ Like the Rampton Report, the Swann Report considered the dual problem of "eradicating the discriminatory attitudes of the white majority" and "evolving an educational system which ensures that *all* pupils achieve their full potential."¹¹⁷ This dual focus blended idealistic concerns for the future of society with more immediate concerns for educational achievement. Speaking in the House of Lords, for Labor, Lord Pitt urged the full acceptance of these

¹¹⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 14, 1985, vol. 75, cols. 451-452.

¹¹⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 14, 1985, vol. 75, col. 453.

¹¹⁶ *Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups: The Swann Report: Education for All*, Cmnd. 9453 (London: HMSO, 1985), <http://www.dg.dial.pipex.com/documents/docs3/swann06.shtml> (accessed January 23, 2009).

¹¹⁷ *The Swann Report*, Cmnd. 9453.

precepts, placing special emphasis on the need for multicultural education in schools with both white majority populations and mixed populations.

The Swann Report took a potentially polemical stance regarding religious education. Rejecting the need for a specifically Christian religious education, the Swann Report argued that legislation needed to disentangle religious education from religious instruction and appropriately consider the ramifications of the multicultural, multi-faith, community in schools. Instead, "a non denominational and undogmatic approach to religious education" would provide the necessary moral instruction for students without proselytizing or encroaching on the religious instruction provided by other institutions in the community.¹¹⁸ In response, Conservative MPs, like Rhodes Boyson, argued for separate religious services for Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs, based on the needs of individual schools, with power relegated to the local authorities and schools to determine such a need. The Swann Report, on the other hand, contended that reformers needed to review religious assemblies and determine whether these assemblies still reflected the general will of society. The message of the Swann Report was the persisting need to address the disadvantages endured by ethnic minority students on an individual basis and adapt the curriculum to teach tolerance and remove racism from society.

The message of the Swann Report became muddled when considered in the House of Commons debate. Indeed, Keith Joseph agreed with Conservative MP Tony Marlow's leading question that the general message of the Swann Report was to "encourage one mother tongue, which is English, one culture, which is the culture of

¹¹⁸ *The Swann Report*, Cmnd. 9453.

these islands, and the teaching of one history, which would be British history" to promote a "coherent, stable and integrated society."¹¹⁹ This statement was either a deliberate falsification or a misunderstanding that misrepresented the Swann Report. Although, the Swann Report supported section 11 spending to teach English to students with deficient skills, the report explicitly defended the introduction of multiple cultures into the curriculum through stories and history to reflect the many cultures residing in Britain. In fact, the idea that Britain had one culture to teach was controversial. Joseph complicated his position further by referring to "respecting the cultures of each separate group" and the "willingness of separate cultures to protect their continuity."¹²⁰ By this reasoning, assimilation seemed the best option, since a society made up of separate cultures would contain zealously guarded boundaries. Boundaries like these would ensure that divisiveness would thrive in spite of all integration efforts. Despite some confusion about the implications of the Swann Report by Conservatives, Labor opposition continued to defend precepts, as laid out by Labor MP Giles Radice, that "root out the racism which...blights the prospects of many black and Asian children" and sponsored "curriculum [that reflected] the values of our multicultural society."¹²¹ Labor pushed the government to provide resources to enact Swann's proposals, as opposed to what Radice called an "elegant waffle" that promised everything and did nothing.¹²²

¹¹⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 14, 1985, vol. 75, col. 456.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 14, 1985, vol. 75, col. 452-453.

¹²² *Parliamentary Debates*, March 14, 1985, vol. 75, col. 452.

Fighting for Good Solutions: The National Curriculum and Religious Education

Debates about multicultural education in 1988 demonstrated the beginnings of a separate identification for the existence of multiple cultures and the process of promoting tolerance, respect, coexistence, and understanding between those cultures. Initially, the use of the word multicultural by MPs was complicated. On one hand, multicultural identified the presence and incorporation of different cultures in society. Multicultural also described a solution for the tensions present in such a society. Eventually, this convoluted use of multicultural led to the increased use of multiculturalism by Labor MPs to separate the positive measures proposed by Labor reforms from the negative connotations attributed to the word by Conservative MPs. The use of multiculturalism instead of multicultural, which did not occur to any consistent degree until the mid 1990s, partly derived from the negative connotations attached to the term multicultural by some Conservative MPs during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Conservative MPs promoted assimilation due to their belief that multicultural policies would lead to a failure to integrate and therefore to segregation. Some Conservative MPs, such as John Townsend, explicitly desired "assimilation and Anglicisation" to prevent "Britain ceasing to be one nation and [instead] becoming several nations."¹²³ Some MPs further condemned the policies arguing that "pursuing a pretence of multicultural policies" took time away from legitimate concerns that would help schools "fulfil the potential of all their children."¹²⁴ Pretence was a loaded word that reflected both the discouragement with failures in multicultural education and the disgust

¹²³ *Parliamentary Debates*, November 8, 1989, vol. 159, col. 1106.

¹²⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, May 2, 1989, vol. 152, col. 16.

at the prospect of singling out specific children for help at the expense of the whole. It was the whole that concerned Conservative education reform in the late 1980s.

The overall justification of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA 1988) was to establish increased choice for parents, about which school to send their child, and with greater diversity in school choice. Conservatives believed that the comprehensive education scheme, initiated by Labor in the 1960s and 1970s, did not support differences in abilities as well as a hierarchical system of schools could, with grammar schools and independent schools offering hope and something to which to aspire. The Assisted Places Scheme initiated in 1980 had offered parents their choice of schools for their child regardless of personal income. The ERA 1988 solidified many contentious Conservative reforms, especially those concerning multicultural education, religious education, and the national curriculum (a late addition to the ERA 1988 made by Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education and Science). The ERA 1988 did not specifically include multicultural education, and the provisions concerning religious education supported the Christian tradition. The ERA 1988 centralized planning for the curriculum and placed the power to establish and assess necessary changes to the national curriculum directly in the hands of the Secretary of State for the DES. The Secretary of State would then have the power to set "attainment targets," "programmes of study," and "assessment arrangements."¹²⁵ The national curriculum assured that any school parents chose for their children would follow a common basic curriculum. This curriculum, according to educational historian Brian Simon in 1991, had "a strong emphasis on technological,

¹²⁵ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40

scientific and practical work."¹²⁶ Thus, the national curriculum supported the Conservative ideal that a good education needed to prepare students for active participation in the market economy, instead of employing education as an instrument in a social engineering project.

