



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

“Crocodiles in the corridors” : security vetting, race and Whitehall, 1945 – 1968

Lomas, DWB

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2019.1648231>

Title	“Crocodiles in the corridors” : security vetting, race and Whitehall, 1945 – 1968
Authors	Lomas, DWB
Publication title	Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History
Publisher	Routledge
Type	Article
USIR URL	This version is available at: http://usir.salford.ac.uk/id/eprint/51839/
Published Date	2021

USIR is a digital collection of the research output of the University of Salford. Where copyright permits, full text material held in the repository is made freely available online and can be read, downloaded and copied for non-commercial private study or research purposes. Please check the manuscript for any further copyright restrictions.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: library-research@salford.ac.uk.

“Crocodiles in the corridors”: security vetting, race and Whitehall, 1945 – 1968

Daniel W. B. Lomas

School of Arts and Media, The University of Salford, Salford, Greater Manchester, M5 4WT

Email: D.W.B.Lomas@salford.ac.uk

Twitter: @SourceMerlin @SalfordUni_PCH

Dr. Dan Lomas is author of *Intelligence, Security and the Attlee Governments, 1945 – 1951* published by Manchester University Press (2016) and nominated for the 2018 Royal Historical Society’s Whitfield Prize, teaching on intelligence and security issues at the University of Salford. His research looks at intelligence, security and policymaking in Britain since 1945.

Word count: 13,647

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Prof. John Ferris, Dr. Christopher J. Murphy, Dr. Jim Beach, Dr. Adam Prime, Mr. James Bruce, Miss Sophie Rowlinson and the anonymous contributors for their help with this article.

Key words: Security, race, MI5, Whitehall, government

“Crocodiles in the corridors”: security vetting, race and Whitehall, 1945 - 1968

ABSTRACT: In July 2018, the UK’s Intelligence & Security Committee issued a report into diversity and inclusion across the intelligence and security community. The picture the report painted was far from satisfactory; in short, Britain’s intelligence agencies did not ‘fully reflect the ethnic make-up of modern Britain’. The report argued that Britain’s spy agencies – MI5, SIS (or MI6) and GCHQ – should improve black, Asian and ethnic minority recruitment, highlighting areas for improvement, especially around the vetting of recruits. This problem stems from the post-war Cold War ‘security state’ and the development of security-vetting programmes from the 1940s, aiming to protect Whitehall from Soviet spies and ‘fellow travellers’ to those with so-called ‘character defects’ - drink, drugs and homosexuality. But this ‘security state’ also saw the newly emerging multicultural Britain as a major threat. The so-called ‘Windrush Generation’ of migrants from the Caribbean, and migration from the Indian subcontinent and Africa, forever changed the social complexion of Britain, but posed significant questions for security officials. What was Britishness? With first or second generation migrants entering the civil service, who was a ‘UK eye’ and what access to secret information should they have? To what extent was discrimination justifiable to protect state secrets, and how should officials respond to new legislation such as the Race Discrimination Act? As this article shows, new entrants to the civil service faced deeply engrained prejudices, and questions over their loyalty to Britain. As late as the 1960s (and beyond), ‘coloured’ members of the civil service were rejected from secret posts across government, including the Ministry of Defence and intelligence and security services, especially MI5 and GCHQ, with discrimination on ‘security’ grounds justified by the landmark 1968 Race Relations Act, which barred race discrimination for housing and employment elsewhere.

In July 2018, the UK's Intelligence & Security Committee issued a report into diversity and inclusion across the intelligence and security community. The picture the report painted was far from satisfactory; Britain's intelligence agencies were 'still not gender balanced' and did not 'fully reflect the ethnic make-up of modern Britain'.¹ Whilst the heads of Britain's agencies recognised change was needed, and 'significant progress' had been made in making the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS or MI6), the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) and Security Service (MI5) more inclusive, the agencies were still not 'gender balanced'. On ethnicity, the report found that just 8.6% of MI5, 3.1% of GCHQ and 7.7% of SIS staff were from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups (BAME), compared to 11.6% across the whole Civil Service.² Only GCHQ had BAME staff in senior management positions (4.8% compared to 4.6% across government), a lack of cross-community representation described as 'lamentable'.³ The absence of a representative gender balance and BAME, LGBT, and disability groups was blamed on range of issues, especially recruitment strategies, career progression and organisational cultures. For BAME recruitment, vetting and nationality rules had a 'disproportionate impact upon ... recruitment', with, in the case of GCHQ, at least one parent needing to be a UK national or have 'substantial ties' to Britain, with agency heads wanting 'greater discretion over how the nationality rules should be applied'. The vetting of BAME recruits was equally problematic; the highest form of security clearance, Developed Vetting (DV) usually took three months to finish, but would take 'considerably longer if an applicant has links to, or family, overseas' with some applicants withdrawing their application and moving to other careers.⁴ While organisational cultures had also moved on, the ISC found the majority of vetting officers were 'white, male and middle-aged' who had 'a particular approach formed by their own personal experiences and background, both personal and professional', with deeply embedded 'cultural and behavioural issues' impeding diversity and inclusion across the intelligence community.⁵ A government spokesperson replied, 'As the report states, we have made significant progress in recent years, but there is clearly more to do. We remain committed to further improving this and will give full consideration to the conclusions and recommendations of the ISC's report and respond formally in due course'.⁶ Certainly, the subject of BAME recruitment and representation across UK intelligence – as in the rest of government, is a 'strategic priority'⁷ for officials, with minority groups and gender balance providing