Still, the identification of the proper role for individuals in society occupied much of the debate. While Conservatives considered the set of seven foundation and three core subjects in the national curriculum, defined by the ERA 1988, as adequate preparation for students to reach their potential and enter the marketplace, Labor opposition argued that students could not reach their potential without some provision recognizing the presence and challenges of a multicultural society. The national curriculum was extremely prescriptive in some parts, especially in the description of attainment in the core subjects. For example, the national curriculum was comprised of 3 core subjects—math, English, and science—and 7 foundation subjects—history, geography, technology, music, art and physical education, and religious education. In Wales, Welsh was added as a core subject in Welsh-speaking schools and as a foundation subject in schools that were not Welsh-speaking. This division illustrated the possible difference that MPs intended to encourage between core and foundation subjects. In Wales, Welsh was included as part of the national curriculum as a core subject and a foundation subject, depending on whether the school was Welsh-speaking. In a Welsh-speaking school, the development of Welsh as a language would necessarily be as important as the development of English in English-speaking schools. Yet, the national curriculum also included Welsh as a

¹²⁶ Brian Simon, *Education and the Social Order, 1940-1990* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 531.

foundation subject in Welsh schools that were not Welsh-speaking. By not including Welsh as a core subject in all Welsh schools, a lowered status for a foundation subject in relation to the core subjects was expressed. The national curriculum, then, focused on subjects like math and science, and placed less importance on the social sciences. Further, the curriculum prescribed the necessary levels of achievement for four Key Stages of schooling. The four Key Stages were between ages 5-7, 8-11, 12-14, and 15-17 (depending on the ages when compulsory education began and ended). Levels of differential achievement and maturity were taken into account in "the knowledge, skills and understanding" expected of those children in each Key Stage.¹²⁷ The national curriculum succeeded in providing a baseline of subjects to be provided to each student, although with some ambiguity in how these subjects were weighted (which were more important than others) and what exactly should be taught in each subject. Issues in the definition of subjects would be revealed in the 1990s when HMI reports showed that the same attention to investigation and advising paid by HMI to how the school performed in geography and history occasionally was paid to art and music, especially at the primary school levels.¹²⁸

The resulting schools supported by the ERA 1988 were decidedly hierarchical and served to direct administrative power into the hands of the central government. New categories like City Technology Colleges allowed independent schools to reclassify themselves and offer a "broad curriculum with an emphasis" in either the sciences or the

¹²⁷ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40.

¹²⁸ Department of Education, *Report by H.M. Chief Inspector of Schools on Frizinghall First School in Bradford* (London: Department of Education, 1992).

arts.¹²⁹ The ERA 1988 also increased support for Grant Maintained schools that had chosen to opt out of the local education authority's control in order to receive funding directly from the government. Grant Maintained schools were originally independent schools, voluntary institutions (church schools), or county schools before choosing to opt out. Grant Maintained status directly attacked LEA control, destabilizing the power base of the authorities, so that more power over administration and curriculum would be given directly to the central government.

The abolition of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) served a similar purpose. By splitting the mammoth ILEA into its constitutive parts, the central government dealt a blow to the central planning of Inner London and created smaller, easier to control, LEAs. Coincidentally, (or not) the ILEA was responsible for great strides in codifying multicultural education, as a report by HMI on Warwick Park School in Peckham indicated. The ILEA had "published policies with regard to racism and education for a multi-cultural society," which individual schools were encourage to expound on, like Warwick Park School's interest in developing in students a "sensitivity for the understanding of themselves and others."¹³⁰

The Conservatives also hoped to increase the effects of market forces (specifically supply and demand) upon school development and control. If a sufficient number of people desired a certain type of school in their area, a Grant Maintained school or the reinstatement of a grammar school, appropriate funds directly from the state would fund

¹²⁹ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40.

¹³⁰ Her Majesty's Inspectorate, *Schools Serving Predominately Ethnic-Minority Communities: Warwick Park School, Peckham, ILEA, 1988*, ILEA, National Archives, 7.

that decision. Likewise, since the achievement of Grant Maintained status partly relied on a ballot by parents, legislation hoped to allow the needs and desires of communities and individuals to dictate what kind of schools grew stronger and which failed.¹³¹ Like many other Conservative reforms, privatization and centralized planning and control of curriculum characterized educational reform.

For Labor, the failure to include multicultural education explicitly in the ERA 1988 represented the most damaging error. Lord Pitt called this "omission...the failure to require the national curriculum to prepare pupils for life in a multiracial and a multicultural community."¹³² Attempts to add stipulations that specifically addressed multicultural concerns were fiercely debated in both Houses of Parliament. Lord Morton of Shuna, official Labor spokesman for the House of Lords, proposed that "pupils or the society, whichever way we look at it, must accept the reality of a diverse multi-cultural society" with appropriate legislation recognizing that fact.¹³³ Shadow Cabinet Education spokesman, Jack Straw supported this statement in the House of Commons by asserting that the British were "multi-cultural multi-faith, multi-religious and multi-denominational...even before the arrival of Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities in this country."¹³⁴ At this point, identifying Britain as multicultural was either accepted as a given or denied because of the negative connotations Conservatives associated with the term. For Labor MPs the existence of the British multicultural society was not a new revelation. Likewise, there was no single British culture that the ERA 1988 could

¹³¹ Clyde Chitty, *Education Policy in Britain*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, 51.

¹³² *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, April 18, 1988, vol. 496, col. 1320.

¹³³ *Parliamentary Debates*, June 21, 1988, vol. 498, cols. 681-682.

¹³⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, June 21, 1988, vol. 137, col. 818.

support and reference. Speaking in the House of Lords, Labor Lord Hatch asserted that "there is no British culture; there is a culture in Northern Ireland, there is a culture in Wales" and that the progress up to the 1980s created an "even wider multi-cultural society."¹³⁵ Labor continued to press the positive aspects of a multicultural society, supporting integration and the future ideal tolerant society. Lord Morton, for example, argued that there were "people who [had] come to this country within the last 50 or 60 years who have not been wholly assimilated" and in fact helped further develop British culture.¹³⁶ In each case, Labor emphasized the positive contribution of ethnic minorities in the past and future and the need to protect, respect, and understand the differences between cultures and religions with appropriate additions to legislation.

Religious education occupied a position of great importance in the ERA 1988. The terms of the act reinforced the position of Christian belief systems at the forefront of religious education. Instruction in religious education would "reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain."¹³⁷ In practice, this type of religious education either incorporated the stories and beliefs of other religions as supplements to Christian assemblies or ignored, or treated casually, other religions. The irregular treatment of multiple faiths in religious education derived, in part, from unclear prescriptions and divided opinion. An act of collective worship was required in all school maintained by the state, but the nature of the collective worship was

¹³⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, June 21, 1988, vol. 498, col. 684.

¹³⁶ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, June 21, 1988, vol. 498, col. 686.

¹³⁷ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40.

ill defined. The county schools were the only schools maintained by the state to receive special consideration under the ERA 1988. The act of collective worship, required by the ERA 1988, was to be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" in the county schools.¹³⁸ In the words of Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education and Science, religious education needed to be of a Christian character "to secure that proper regard is paid to our nation's Christian heritage and traditions" while ensuring a central position for religious education in the curriculum.¹³⁹ Labor MPs reacted fiercely to Baker's pronouncement and religious education conducted in a wholly Christian manner. Labor MP Nigel Spearing argued succinctly that the provision "will lead to division, especially in multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-religious areas."¹⁴⁰

In contrast, there were alternative answers to the rule on religious assemblies and lessons. The Warwick Park School in Peckham, while still attached to the Inner London Educational Authority in 1988, chose a non-confrontational approach for their religious lessons and assemblies similar to that prescribed by the Swann Report. In this case, the Warwick Park School's unpublished report, intended only for HMI offices, argued that the "avoidance of reference to religious belief [negated] the school's own policy to respect and reflect the variety of traditions" present in society and their school community.¹⁴¹ This description illustrated the bias of this group of HMI toward promoting multicultural education. They believed that the precepts and use of multicultural education needed better definition and clarified standards but that

¹³⁸ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40.

¹³⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, July 18, 1988, vol. 137, col. 824.