a diverse pool of analysts and improving working practices, but many of the issues highlighted in the report – vetting, nationality, race, inclusivity and organisational cultures, were by no means new, stemming from historical trends in recruitment and security policy, an area overlooked by MPs and intelligence officials, with the history of race, vetting and the impact of past policy entirely absent from discussions. While it might seem unimportant to some, understanding and acknowledging past policy and wrongs – however unpalatable, is surely important, offering officials and agencies now the ability to see how far they have come. For too long, Britain’s intelligence agencies – as in the case of the rest of Whitehall, have suffered from an ‘official amnesia’ where uncomfortable truths from the past have been swept under the carpet.⁸ While modern day officials have been keen to celebrate ‘Black History Month’ by making the case for greater diversity, no mention is made of past BAME recruitment – a marked contrast to the history of British policing, for instance⁹, or the experience of early black or Asian intelligence officers, with the BAME experience (as in the case of social history more generally) being a neglected subject, even if files at the UK National Archives give insights into MI5 and GCHQ policy on ‘black’ or ‘coloured’ recruits in post-war Britain and wider security concerns across government departments.¹⁰

The subject of race and post-war security vetting in Britain is almost entirely neglected from the history of Whitehall, with the focus political screening and so-called ‘character defects’.¹¹ Newly released papers show that vetting in Britain was by no means a post-1945 growth area, with security screening applying to Communist ‘subversives’ in the inter-war period, who were rejected or removed from working in the ‘industrial civil service’ and privately owned factories engaged in defence work. The policy was a closely guarded secret, revealed to Ministers and senior officials, but never avowed in public, and did not apply to the ‘black coated’ office workers in Whitehall.¹² The Cold War saw an intensification of vetting as Whitehall sought to protect the state from civil servants under the influence of a foreign state; by March 1948 and the announcement of an officially avowed purge procedure, the British government had restricted employment in specific government departments to right and left-wing extremists, arguing, in the case of the Communist Party of Great Britain, that membership would lead to divided loyalties ‘inimical to the State’.¹³ By 1952, this ‘negative’ system

of vetting and checks against MI5's archives had been replaced with a new 'positive' procedure, reluctantly agreed in principle in the final days of Clement Attlee's Labour government had announced by Winston Churchill's post-war Conservative government. But behind the public policy on political extremes, government departments, starting with the Foreign Office in 1952, had also begun to screen for personal 'character defects' triggered by the defection of officials Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean. By 1956 it had become policy across government to watch for 'character defects as factors that might make a man unreliable or expose him to blackmail ... There is a duty on Departments to inform themselves of serious failings such as drunkenness, addiction to drugs, homosexuality or any loose living', with issues such as homosexuality remaining a significant security risk in some departments even until 1991.¹⁴ This focus on political views and the so-called 'character defects' has overlooked other security concerns, especially over race and identity.

While this focus on race and colour may seem irrational in today's multicultural society, government concerns about non-UK born citizens from the 'new' Commonwealth were directly linked to other discussions about 'Britishness'.¹⁵ In 1945, Britain was essentially a 'white country'.¹⁶ In June 1948, the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* carrying four hundred and ninety-two men from Jamaica, while seen as the starting point for largescale economic migration from the 'new' Commonwealth, did little to change this. Out of the total overseas-born individuals living in Britain by 1951, just 14 per cent originated in Africa, the Caribbean, India and the 'new' Commonwealth, with 8 per cent from the Dominions, 36 per cent from Europe and 34 per cent from the Republic of Ireland or 'Ireland'.¹⁷ By 1971, the demographic of migrants had significantly changed; the number of 'Irish' had fallen to 24 per cent, overtaken by entrants from the 'new' Commonwealth now at 39 per cent.¹⁸ Between 1951 and 1966, the Caribbean-born population of Britain grew sixteen-fold, while the combined Indian and Pakistani-born population doubled between 1966 and 1981.¹⁹ Even with the curb on immigration signalled by the Commonwealth Immigration Act of July 1962, which brought in a system of entry based on employment vouchers, the growth of colonial or dominion subjects able to apply and work in Whitehall was viewed with considerable trepidation in government departments. Before 1940, applicants were subject to nationality rules that anyone born in Great Britain or the self-