¹⁴⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, July 18, 1988, vol. 137, col. 829.

¹⁴¹ Her Majesty's Inspectorate, *Schools Serving Predominately Ethnic-Minority Communities: Warwick Park School, Peckham, ILEA, 1988*, ILEA, National Archives, 7.

multicultural methods were still the best. In addition, members of different religions could opt out of collective worship or local authorities could establish separate assemblies specifically for other faiths. It was the availability of withdrawal from religious assemblies that Conservative MPs believed negated the charges of divisive education tactics and assimilating techniques leveled by the Labor opposition. In fact, Secretary of State Kenneth Baker argued that "a specific type of worship or religious education should [not] be thrust down the throats of children when they or their parents do not want it" and certified that the ERA 1988 would continue to defend parents' choice in all aspects of the children's education.¹⁴² Labor MPs, like Brian Sedgemore, denied that these opportunities to opt out represented equality in any form and disagreed with the idea of separate assemblies for different faith groups. A fellow Labor MP, Paul Boateng, suggested that religious education needed to "draw on the Hindu religion, the religion of the Sikhs and on Islam to enrich the spiritual body of our nation" though the ERA 1988, at least obliquely, offered the opportunity for such enrichment.¹⁴³

To some Conservative detractors, the national curriculum imposed by the ERA 1988 seemed to have more in common with a Labor design than anything established by a Tory government, since the national curriculum was applied across all state schools without regard to a diverse set of institutions. Combating this opinion, Margaret Thatcher quickly took over stipulating how the national curriculum would be instituted. Thatcher considered the national curriculum the course by which "every child can have a really good education whatever local authority he is in," thereby increasing the standards

¹⁴² *Parliamentary Debates*, July 18, 1988, vol. 137, col. 827.

¹⁴³ *Parliamentary Debates*, July 18, 1988, vol. 137, col. 840.

of achievement for all students.¹⁴⁴ A set standard of education was provided for all students across the spectrum, at least superficially. The difference was that, though the national curriculum provided a basic curriculum for all schools, grammar schools (and other institutions) were still able to use a variety of means to select their student populations. Likewise, the national curriculum did not do enough to equalize educational opportunities for all students, focusing instead on opportunities for the few students deemed high-achievers. Labor had one major issue with the national curriculum, a continuing issue that Labor MPs fervently defended despite all new reforms and changes in government: multicultural education. Once provisions were inserted to support multicultural education, Labor considered the national curriculum a useful tool that could, and would, be reworked for their purposes.

During the 1980s, Labor MPs lobbied for multicultural education policies to remain in effect. Hard opposition from many Conservative MPs thwarted these efforts. Tories were not committed to multicultural education except in terms of language classes for ethnic minority students, but for Laborites multicultural education meant much more. Because of this confrontation, Labor MPs refined the multiculturalist ideal and pushed away from the radicalism of the 1960s and 1970s.

¹⁴⁴*Parliamentary Debates*, May 2, 1989, vol. 152, col. 17.

CHAPTER 4

The Maturation of New Labor's Multicultural Education Policies, the 1990s

During the early 1990s, there were important debates in Parliament concerning areas of unresolved cultural tensions that included incitement to racial hatred, religious education, and educational underachievement—all issues that caused most Laborites to turn to multiculturalism as a permanent solution. The gap between Tory and Labor ideologies in the early 1990s, especially over the repercussions of racial tensions, the perceived failures in education reform, and the Assisted Places Scheme, was wide. Differing opinions about education spending, religious education, and the organization of schools led to vigorous debate in both Houses of Parliament. Labor's vision for multicultural education policies grew more distinct even as the Conservatives, led by new Prime Minister John Major, pushed through their own reforms.

A significant picture of how education reforms, especially the Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA 1988) filtered down from legislation and into practice becomes apparent by comparing Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) reports in the early 1990s for selected primary schools. The HMI reports show that the national curriculum was not implemented uniformly, despite the fact that Conservative MPs intended the ERA 1988 to standardize the curriculum. These differential applications of the national curriculum reveal inconsistencies, confusion, and unnecessary complexity within the new curriculum framework.

In a report covering Marsh Green Primary, a maintained school inspected from November 26th to November 30th in 1990, in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, special attention was paid to the “implementation of the National

Curriculum...in Key Stages 1 and 2," stages that affected the children attending Marsh Green (aged 3 to 11).¹⁴⁵ Each subject in the curriculum, from English to Art, received its own section delineated by a heading marked in all capital letters. The descriptions of the relative successes and failures in each subject were surprisingly thorough and indicated a varied level of achievement between classes and across grade levels. Inspectors singled out the sensitivity of the school to students "from different cultural backgrounds" as a strength, including the purchase of "resources which reflect the multi-cultural nature of the school's catchment" and offer "equal access to all curricular activities."¹⁴⁶ The inspectors advised the school to raise its standards of achievement and eliminate inconsistencies in the application of the curriculum. It is important to note that these inspectors treated the core (English, math, and science) and foundation (history, geography, technology, music, art, physical education, and religious education) subjects of the national curriculum with equal weight, though inspectors carefully ordered the list dealing with the core subjects first. By treating all subjects with equal weight, these inspectors showed a distinct confusion as to the actual importance of various subjects. Lacking a system that streamlined and ranked subjects in their importance to the eventual assessment tests, the national curriculum led to the assumption that each subject deserved equal time.

This confusion was not alleviated by turning to the national curriculum itself. The curriculum was crowded with subjects and their individual goals in attainment and

¹⁴⁵ A maintained school was a school that received all or part of the funding for its budget from the state. Department of Education and Science, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on Marsh Green Primary in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham* (London: Department of Education and Science, 1990), 1.

¹⁴⁶ DES, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on Marsh Green Primary*, 2.

assessment. The national curriculum, in its perplexing convoluted state, lacked a clear and consistent message, presenting difficulties for educators in effectively carrying it out. Many critics of the national curriculum disliked its specificity, especially considering the system of in-class assessment based on individual goals for each of the 10 subjects depending on the students' age. Since individual committees, established by the Secretary of State for the Department of Education and Science, developed the national curriculum by subject, instead of by age group, the syllabi for each subject were extremely descriptive.¹⁴⁷ The curriculum contained a plethora of provisions and prescriptions for lessons in all subjects and "was often bogged down in minutiae," as Conservative MP Rhodes Boyson observed.¹⁴⁸ The HMI report on Marsh Green hinted at the future complications in determining what was important for a successful student in a complicated and confusing state-mandated curriculum.

Conversely, the Culloden Primary School in Tower Hamlets, also a maintained school, was inspected from March 18th to March 22nd in 1991. Serving roughly the same age group, Culloden Primary's progress toward incorporating the national curriculum was severely lacking. The ERA 1988 clearly stated that religious education in schools should conform to a set syllabus from the Department of Education and Science and local councils, and should "reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the

¹⁴⁷ The Department for Education and Science became the Department for Education in 1992. See also: David Coulby and Stephen Ward, eds., *The Primary Core of the National Curriculum: Policy into Practice* (New York: Cassel Education, 1996).