governing Dominions, with at least one parent (or two in the case of the Foreign Office and service departments) could join, though there was some discretion for departments to bend the rules. In wartime, departments had relaxed rules to recruit naturalised British subjects – foreign nationals granted British nationality, but the rules were tightened after 1945 to remove the ‘wrong sort of British subject’.²⁰ For the Foreign Office or armed forces, candidates were ineligible unless ‘he is a natural born British subject and born within the United Kingdom or in one of the self-governing Dominions of parents also born within the United Kingdom or in one of the self-governing Dominions, except when the circumstances are such as to justify a departure’.²¹ At face value, new guidelines made no mention of colour or race, even if this was often implied. For some, the fact that individuals were born overseas or had links to the growing number of the post-colonial members of the new Commonwealth gave ‘coloured’ or ‘black’ applicants a divided loyalty that posed a security risk. For others in Whitehall, the recruitment of non-white staff challenged entrenched organisational cultures and individual mind-sets. For security officials, the changing demographic of the post-war Civil Service directly challenged preconceived views of ‘Britishness’, loyalty and assimilation, with race and identity remaining an important security issue in government even after the introduction of legislation in 1968. Discussions about race, security and recruitment were complicated by the British Nationality Act which had received Royal Assent in July 1948, which came into force on 1 January 1949, allowing anyone formerly with the title ‘British subject’ to become a ‘Commonwealth citizen’ with the right to enter and settle in the country. Citizens from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Newfoundland, Southern Rhodesia, India, Pakistan and Ceylon enjoyed the status, while ‘any citizen of Eire’, having been a British subject before the Act, would also fall into the legislation.²² But even before its passage, departments had already sought to disparage the recruitment of non-white candidates from the Indian civil service²³, Indian Political Service²⁴ and Burmese Civil Service, with ‘security’ often cited to scare candidates – a rule that did not apply to white officers returning from the Indian subcontinent. As the Admiralty admitted in January 1948, applicants of ‘European British descent born in India or Pakistan would present no difficulty’ for departments, with the Ministry of Supply, Treasury, Foreign Office, Commonwealth Relations Office and service departments adopting ‘covert administrative action’ to prevent the recruitment of new ‘dark dominion [sic]’ candidates, as

officials recognised an overt bar would cause ‘great political embarrassment’.²⁵ For the service departments, entrants from India or Pakistan were unsuitable for ‘secret matters ... the Americans insist as a condition of giving us certain secret information that it should not be passed on even to the Dominions; they would presumably object if they found colonial subjects in offices dealing with such matters’.²⁶ In August 1948, the Sub-Committee on Security had already proposed that staff engaged in cypher work should be vetted and subject to the tougher Foreign Office rules on nationality, ruling out anyone born outside of Britain to non-British parents.²⁷

For Whitehall officials in the 1950s and 1960s, the guidelines setting out the security precautions of employing ‘aliens and persons who are not of U.K. origin’ made it clear that anyone of ‘alien origin’ could not have ‘an inherent loyalty to the United Kingdom notwithstanding the ties which may be created by long residence or marriage to a British subject of United Kingdom origin, or even naturalisation’, which extended to Commonwealth nationals, the majority of which were ‘coloured’.²⁸ As the documents reveal, discussions on race and security were often rife with the racial prejudices of the day, and wider organisational cultural attitudes against employing ‘coloured people’ certainly played a key role in the decisions of individual government departments, even if such views were often wrapped up in wider concerns about the inherent loyalty of overseas-born civil servants and the security of information across government. As officials later told Ministers, access to confidential or secret information required ‘normal vetting’ (or ‘negative’ vetting) comprising of a check against departmental records, MI5’s archive and the records of the Criminal Record Office, a process complicated when ‘the subject has lived in this country for a few years, unless satisfactory enquiries about this can be made in his country of origin’.²⁹ Officials realised that checks against MI5’s records, complicated at the best of times due to the incomplete nature of files, were ‘valueless where there was only a short period of residence in this country and no possibility of making satisfactory background enquiries in the country of origin’. Some checks could be made against ‘some staff of non-UK origin (e.g. Canadians)’ while it was impossible for ‘others (e.g. Tanzanian)’.³⁰ Further ‘positive’ enquiries would also need long-term evidence of residency or employment history in the UK.³¹ While personal and departmental prejudices were to leak into the vetting system, officials