¹⁴⁸ Rhodes Boyson, *Boyson on Education* (London: Peter Owen Publishers, 1996), 33.

other principal religions represented in Great Britain."¹⁴⁹ In this report, the inspectors took special care to stress the lack of appropriate religious education in the school, finding it especially appalling that “none of the school assemblies appeared to constitute a collective act of worship,” as the ERA 1988 dictated.¹⁵⁰ It seemed that Culloden Primary avoided all religious instruction in its curriculum, in addition to failing to apply the national curriculum more generally through all its subjects and assess students accordingly. In fact, Culloden Primary did not teach religious education “explicitly as part of the school curriculum, whether as a subject or an aspect of topic work” and students were “not introduced in any planned way to the practices beliefs or literature of Christianity and other major faiths.”¹⁵¹ The inspectors’ focus on the lack of religious education in the school overshadowed their concerns with its nonconformity to national curriculum standards in other subjects. The importance of proper religious education was an important feature of Conservative education reform, as well as one focal point for Labor’s policies on a multicultural education that increased the presence of all religions in schools’ instruction. Consequently, Culloden Primary’s insufficient and inconsistent application of religious education would have pleased neither party.

After failing to regain a parliamentary majority in 1992 under Party Leader Neil Kinnock, the Labor Party began to reorganize under new leadership. As the 1997 election neared, Conservative MPs scoffed at newly christened New Labor MPs who predicted the numerous changes that would happen once they regained control of the

¹⁴⁹ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40.

¹⁵⁰ Department of Education and Science, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on Culloden Primary School in Tower Hamlets* (London: Department of Education and Science, 1991), 6.

¹⁵¹ DES, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on Culloden Primary*, 15.

government. Yet, the tide of reform had shifted in New Labor's favor and the election of a New Labor majority in Parliament in 1997 opened up the opportunity to put to use the years spent in opposition revising ideals and opinions. Laborites had gained clarity of purpose by continuing to refine Labor's position on multicultural policies and the ideal of multiculturalism in a long opposition, a development which combined with effective organizational tools produced by New Labor's restructuring to provide the desire and ability to pursue multiculturalism through reform.

Racial Hatred, Asylum, and Immigration, 1990-1993

The Tory and Labor Parties both argued that their versions of reform, "choice and diversity" for Conservatives and "highest standards for all" for Laborites, would solve the problems inherent in a society where deep divisions between class and race remained prevalent.¹⁵² For both parties, positive education policies were one major solution for the disorder caused by underemployment, racial violence, and underachievement. In this light, the sorry state of education for the poor and minority ethnic groups was only part of the story. Education policies do not exist in a vacuum. Examining specific examples of racial violence and restrictions laid on minority ethnic groups is essential to understanding how Labor continued to form its ideals of multiculturalism, especially in the pursuit of a society that encouraged cooperation between, and integration of, different cultural groups by supporting the needs and desires of the individual.

Examining Labor's ideological concern over Conservative methods of dealing with further racial tensions and immigration anxieties offers a glimpse of the remaining

¹⁵² *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, July 13, 1995, vol. 565, col. 1906; and *Parliamentary Debates*, January 27, 1997, vol. 289, col. 104.

difficulties between cultural groups either left unsolved by protective legislation or increased by restrictive legislation. The murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993 highlighted the need for more effective race relations laws, while the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act of 1993 (AIAA 1993) further enshrined the belief, as voiced by Kenneth Clarke, then Home Secretary, that "good race relations are heavily dependent on strict immigration control."¹⁵³ During debates over both the murder and the AIAA 1993, Labor's occasional agreement with Conservative policy (such as supporting better relationships between the community and the police) and general dissent (by continuing to press for specific anti-discrimination protections) refined Labor's multicultural ideology as a viable solution to cultural tensions. Labor's view of good race relations through multiculturalism was revealed by MPs' arguments that pressured the government to pursue methods that combined anti-discrimination protections with more tolerant community interaction and greater respect and understanding for the different needs of multiple cultures.

Strengthening immigration restrictions remained a major focus in Conservative policies concerning ethnic minority groups. Like the British Nationality Act of 1981, new immigration policies in the 1990s sought to protect Britain from supposedly unlawful immigration. According to most Labor MPs, the new immigration restrictions limited the resources available to actual immigrants and asylum seekers and unjustly affected the immigration of members of minority ethnic groups, policies which led to increased alienation and isolation of these individuals. The AIAA 1993 sought to extend

¹⁵³ *Parliamentary Debates*, November 2, 1992, vol. 213, col. 21.

the policies established under the Immigration Act of 1971, particularly those that affected asylum seekers, visitors, and those individuals whom officials declined admittance to Britain. The act introduced fingerprinting of asylum seekers, even of children, and severely limited the right of individuals to appeal a refusal of an entry clearance. Conservative and Labor MPs did not want to prevent those who truly needed asylum due to persecution in their home country from seeking asylum in Britain. Likewise, Conservative MPs, at least in theory, wanted to keep immigration lines open for visitors to the country. Labor MPs argued that these visitor policies had racial and cultural overtones that, in practice, prevented certain ethnic minorities from temporarily joining their families and friends. By combining the needs of asylum seekers with other immigration concerns, Conservative proponents opened themselves up to criticism. Critics, like Labor MP Mike Gapes, accused the act's creators of supporting racist intolerance by combining into one piece of legislation policies with legitimate concerns, such as fake applications for asylum, with stricter immigration controls that would mainly affect minority ethnic communities.¹⁵⁴

For many Conservatives, one major problem solved by the AIAA 1993 was the unjust manipulation of immigration law by unqualified individuals. These supposed con artists appropriated money and support intended for deserving and desperate immigrants and, possibly most despicably, asylum seekers suffering under foreign oppression. The reporting of actual numbers of fraudulent asylum applicants during parliamentary debates provided uncertain justifications for determining which claims were fraudulent. The

¹⁵⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, November 2, 1992, vol. 213, col. 97.

numbers of applicants provided by Conservative MPs in 1991, when the Asylum Bill was first proposed, offer a clear example of both the actual numbers of applicants and how the government perceived these applications. Kenneth Baker, then Home Secretary, reported in July of 1991 that the number of asylum seekers had risen "from 5,000 a year in 1988 to more than 30,000 in 1990" and that applications in the first 5 months of 1991 came in at "a rate of nearly 1,000 a week."¹⁵⁵ Conservative MP Michael Shersby added to this assessment later in 1991 with the assertion that "there is no doubt that some of those applicants are bogus."¹⁵⁶ The idea that there must have been some fraudulent claims because of the rise in applications did not adequately support the notion of any actual rise in fraudulent cases. Kenneth Clarke, succeeding Baker as Home Secretary in 1992, argued that it was "unfair to people in this country and those who wish to come here if inefficiencies" or the alleged "skilful exploitation" of certain applicants led to "undeserving applicants managing to stay while others who play by the book are turned down."¹⁵⁷ Likewise, reports by Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department Charles Wardle in 1993, claimed the asylum policies "designed to deter bogus asylum applications" (initiated in 1991 and strengthened by the AIAA 1993) had resulted in the reduction of "new asylum applications" by half. These reports also did not differentiate between a reduction in actual applications and those applicants deemed bogus. The increasingly large numbers of asylum seekers were the major problem. In fact, by relying on the rhetoric of counterfeit claims Conservatives effectively raised the

¹⁵⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, July 2, 1991, vol. 194, col. 165.

¹⁵⁶ *Parliamentary Debates*, November 13, 1991, vol. 198, col. 1139.

¹⁵⁷ *Parliamentary Debates*, November 2, 1992, vol. 213, col. 24.

specter of masses of rogues improperly taking advantage of the mercy offered by the government for the truly desperate.

Despite some very specific areas of accord between certain Conservative and Labor MPs, the general tenor of many parliamentary debates was confrontational. Both parties abhorred racial violence and denounced "bogus" applications for entry into Britain, and most MPs referred to a community that needed laws to defend it, from either internal violence due to racial or ethnic tensions or unlawful entry by illegal immigrants. MPs on all sides of the debate roundly condemned these "bogus claims," but the process needed to find and prevent these claims from succeeding received mixed reviews.¹⁵⁸ By imposing stricter controls on incoming applicants, Home Secretary Kenneth Clarke, hoped to free up resources to help "the genuinely persecuted" without diminishing the security of "the population of our inner cities, our urban poor and our homeless...[with] misguided liberalism" that would flood the cities with new immigrants.¹⁵⁹ Clarke's statement illustrated the Conservatives' sometimes profound misunderstanding of the opposition's point of view, one which actually expanded divisions between the two parties when compromise could have been reached. Labor did not desire wholesale approval for all asylum applicants and disapproval of certain parts of the act did not indicate such a desire. Specific points of disagreement included the denial of the right to appeal a refusal of admission for certain groups and fingerprinting (especially of minors). Instead, Labor proposed a fair application of all immigration rules to all individual immigrants regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality. Misguided liberalism or not,

¹⁵⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, November 2, 1992, vol. 213, col. 36.

¹⁵⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, November 2, 1992, vol. 213, col. 23.

certain members of the majority agreed, in part, with Labor's reservations over the application of the act and voted accordingly. At least superficially, Conservatives wanted to protect the borders against massive groups of bogus asylum seekers at the expense of a few true applicants while Labor did not want those few true applicants to be lost in heavier restrictions.

Tony Blair, then Labor MP for Sedgefield, spoke fervently against the provisions of the AIAA 1993 during its second reading in the House of Commons, especially expressing apprehension about its unbalanced effects on the minority ethnic populations in Britain. For Blair, the issue that divided the house rested on "fairness and whether our procedures conform to the rules of natural justice."¹⁶⁰ Any law that did not affect each community and individual on equal terms was neither fair nor just. This focus on fairness and social justice foreshadowed the future direction of New Labor's promotion of tolerance through multiculturalism. Blair especially condemned the unfairness in the restriction of visitors in the provisions of the AIAA 1993, in terms of both actual visitation and the right to appeal when officials refused their application.¹⁶¹ Labor MP Roy Hattersley believed that the two communities most affected by this provision would be Muslims and Sikhs. These groups would receive the message that "their families abroad are automatically treated with suspicion and that it is somehow detrimental to life in this country to have a few more people like them here."¹⁶² Thus, the AIAA 1993 would have negative effects for the individuals denied admittance as well as for the

¹⁶⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, November 2, 1992, vol. 213, col. 36.

¹⁶¹ Please refer to: Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993 c. Specifically, Clause 10, Section 3A, and Clause 11, Section 1, Part 3B.

¹⁶² *Parliamentary Debates*, November 2, 1992, vol. 213, col. 51.

ethnic minority population already settled in Britain. Restrictions not only limited the fairness of immigration controls for different cultural groups, but also caused a negative perception of the operations of government to reverberate through the whole community. The cooperation and partnerships espoused by Labor's supporters needed trust, respect, and tolerance to flourish between individuals and groups for its multiculturalism to be most effective; by denying the right to appeal a refusal, which prevented, possibly, a family member from attending a wedding or funeral, that system would break down.

Strict immigration controls were not the sole factor leading to breakdowns in trust and understanding between racial and ethnic groups. Harassment, racial hatred, and violence remained prevalent despite race relations legislation and multicultural education policies that aimed to prevent violence and restrain the growth of racism. The murder of Stephen Lawrence showed the need for further revision of the provisions of race relations legislation by stressing that racial tensions and violence remained present in society and, in fact, were on the rise.¹⁶³ On April 22, 1993, five or six white attackers fatally stabbed Stephen Lawrence, then 18, who was born in England of Jamaican descent. According to witnesses, and a fact stressed by Labor MP Diane Abbott, the attack was unprovoked and due to racist motivations on the part of the attackers. Abbott then connected the murder of Stephen Lawrence to a series of other racially motivated murders calling them a "part of a national pattern of racial harassment and violence" left unaddressed by race relations

¹⁶³ In July 1997, the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, set up the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, which published the resulting report, written by Sir William MacPherson, in February 1999. See the *Report of an Inquiry by Sir William MacPherson of Cluny advised by Tom Cook, the Right Reverend Sir John Sentamu, Dr. Richard Stone: The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*, Cm. 4262-I (London: HMSO, 1999). <http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm42/4262/4262.htm> (accessed December 18, 2008).

legislation.¹⁶⁴ If racially motivated crime was on the rise, then policies that preserved the status quo were flawed. Only by increasing the strength of laws covering incitement to racial hatred and race related violence would the law protect the members of all communities in the same way.

Abbott's arguments, supported by fellow Labor MP John Austin-Walker, described the need "to make racial harassment a specific criminal offence" and urged the government "to consider criminalising racial violence."¹⁶⁵ Notably, the proposals put forth by the Labor participants in this debate included religion as a category for the vulnerable groups that needed protection against racial violence. Involving religious discrimination directly in race relations legislation would have increased the protections provided by the provisions and closed one of the loopholes in the Race Relations Act of 1976. In response to Labor MPs' propositions, Peter Lloyd, Minister of State for the Home Office, argued that there was a bigger picture involving issues of "social relationships" where many factors, including race and unemployment, led to social tensions between groups.¹⁶⁶ These tensions in the right circumstances could then erupt into racial violence. In response to Abbott and Austin-Walker's demands for the specific criminalization of racial violence, Lloyd "emphasized that a violent attack is a crime, whoever commits it and against whomever it is committed" and expressed doubt that any specific law would clarify incitement laws and lead to more effective adjudication.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, May 21, 1993, vol. 225, col. 541.

¹⁶⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, May 21, 1993, vol. 225, col. 544.

¹⁶⁶ *Parliamentary Debates*, May 21, 1993, vol. 225, col. 547.

¹⁶⁷ *Parliamentary Debates*, May 21, 1993, vol. 225, col. 549.