were less concerned about outward appearances – whether an individual was ‘coloured’ or ‘black’, than issues regarding residency and naturalisation, with rules applying as much ‘to a Cypriot, or indeed a French Canadian, as to a Nigerian’.³² As Whitehall officials recognised, ‘loyalty to this country’ and ‘trustworthiness’ were the significant factors.³³ But concerns about race and security were further complicated by differing views across government, hardly helped by the different terminology with ‘non-UK’, ‘black’, ‘coloured’ and ‘negro’ often interchangeable. Since the early 1950s, the Joint Intelligence Committee had ruled that overseas-born members of the UK armed forces should be allowed to view documents marked ‘UK eyes only’, with MI5 advising in 1963 that ‘any member of the UK Armed Forces, or of the Home Civil, Overseas Civil or Foreign Service of the UK, or any employee of the UKEA, was a UK eye regardless of his country of birth’.³⁴ But the rules on who could see such information were not standard across Whitehall, especially for parts of government engaged in secret work and the Diplomatic Service. As the JIC itself acknowledged, there was the significant question of ‘who is a UK eye’, with responses to the issue changing between ‘security departments’ – those areas of government dealing with often secret information, and ‘safe’ areas of the state.³⁵ Government nationality rules complicated the issue; most people closely associated with the United Kingdom became a ‘British subject’ until 1949, when superseded by the British Nationality Act which had received Royal Assent in July 1948, giving anyone who had been a ‘British subject’ the title of ‘Commonwealth citizen’, with the right to enter and settle in the country. The policy had only really been intended to maintain the close ties to the ‘old dominions’ – Australia and New Zealand, Canada and South Africa, rather than the growing ‘new Commonwealth’ including Africa, the Caribbean and Asia.³⁶ Under new regulations, recruits to the civil service would only be acceptable if the individual was ‘a British subject at birth’ or if ‘at least one of your parents must be, or have been at death, a British subject’ or resided in a Commonwealth country or the Irish Republic for five out of the past eight years, wide ranging criteria allowing almost anyone from Britain’s overseas territories to join departments. Those not fulfilling the criteria would have to apply based on ‘ancestry, upbringing, or residence, or by reason of national service’, though stringent rules applied to areas of government including the Ministry of Aviation, Ministry of Defence and Cabinet Office.³⁷

But the Foreign Office and GCHQ had different entry criteria. Unlike the other agencies, MI5 and SIS who controlled their own recruitment³⁸, GCHQ relied on public sources, and took a much tougher line than the general nationality rulings set by the Treasury, which stipulated that candidates would ‘not be eligible for appointment to a situation in the Foreign Service or to any other situation under the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, unless at all times since his birth he has been either a British subject or citizen of the Republic of Ireland and was born of parents each of whom is, or was at death a British subject or citizen of the Republic of Ireland and has been one or the other at all times since birth’.³⁹ In February 1956, GCHQ argued its recruitment practices should differ from the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service, with nationals from the Republic of Ireland ineligible to join as foreign nationals, with the bar also applying to members of the ‘new’ Commonwealth.⁴⁰ In a letter to the Civil Service Commission, GCHQ’s John Somerville also argued that a bar should apply to ‘coloured’ individuals, where one or both parents were ‘not of Old Dominion stock’. The security vetting of ‘coloured’ staff was problematic as there would, wrote Somerville:

... be cases – Anglo-Indians for example – where we can’t be positive one way or the other on the basis of a visual inspection of the candidate combined with an intelligent guess whether his parents’ names and addresses provide any clue. I do not think we can possibly use the more searching interrogation of the Positive Vetting stage for this purpose; obviously we cannot risk a candidate connecting G.C.H.Q.’s refusal to have him with his coloured ancestry.

The most I think we can ask is that where there is a suspicion either from the candidate’s appearance or from the material about parentage normally available to the Commissioners, that he may be a “coloured person” as defined above, he should not be assigned to G.C.H.Q.⁴¹

The implication of Somerville’s request was that even ‘coloured’ individuals born in Britain, whose parents had migrated from the ‘new’ Commonwealth countries, would still be ineligible to work in the organisation. Before 1945 and migration from the ‘new’ Commonwealth, GCHQ’s predecessors

(from 1919 the Government Code & Cipher School) had taken a pragmatic approach, often hiring foreigners with vital skills, especially those with important linguistic abilities, with army codebreakers in the Middle East employing a ‘cosmopolitan workforce’ including non-Muslim minorities in the Ottoman Empire, while hundreds of foreign nationals were employed after 1945, many Eastern Europeans in the in the London Processing Group, transcribing Russian-language intercepts, or Chinese in Hong Kong.⁴² Both were compartmentalised from head office and the most secret aspects of British signals intelligence (SIGINT), receiving little in the way of positive vetting and recruited for their anti-Communist views – a recruitment policy that sometimes led to security issues itself.⁴³ GCHQ officials were, however, unwilling to bend the rules for foreign-born nationals and members of the ‘new’ Commonwealth to head office. While the blanket ban on first- and second-generation migrants may now seem a little drastic, the security of GCHQ signals intelligence was almost certainly at the forefront of Somerville’s request, though, like in other areas of Whitehall, stereotypes and racism also played a part. In 1948, British-American officials attending a joint technical conference on the transatlantic ‘COMINT Agreement’ (formerly BRUSA) agreed that, except in special categories and individual cases agreed by the US-British SIGINT authorities, ‘personnel to be indoctrinated as recipients of Communication Intelligence ... shall be the subject of special security measures’, requiring positive vetting inquiries that extended to the private lives of parents and spouses.⁴⁴ GCHQ’s product was subject to strict regulations under later UKUSA or ‘Five Eyes’ regulations, with much material restricted to British and American nationals, alongside nationals from their COMINT partners in Australia, New Zealand and Canada, requiring stringent security screening before individuals were fully ‘indoctrinated’.⁴⁵ By the 1960s, the vast majority of those working on British SIGINT – 8,000 directly with GCHQ and another 3,500 service personnel working on collection – had to be positively vetted, resulting in a significant ‘backlog’ for the small team of Cheltenham-based investigating officers, posing even greater problems for any recruits whose credentials had to be sourced overseas.⁴⁶ By the 1960s, as a ‘defence department’, GCHQ maintained a ‘ten year’ rule for applicants to headquarters, who needed proof of residency in the UK for the last decade, even if little is known about the policy in practice.⁴⁷