Conservative and Labor MPs understood that both the murder of Lawrence, a young man considered to be upstanding in all respects, and the treatment of Lawrence's case by the public and police raised questions regarding the effectiveness of protections supposedly guaranteed by race relations legislation. The tragedy of the murder was quickly compounded by an initial lack of media coverage and governmental response, an unsuccessful police investigation—limited by lack of evidence, inefficiencies in the investigation by police, and few witnesses—and then the massive publicity of a trial that failed to convict the accused murderers. Conservative MPs promoted increased cooperation between the police and the community to attack the problems inherent in investigating racially motivated crimes, such as a shortage of reports for such crimes and racism on the part of the police. Peter Lloyd suggested that racially motivated crimes were properly dealt with by building confidence on both sides of the police-community relationship "to encourage people to report racial attacks and to ensure that those reports are effectively followed up."¹⁶⁸

Labor MPs sought specific legislation that would protect disadvantaged groups from racially motivated crime, encouraging them to feel that their government understood, and responded to, their individual needs. Labor MP Diane Abbott argued, for example, that the government needed to pressure the local government (or enact laws that would make it easier for the local council to act) to respond to the fears of minority ethnic groups and the danger represented by the fascist British National Party (BNP) headquarters, located in Bexley, by forcing it to close down. By responding to the needs

¹⁶⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, May 21, 1993, vol. 225, col. 545.

of the individuals harassed by the BNP, and its supporters, Abbot believed that the overall community, regardless of race or ethnicity, would benefit. According to Abbot, legislation needed to reflect that "there is not one law for black people and another for white people" and that "brutality and violence will not be tolerated."¹⁶⁹ This method for dealing with the tensions of a multicultural community further illustrated Labor ideals forming into a distinct variety of multiculturalism that protected individuals to improve the whole community. At issue in the multiculturalism increasingly espoused by Labor MPs, and derided by most Conservatives, was who comprised this British community, what were the needs of the members of that community (both as individuals and members of constitutive communities), and how legislation could be reformed, or fashioned, to protect that community.

Discordant Voices in Education, 1992-1997

Debates concerning education reform increasingly divided along party lines and displayed the essential incompatibility of some Labor and Conservative views on educational policies themselves while accenting a few potential areas of agreement. The main concern of Conservative education reform in the late 1980s and early 1990s was to promote parental choice and a diversity of schools. Conservative MPs chose varied methods to increase choice and diversity. They promoted diversity in the types of schools available to children by supporting Grant Maintained schools, by refining the Assisted Places Scheme, and by propping up a system of diverse schools with specifically

¹⁶⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, May 21, 1993, vol. 225, col. 543.

selected student populations.¹⁷⁰ Despite the growth of opportunities for schools to gain Grant Maintained status, the numbers of those schools remained relatively low.

According to Under-Secretary of State for the Department of Education Robin Squire, there were only 693 Grant Maintained schools in October 1993.¹⁷¹ The number of Grant Maintained schools increased only to 1,000 by 1997.¹⁷² In contrast, the highlight of Conservative educational policies aimed at the underprivileged was the Assisted Places Scheme.¹⁷³ The government continually increased funding for the scheme throughout the 1990s and high scores on assessment tests verified, for Conservatives, that this plan was profitable and successful. On the other hand, Labor MPs sought to increase standards of education for all students, rejecting selection (especially selection of primary school students) and policies that fostered elitism (by funneling state funding into public schools) without solving the problems leading to the lowered achievement of students in state schools.

The Labor Party General Election Manifesto of 1992, for example, proposed two key education reforms. These measures planned to make religious and voluntary-aided schools "available equally and on the same criteria to all religions" and to "modernise" the national curriculum, applying it in all schools.¹⁷⁴ Labor planned to support the national curriculum with reforms that would increase support and resources for

¹⁷⁰ Grant Maintained schools chose to opt out of the local education authority's control in order to receive funding directly from the government.

¹⁷¹ *Parliamentary Debates*, October 25, 1993, vol. 230, col. 436W.

¹⁷² *Parliamentary Debates*, January 27, 1997, vol. 289, col. 101.

¹⁷³ The Assisted Places Scheme subsidized students with high levels of ability and achievement, and demonstrated need, in fee-paying independent schools.

¹⁷⁴ Ian Dale, ed., *Labour Party General Election Manifestos, 1900-1997* (London: Routledge, 2000), 329. Voluntary aided schools retained some control over their curriculum by accepting only 50 percent of the support for their budget from the state and making up the difference through donations.

multicultural education, because it represented a basic guarantee of a certain level of education available to all students. These measures, though a part of a failed election campaign since the Conservatives retained power in 1992, demonstrated a key Labor intention to retool Conservative policies in the direction of Labor's ideals once they regained power. In this way, Labor MPs declared certain reforms, like a state mandated curriculum available to all students, acceptable in their premise, but not in their application, since Conservatives did not include provisions to support multicultural education in the curriculum. Labor insisted on schools reflecting the multicultural nature of society by including a larger presence in religious education for all religions, by offering state support to religious schools with Muslim and Sikh orientations, and promoting a greater sense of equality between schools. Eliminating selection and an elitist hierarchy of schools supported by state funds, especially ending the policies giving private (independent) schools public funds, would be Labor's primary means of promoting equality between schools.

Compliance with the provisions of the Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA 1988) was a major concern for Conservative MPs, especially the appropriate teaching of religious education. According to Baroness Caroline Cox, a Conservative peer, in 1992 the government needed to ensure that schools were teaching Christian values without proselytizing or reducing religious education to a jumbled set of religious themes inadequately covering a variety of religions.¹⁷⁵ In 1994, Minister of State for the Department of Education Baroness Emily Blatch pursued a similar idea by arguing that

¹⁷⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, June 17, 1992, vol. 538, cols. 248-249.

multiculturalism in religious education would be acceptable "so long as the integrity of each religion is preserved" but lamented that improper teaching resulted in an unacceptable "mish-mash."¹⁷⁶ In this case, setting an appropriate age group to receive such multicultural religious education, after age 11, and in-depth teacher education would help eliminate issues with non-compliance. In contrast, Labor Lord Frank Judd argued that properly teaching religious education "is absolutely central to our future as a stable multicultural society" and that teachers having "in-depth knowledge of the traditions and faiths with which they deal" would do much to eliminate the confusion resulting from convoluted lessons in religious education.¹⁷⁷ While limited and inefficient teacher education was a considered a problem by both Labor and Conservative MPs, multicultural education was not. Labor MPs believed that teaching the beliefs and cultures of different religions was central to promoting understanding and respect for these religions, thereby producing a tolerant society.

HMI was a major means of analyzing the effect of the ERA 1988 on the schools. In the early 1990s, Conservative reforms wrought changes within HMI itself to bring the relatively independent HMI under tighter control by the central government. The Conservative promoted Education (Schools) Act 1992 dealt specifically with HMI, simultaneously stripping them of power and increasing their duties. The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) absorbed HMI, as scholar Denis Lawton argued, in "a small core HQ body...which would supervise" the inspection tasks in every school once

¹⁷⁶ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, February 15, 1994, vol. 552, col. 93.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

every four years.¹⁷⁸ Inspections were increased for all schools, the reports over the schools would now be published, and methods of reporting were standardized. The effects of the ERA 1988 and the Education (Schools) Act 1992 on HMI reports were plain to all observers: reports became synchronized, national curriculum subjects garnered special attention. These changes led to inspectors generally deemphasizing certain issues affecting the school community, such as staffing problems and student body harmony, in favor of a stricter inspection regimen. The further professionalisation and partial privatization of HMI under the application of the Education (Schools) Act 1992 gave control directly to the central government and caused teachers and administrators to view inspections negatively.

A cross-section of reports from maintained primary schools in 1992 demonstrated the diversity of provisions concerning religious education. These schools (St. George's Bickley a maintained and voluntary controlled school in the London borough of Bromley, Dormers Wells First School, a maintained school in the London Borough of Ealing, and Frizinghall First School, a maintained primary school in Bradford) represented a widely different set of locations, religious orientations, ethnic makeups, and economic statuses, but a relatively similar school type.¹⁷⁹

According to the inspectors' report, St. George's Bickley had a "bias toward more able pupils," with the majority of its households belonging to a higher economic

¹⁷⁸ Denis Lawton, *Education and Labour Party Ideologies: 1900-2001 and Beyond* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer), 2005, 110.