The Foreign Office had also sought to clarify its in-house policy on race, which saw no real reason to discriminate on race alone, even if the first Civil Service Commissioner Sir Percy Waterfield found that applicants of ‘un-English appearance or speech might be held unsuitable for a situation in which he would not act as a representative of the United Kingdom to foreigners’.⁴⁸ In contrast to the total bar in GCHQ and other areas ‘under the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs’ (a bar that presumably applied to officers in the Secret Intelligence Service or MI6), the 1950s marked the start of an informal ‘colour’ bar in the Foreign Office with ‘different types of racism operating in tandem ... from concrete, overt practices like the “Not for Foreign Service” label, through to subtler, psychological barriers like the requirement that candidates be judged as sufficiently “English”’.⁴⁹

By the 1960s, there was growing pressure for government departments to accept black and Asian recruits, reflecting societal changes regarding race and immigration.⁵⁰ In the United States, important pieces of legislation – the Civil Rights Act (1964) and Voting Rights Act (1965) – had been introduced to end segregation in public places and discrimination based on race, religion, sex or national origin, and end race discrimination in voting. In Britain, the growth of immigration from the Caribbean resulted in white-on-black riots in Notting Hill and Nottingham in 1958, with a 1961 poll conducted by Gallup revealing that 67 per cent of the population supported tougher controls on migration from the ‘new’ Commonwealth, with the subsequent Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 subjecting Commonwealth nationals with passports not directly issued by the British government to immigration checks.⁵¹ By 1964, even the Labour government took a tough immigration line, suggesting a tightening of employment rules, restricting entry for unskilled workers and an extension of Home Office repatriation powers⁵², even if there was recognition of the need to ‘take action against racial discrimination and promote full integration into the community of immigrants who have come here from the Commonwealth’. In Cabinet Home Secretary Roy Jenkins proposed new legislation to criminalise racial discrimination ‘if it is practiced in places to which the public have access – in particular in hotels, restaurants, public houses, places of entertainment or recreation or public transport’, resulting in the 1965 Race Relations Act and beginning a process that would see new anti-discriminatory legislation in the form of the 1968 Race Relations Act, making it illegal to

refuse housing, employment or public services on grounds of race.⁵³ But these proposals unwittingly brought government legislation into conflict with the security policies of government departments on the recruitment of candidates from the Commonwealth.

Since July 1964, defence departments – defined at the time as the Ministry of Defence, the three services, Ministry of Aviation, Cabinet Office and GCHQ⁵⁴ – had only recruited ‘coloured staff’ to the headquarters defence departments, provided candidates ‘show, normally by a substantial period of residence, that he has assimilated himself into this country’.⁵⁵ Previously no ‘coloured staff’ had been employed in defence headquarters on security grounds, given the difficulties of vetting recruits who were first or second generation migrants, with defence departments adopting ‘as a rule of thumb (not to be publicly stated) a minimum of ten years’ residence’ before an individual could be transferred to secret work, a rule accepted by the Whitehall official committee on security in September 1964.⁵⁶ The policy was far from popular; it only applied to civilian staff in defence departments, not the ‘uniformed side’ and was never implemented by the three services, who had long recruited ‘hundreds of servicemen of non-United Kingdom origin, including coloured people’.⁵⁷ Despite the aim of the policy to get reliable ‘coloured’ staff in defence department headquarters, the regulations did little to diversify the staff pool, one official admitting in 1967 they had been unable to ‘assign to a Defence Department a single successful coloured candidate in the Clerical Class’, given the prohibitively restrictive nature of the ten year residency and the wider difficulties in screening non-UK born nationals.⁵⁸ Moreover, the ‘ten year’ policy only applied to civilian staff at headquarters, with a lesser ‘five year’ vetting period applying to armed service personnel, despite the large number of Commonwealth nationals serving in the military. The rules of the defence departments on residency, while reflected across government, were not set in stone, with the period a candidate needed to have lived in Britain changing from department to department., even if race and the recruitment of ‘coloured staff’ was a concern across departments.

Like the Ministry of Defence, Foreign Office diplomats were also concerned about recruiting individuals who had only recently migrated to Britain. In July 1965, Dennis Fowler from the Diplomatic Service Administration Office highlighted the cases of three members of the Home Civil

Service who wanted to transfer to the Diplomatic Service, whose transfer would conflict with the nationality regulations. The first of the candidates, Mr. M.L. Atwell was a Clerical Officer in the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, who had been born in Barbados and only resident in the UK since 1960. Atwell had made a 'favourable impression' during his interview, with the chances of transfer 'quite good'. Fowler also drew attention to Mr. C.M.K. Burge, an executive officer working in the Atomic Energy Authority, born in Indore, India and educated at the Boys' High School Bala Hissar, Peshawar, and Mr. I.H. Chin who was working as an executive officer in the Colonial Office born in Georgetown, British Guiana, both interviewed for the Foreign Office and found 'acceptable'. There was a strong case to accept all three in the Foreign Office, Fowler believed. In his view, they had 'earnt it' on merit, and there was a need, he argued, for the Diplomatic Service to reflect society. In short, integrating 'coloured' officers into diplomatic posts would 'improve' the image of the Foreign Office. Fowler added, 'it could be argued in some quarters that the fact that there are no coloured members of the Diplomatic Service is proof that our talk of equality of opportunity for all races is so much eyewash!' On the other hand, there were arguments against employment, particularly over 'portability and security'. The posting of a 'negro officer would not be acceptable in a number of countries, and to a lesser extent this is probably true of officers of Asian origin'. But security was the larger problem:

... is it right to entrust classified information to a person whose roots are not in the U.K. and whose loyalties could well be to another country? From my own experience, I would say that this is perhaps not a strong argument in the case of Asians, many of whom ... seem to have a genuine loyalty towards Britain. I feel though, that the present upsurge of racist feeling among negroes throughout the world, there would be a considerable risk in employing a negro in a Diplomatic Service post abroad. He would, I feel, immediately become a target for subversion by the Iron Curtain countries and even more extreme African countries.⁵⁹

Fowler's argument that black recruits were susceptible to wider 'racist feeling among negroes' around the world, reflected wider Foreign Office and government thinking on homosexual recruits

and the misguided belief that gay men everywhere clandestinely supported one another – the so-called ‘Homintern’, and was to be later reiterated by the Security Service.⁶⁰ Paradoxically, while James McGhie of the Personnel Department agreed with Fowler that the Foreign Office should attract black recruits, he disagreed with Asian ones, claiming that the Chinese ‘are in my experience only basically loyal to themselves and the Central Kingdom. I suggest, if you agree that this be tamed into a submission’.⁶¹ The issue was brought to the attention of the Foreign Office’s head of the Security Department, Stephen Olver.⁶² For Olver, this was not an issue of race or colour, but a security issue. In Olver’s view, Foreign Office officials needed to ensure that the applicants loyalty ‘is not merely to the Commonwealth but to the United Kingdom’, adding:

... All three of these candidates have spent more of their lives in their country of origin than in the United Kingdom, and Mr. Atwell has been in this country only since 1960. It is arguable that Mr. Burge, who appears to be Anglo-Indian by birth with a British wife, probably moved to this country by choice following India’s independence and that Mr. Chin has now spent sufficient time in this country (about 16 years) to be assumed to be making it his home. But is this enough? May they not still be susceptible to Indian and West Indian influence? Mr. Chin has a Chinese name and the inherent nationalism of the Chinese is such that he may be susceptible to Chinese influence.⁶³

While the Security Department saw little concern about anyone who had been living in Britain from their early childhood, the three transfers had not spent long enough in the UK to establish reliability and there would be ‘considerable difficulty’ in the positive vetting of Chin and Atwell especially.⁶⁴

Security issues were again raised the following year with the impending move of the Colonial Office’s Aden section into the Foreign Office. In May 1966, Philip Finney wrote to the Security Department’s Michael Morgan regarding the vetting of a nineteen-year-old Miss F.V. Glaze, then personal assistant to the Charles Roberts, an Assistant Secretary in the Aden section. While the Colonial Office maintained that Glaze has been positively vetted, Finney expressed concern that she had only been ‘discovered by chance’ by Foreign Office officials, claiming that Glaze could be a

security risk as she may ‘catch a sight of code word material from time to time’. As Glaze was on a ‘temporary deputation’, it was agreed to allow her to stay in the short term before she was replaced and moved back to the Colonial Office.⁶⁵ As historian James Southern has written, the Foreign Office’s stance on ‘coloured staff’ was riven with ‘internal inconsistency’ with differing attitudes towards Asians and ‘negroes’, even if security was a consistent theme – a stance reflected, as wider research shows, across Whitehall. The Foreign Office attitude of the 1960s is reflected in the writing on diplomat Ewen Fergusson, responsible for departmental recruitment.⁶⁶ In a paper on the recruitment of ‘coloured applicants’, Fergusson interpreted nationality rules to mean that ‘an officer must be identified with this country’, but that the Foreign Office should accept ‘those whose parents had lived in this country and who had themselves been educated and spent most of their lives in this country, whatever the colour’ and reject those ‘who came to this country either at the university stage, post-school age, or later, and whose family ties are still mainly in other parts of the Commonwealth’. Certainly the policy would exclude the majority of ‘Indian, Pakistani, African and West Indian applicants’, though each case would be judged individually.⁶⁷