¹⁷⁹ A maintained school was a school that received all or part of the funding for its budget from the state. Voluntary controlled schools, mainly with Church of England and Roman Catholic affiliation, gave up most of their control over their curriculum and administration for more financial backing by the state.

bracket.¹⁸⁰ St. George's religious education program followed a mainly Christian program of study with some study of an unspecified assortment of other religions. It was unclear whether the school inspectors dealt with the study of other religions in an offhand manner because the school did so, or if inspectors deemed those studies less important than that of the overall Christian belief system. Either way, the school adhered to the letter of the provisions of the ERA 1988. This report reflects one manner of dealing with religious education under the ERA 1988, that of religious study of a primarily Christian nature purportedly in symmetry with the overall beliefs of the student body. If Labor supporters had investigated this school, they would have concluded that this school failed to recognize the key importance of teaching other religious and cultural events to promote understanding and tolerance even in schools without a distinct multicultural community.

Dormers Wells First School and Frizinghall First School demonstrated a markedly different approach to religious education than St. George's in both the manner of study and the subject matter. Also, both of these primary schools represented a primarily ethnic minority population, with the majority of their students learning, or having learned, English as a second language. In Dormers Wells, the lessons covering Christianity, Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam were "well-resourced with books and artifacts to support the teaching."¹⁸¹ Inspectors lauded the students' progress in these diverse subjects and especially the field trips to local places of worship for the various religions. Similarly,

¹⁸⁰ Department for Education, *Report by H.M. Chief Inspector of Schools on St. George's Bickley in LB Bromley* (London: Department of Education, 1992), Introduction.

¹⁸¹ Department for Education, *Report by H.M. Chief Inspector of Schools on Dormers Wells First School in the London Borough of Ealing* (London: Department of Education, 1992), 9.

Frizinghall focused on student participation in religious education, praising students who “talk knowledgeably about their religious faiths and traditions and are proud to share their ideas with each other and with adults.”¹⁸² This focus on the partnership between different cultural groups in the sharing of information, respect for other traditions, and satisfaction in the contribution of the students' own culture demonstrated a commitment to the ideals of multiculturalism. The fact that the inspectors praised the efforts of both schools to promote an atmosphere of mutual regard and tolerance proved the persistence of Labor's principles of multicultural education despite the Conservative government's attack on multicultural education policies as divisive and incompatible with a goal for integration of different cultures by assimilation.

The rise of Tony Blair to the top of the Labor party in 1994 and the subsequent christening of New Labor led to a series of education schemes that illustrated the contentious relationship between New Labor's and the Conservative Party's visions of education reform. Many Conservative plans for further education reform, especially the elimination of section 11 funding and the Assisted Places Scheme, only lasted for the length of the Conservatives' term in office.¹⁸³

Initially, Conservative MPs attacked section 11 funding by denigrating the principles of multiculturalism. The main apprehension expressed by many Conservatives against continuing section 11 funding was the misappropriation of funds for nonessential activities. Conservative MP Anthony Coombs argued that if section 11 funding would go

¹⁸² Department for Education, *Report by H.M. Chief Inspector of Schools on Frizinghall First School in Bradford* (London: Department of Education, 1992), 8.

¹⁸³ Section 11 funds refer to section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966, which allowed local education authorities to apply to the Home Office for reimbursement for special provisions made to accommodate groups and individuals within the multicultural society.

to serve communities needing extra support in teaching English the funding would be approved. Yet, Coombs believed that the majority of such funding went “into nonsensical multiculturalism [*sic*] that divides communities and reminds them of their differences rather than of what they have in common.”¹⁸⁴ Instead, Conservative MPs sought to do away with section 11 funding because the majority of the money was not spent to pursue its primary function, which was to provide funds that supported the teaching of English to immigrants. Under the Conservative administration in 1993, the future of section 11 funding was bleak. By 1997, plans were in place to phase out section 11 funding by August 1998. The election of New Labor in May 1997 thwarted those plans. A resurgence of support flooded through Parliament, especially increasing plans to use the section 11 funds as “a way of encouraging and promoting a harmonious, multicultural society.”¹⁸⁵ The time spent by Labor in opposition led to the solidification of key parts of their plan for multicultural education, sometimes in direct conflict with prevailing Conservative notions. When Labor regained control of Parliament, MPs took full advantage of the opportunity to implement changes fashioned during opposition, including rewriting, delaying, and demolishing Conservative plans.

Another example of Labor and Tory divergence related to the Assisted Places Scheme begun under Margaret Thatcher and increased under John Major’s government. The Assisted Places Scheme aimed to provide able children from low-income families places in independent schools, with reduced fees or no fees involved. Labor MPs considered the scheme, from the very first, a direct attack on the comprehensive scheme

¹⁸⁴ *Parliamentary Debates*, November 26, 1993, vol. 233, col. 706.

¹⁸⁵ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, October 21, 1997, vol. 582, col. 615.

for education and a propping up of elitist public schools, fee-paying institutions with an intake based on selection (either meritorious or class based) that lorded over the top of a perceived low quality state school system. In 1995, critical negative arguments in the House of Lords, led by Labor Peer Lord Morris, described the scheme as “a totally unwarranted subsidy by the state of the private sector” that led to a distorted “picture of the academic achievements of that independent school.”¹⁸⁶ Morris, like many New Labor MPs, believed that the money funneled into the independent schools through the Assisted Places Scheme would be better used to support higher standards and increased resources in state schools, including comprehensive schools and secondary modern schools. Using the taxpayers’ money to further divide the country along economic lines did not support the multicultural vision proposed by New Labor. Instead, assisted places reinforced entrenched class positions based on economic disadvantage and the relative privilege of the few. By removing the top-achieving students from their state schools, those students remaining at state schools would suffer declining test averages, while the private schools receiving such students would achieve a like increase.

For the Labor Party, Conservative policies in the 1990s failed to adequately assess and respond to the problems of race, class, and culture in British society. Divisions between communities hardened in response to unequal educational policies and ineffective race relations policies, which did not offer sufficient coverage or consider the needs of the individual. In response to these deficiencies, Labor MPs formed a plan to disestablish a hierarchical system of schools in favor of encouraging high achieving

¹⁸⁶ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, July 13, 1995, vol. 565, col. 1906.

schools in all sectors. Instead of a policy that argued for parental choice while simultaneously allowing schools to select able students for enrollment, this egalitarian vision argued that by raising standards of achievement in all schools, every parent could exercise true choice of the best school for their child, thus providing equal opportunities for each child regardless of his or her background.

CONCLUSION

Multiculturalism into Practice: New Labor since 1997

The multicultural education policy put into practice by New Labor in the years immediately following the election of 1997 pursued a tripartite policy of removing impractical Conservative legislation, introducing further reforms (such as legislation criminalizing racial violence) and reformatting salvageable material, such as the national curriculum and a greater diversity of schools to match individual student's abilities. The overriding concern of these New Labor reforms, according to the 1997 election manifesto was to move beyond "the solutions of the old left and those of the Conservative right."¹⁸⁷ This policy sought a middle way that combined the idealism of the 1960s and 1970s with essential modernization, one that went beyond the equity provided by creating identical institutions for all students, particularly using multiculturalism in education to help all students reach their individual potential.