As highlighted earlier, attitudes to racial diversity, even in ‘security departments’, differed greatly. Some departments had a total bar on non-UK born recruits, while others, much like wider Whitehall, had a ‘safe’ and ‘unsafe’ areas with varying access to confidential and secret information, requiring only some entrants to be fully vetted. The security vetting of new entrants was also complicated by the different rules across government governing the minimum residency requirements for non-UK born staff. For instance, while the Ministry of Defence maintained a ten year rule for headquarters staff and a ‘five year’ one for serving personnel, the Ministry of Public Building and Works (a department with a ‘fairly wide scatter of classified information’) only had ‘a two-year residence in the U.K. for candidates not of U.K. origin’, even if officials admitted that the residency period should be increased.⁶⁸ The result was that standards across Whitehall differed from department to department, with the number of ‘coloured’ staff varying widely. In June 1966, officials in the passport office identified ‘a dozen “coloured” workers’, ranging from ‘dusky West Indians to pale-faced Levantines’ in junior positions, mostly in clerical posts. Unlike the Diplomatic Service, there

was no 'colour bar', though, in some areas, it was unsuitable, especially when tracking 'illegal immigrants'.⁶⁹ Like the passport office, the Ministry of Technology was equally open to black or Asian recruits, employing 'some 160 coloured people at Headquarters and in the various establishments under its control – 127 non-industrialists and 33 industrialists' with 'little problem of any significance'.⁷⁰ The Treasury had '17 coloured employees' all in clerical and typist roles, explaining the lack of diversity on the 'procedural difficulties about employing people from abroad, whether coloured or not', especially the vetting process that usually took three months, compared to the vetting of British-born nationals that took just two weeks. If anything, the only drawback in recruiting 'coloured people' was the 'language problem'.⁷¹ For the Ministry of Power the issue was the limited number of posts that did not require vetting – just 130 out of 900 positions, with all of the 'coloured' staff concentrated in junior clerical posts 'where they would not be liable to see classified information'.⁷² The Home Office had a similar problem, wrote one official:

... The Home Office has always absorbed its own security risks and we have now reached the stage where we are having some difficulty in arranging postings for those who have not a full n.v. clearance i.e. non-U.K. citizens and security risks. If we take on any more officers without a full n.v. clearance we are soon likely to find ourselves in the position where our non security Divisions are manned almost entirely by security risks and coloured staff – a position which is bound to give risks to management problems.⁷³

Other departments were much in-line with Foreign Office and wider security department policy; the Cabinet Office did not recruit 'candidates not of United Kingdom origin'⁷⁴, while the Atomic Energy Authority had no black or Asian staff, explained in part by their location ('some of our establishments are in areas where there are not, as yet, many coloured residents') but mostly by in-house vetting:

... This is difficult to do properly for people (whatever their colour, and whether or not they come under the British Crown) who have lived for much of their lives in any overseas place. Yet there is no deliberate discrimination, and no discrimination against coloured people as such. The problem affects Europeans, or white non-Europeans, just as

much as it affects coloured people. Conversely, we take on without difficulty the odd coloured employee who was born, or who had lived for an appreciable period, in this country.⁷⁵

As correspondence from across government showed, the issue of security and underlying prejudices could also be coalesced with common preconceptions wrapped up in the language of security. A submission from the Board of Trade reflected this, with officials clear they did not 'accept people who will be a security problem'. Officials were also concerned that 'coloured staff' were mostly concentrated in 'non-Security Departments' with some departments reaching a 'saturation point and further postings of coloured staff would seem likely to lead to resignations from United Kingdom entrants', resulting in an enforced slowdown in 'coloured' recruits. Many non-UK born entrants were also unsuitable, with a 'very poor command of spoken English' who were often unintelligible in face-to-face conversation and over the phone.⁷⁶ Officials also warned against even employing recently arrived members of the 'new' Commonwealth altogether, owing to their possible access to secret information in departments classed as safe. For D.G. Purnell, an Assistant Secretary (Security) in the newly established Ministry of Technology, news of several cases in the Department of Economic Affairs, where individuals had been recruited, having only recently arrived from Nigeria, Trinidad and Ceylon, highlighted the shortfalls of government policy. Purnell added his own view:

... I do not know what assessment these Departments made on each case, but should not be myself be a willing party to the submission of reports which, if they contain no adverse evidence, might form the basis of a Departmental assessment that people with no adequate residence in, or identification with, this country should be entrusted with regular and constant access to Top Secret information.