Labor policy, in this instance, promoted an understanding of individual student's abilities and shortcomings, so that the curriculum, the teacher, and the school could help meet his or her individual needs. Ideally, students would not be selected based on abilities determined by assessment tests and consequently denied entrance into certain schools. Instead, all students would be allowed the opportunity to pursue their individual levels of high achievement, including choosing to pursue an education at schools with heavy concentrations in the arts and technology, with supports in place for students with lowered levels of achievement. All students would have equality of access to education

¹⁸⁷ Ian Dale, ed., *Labour Party General Election Manifestos, 1900-1997* (London: Routledge, 2000), 347.

regardless of economic status, ethnicity, race, or religious orientation. Multicultural educational policies promoted self-respect and the essential knowledge that ethnic minorities' unique contributions to the community mattered.

Among the first pieces of legislation passed under Tony Blair's government in 1997 were the Education (Schools) Act of 1997 (ESA 1997) and the Schools and Frameworks Act of 1998 (SFA 1998). Policies included in the ESA 1997 and the SFA 1998 set about eliminating Conservative policies opposed to New Labor's values of peaceful community interaction, increased individual responsibility, equality between individuals, and equality of opportunity. In July 1997, New Labor eliminated the Assisted Places scheme by pushing the ESA 1997 through Parliament, despite heavy resistance by Conservative MPs, such as Cheryl Gillian. The formal elimination of the Assisted Places Scheme ended a long opposition to its premise by many Labor MPs who had argued that assisted places promoted elitism in schools and unfairly funneled state funds into public schools at the expense of increasing standards and resources for state schools. Similarly, the New Labor government froze the planned stoppage of section 11 spending. The funds available under section 11 now continued to provide support for language classes, but they also provided resources to give each "child an opportunity to grow fully and be respected within a community," according to comments in the House of Lords by Laborite Lord Gareth Williams.¹⁸⁸

Likewise, New Labor recommitted to its opposition to selection. Arguments by Labor MP Stephen Byers, a future Cabinet member, illustrated the fervor of New Labor's

¹⁸⁸ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, October 21, 1997, vol. 582, col. 615.

opposition to selection when he proclaimed that there would be "no new grammar schools and that it will be a matter for local parents to determine the future of the 164 grammar schools" remaining in 1998.¹⁸⁹ Allowing the opportunity for some grammar schools to remain did not mean that Labor had reduced its commitment to eliminating selection. According to Byers, "selection denies choice," taking away a parent's choice of the proper school for their child and giving it to the schools themselves.¹⁹⁰ New Labor considered the elimination of all grammar schools, without the consent of the parents, a further denial of the parent's right to choose a school for their child. Instead, policies gave parents back their choice by putting the fate of existing grammar schools into their hands, without allowing the number of grammar schools to increase. Similarly, the SFA 1998 eliminated the grant-maintained status of schools, providing a new categorization of schools maintained by state funds.¹⁹¹ By removing Conservative policies opposed to multiculturalism, New Labor emerged from under the shadow of Conservative domination and effected the changes the Labor party had planned in its long opposition.

New Labor's initial reforms were not only about education policies. New legislation increased the protections for ethnic minorities against racial violence and discrimination and fulfilled New Labor MPs' desire to support the equality of each individual in the eyes of the law. The Crime and Disorder Act of 1998 (CDA 1998) criminalized racial violence and harassment. By intensifying the punishment for racially motivated crimes, the CDA 1998 increased the ability of the Race Relations Act of 1976

¹⁸⁹ *Parliamentary Debates*, March 24, 1998, vol. 309, col. 317.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ School Standards and Frameworks Act 1998, c. 31. Specifically, Part II, Chapter I, Sections 20-23.

(RRA 1976) to operate effectively. Equally, not offering protections against religious discrimination left a glaring loophole in anti-discrimination legislation. The Human Rights Act of 1998 provided some relief from the lack of safeguards against religious discrimination by including protections taken or copied from the European Convention on Human Rights that guaranteed freedom of religious expression. Yet, actual reform of the RRA 1976 would have to wait until 2000 when the RRA 1976 finally was amended. New policies included an extension of the general statutory duties for the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and an explicit inclusion of the police and governmental bodies in the prohibition of discrimination. According to Labor MP Paddy Tipping, extending the required duties of the LEAs to promote race relations in schools ensured "that educational bodies are subject to the duty to promote racial equality" in the same way as other public authorities.¹⁹² In 2003, further policies extended the same protections enjoyed by racial and ethnic groups to religious communities.

In further reforms, New Labor MPs simply retooled Conservative policies to fit with the goals of multiculturalism, specifically using the framework of the national curriculum to teach tolerance and respect for diversity. New Labor continued to implement the national curriculum when it gained control of Parliament in 1997 because, with some key changes, Labor MPs could use the framework to promote a national identity, encourage community relations, and help make education inclusive for all students regardless of background, race, or ethnicity.¹⁹³ New Labor altered the national curriculum to support teaching of the multiple religions and cultures that now made up

¹⁹² *Parliamentary Debates*, October 30, 2000, vol. 355, col. 557.

¹⁹³ *Parliamentary Debates*, Lords, Dec 10, 2001, vol. 629, col. 1135.

the British community. Likewise, New Labor added citizenship education to the national curriculum to help create a unified and tolerant multicultural society whose citizens understood the responsibilities they had toward one another and their government.¹⁹⁴ Citizenship education intended to teach acceptance of a multicultural society and the proper attitude individual students needed to cultivate as members of that society. Specifically, a proper attitude included a respect for and tolerance of other cultural groups and a personal responsibility for the successful and peaceful operation of society. Through citizenship education, New Labor advanced the idea of individuals connected to a national identity made up of multiple cultures, races, and faiths.

The multiculturalism present in New Labor's policies, from community policing to education reform, had evolved from a hopeful anti-discrimination policy ensuring protection for disadvantaged minority groups through preventive race relations legislation into a pre-emptive strike on racism, elitism, and discrimination by promoting tolerance and understanding through multicultural education. In an effort to effect positive change for the whole of society, New Labor now combined race relations policies with efforts to remove divisive educational policies that had deepened class divisions and ignored or treated casually the contributions of different cultural groups. Labor MPs promoted the creation of a society filled with tolerant citizens who found support and equality of opportunity in effective governmental policies and who in turn supported their community. The evolution of such policies demonstrates that multiculturalism is not a

¹⁹⁴ For further information on the aims of citizenship education, see Denis Lawton, *Education and Labour Party Ideologies 1900-2001 and Beyond* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005); and Citizenship Advisory Group, *The Crick Report: Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools*, Qualification and Curriculum Authority [September 22, 1998].

policy that once tried, and seemingly failed, is untenable. Multiculturalism is responsive to change, adjusting when policies don't adequately reflect progress, and above all attempting to foster a particular brand of open communication and respectful cooperation among multiple individuals and groups toward a common goal. In the words of Tony Blair, "We must build a nation with pride in itself. A thriving community, rich in economic prosperity, secure in social justice, [and] confident in political change."¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ Tony Blair (First Speech to Conference as Party Leader, Labour Party Conference, Blackpool, England, October 4, 1994).

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