... My personal view is that secrets are no less secret in Civil Departments and that therefore the rule should, if sustained by Ministers, apply with equal force to them. But to contemplate the Positive Vetting of recent immigrants about whom we know little or nothing strikes me as indefensible.⁷⁷

The issue of race and security became all the more problematic following Ministerial attempts to tackle head-on prejudice in British society. While the Race Relations Act of 1965 was a major step forward, demonstrating a willingness by Ministers to use the law to address race discrimination, making it a civil offence to refuse to serve someone on grounds of race, ethnicity or national origins, the legislation left significant gaps, especially surrounding employment and housing. The results of the 1967 Political and Economic Planning (PEP) survey into racial discrimination provided evidence that government legislation should go much further, finding there was ‘widespread discrimination against coloured citizens in employment, housing and personal service’, resulting in the prospect of further legislation.⁷⁸ For Ministers new legislation on work-based discrimination was necessary, yet there was depending concern at the impact on Whitehall security. As the chair of the personal security committee Harry Pitchforth admitted, the ‘pressure’ for new legislation would impinge on current guidelines for ‘employing coloured staff in the defence departments’, with officials needing to fully inform Ministers of the consequences and face up to any potential backlash by making the policy ‘public at a suitable opportunity’.⁷⁹ As earlier outlined, the policy of restricting the recruitment of ‘coloured staff’ in secret departments had a disproportionate impact on non-secret areas of the Civil Service. ‘Nearly half of the entry of (for example) Clerical Officers in London’, are now ‘coloured’ which resulted in undisclosed ‘management problems’, wrote the official committee and Head of the Home Civil Service, Sir Lawrence Helsby.⁸⁰ By 1967 there were just 16,550 black officials concentrated in the clerical and industrial classes of the civil service, from a total Home Civil Service total of just under 650,000.⁸¹ In practice, the restrictions meant the vast majority of black civil servants were sent to departments outside the ‘security field’ meaning that:

... 594 out of 1,346 candidates assigned from one of the 1966 adult clerical class schemes of recruitment were coloured. Of the 594, three large Departments took 271 (out of total assignments to those Departments of 464), other non-security Departments took 314, and the Security Departments themselves a mere 9. In the Executive field the proportion of coloured recruits is still small but the number will grow and a problem may arise here too. The concentration of increasing numbers of coloured clerical staff in a few

large Departments such as the Inland Revenue is giving rise to such management problems that some of these Departments have asked the Commission not to assign to them any more such candidates at the present until they have assimilated their present quota.⁸²

Interdepartmental battles about the 'quota' of new personnel from non-UK backgrounds, the possibility of new anti-discriminatory legislation and the wider security concerns about the growing numbers of civil servants drawn from the 'new' Commonwealth, meant the matter of 'coloured staff' in defence departments and wider government was brought before the official committee on security in May 1967. While little has been written about the interdepartmental security structures across government, the committee essentially mirrored the Cabinet Office's unified structures on intelligence, first formed in the 1950s to deal with issues regarding protective security and counter-intelligence, supporting a Ministerial Committee on Security, chaired by the Home Secretary. The official committee fell under the chairmanship of Treasury officials and included the Director-General of MI5, Director of GCHQ and the permanent under-secretaries' of the Home Office, Board of Trade, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Technology, with smaller specialist committees often feeding into discussion on matters such as general security policy or personnel security and vetting.⁸³ In May 1967, the committee discussed the Ministry of Defence's vetting policy and the extension of the 'ten year' rule to 'coloured staff'. Already, the policy was seen a controversial, but necessary, one that safeguarded secret information, even if it was regarded as a 'colour bar' by some. MI5's concerns appear to have gone far beyond the practical effect of the 'ten year' rule, appearing to highlight the service's deep-seated suspicion of black recruits across government. As MI5's Director General Martin Furnival Jones told the official committee, the risks of employing first or second generation migrants went beyond just security vetting:

... they stemmed simply from the colour of a man's skin, which gave him a chip on his shoulder. It would be a long time before that chip was removed. Even when a man was placed in a position of trust which ought to remove the chip, he and his wife and family might be subjected to public humiliation in such a way to make the chip reappear. It must

be assumed that the Communist intelligence services were fully aware of the possibilities of recruiting agents from among disaffected coloured people in this country. The security risk of employing coloured staff was therefore a serious one, and one which should be brought to the attention of Ministers.⁸⁴

The committee agreed that it was 'sensible that Ministers should be made aware of the security difficulties' while considering further race discrimination legislation. Following Furnival Jones' comments, MI5's concerns about the recruitment of 'coloured' staff were set out in a paper in June. For MI5, the recruitment of 'coloured' staff was made all the more problematic as many members of the new Commonwealth had 'obtained their independence following a period of struggle against Colonial rule', with nationals often referring to British policy as 'colonialist' or 'neo-colonialist'. The Cold War international dimension was equally a concern; the 'old' Commonwealth remained closely aligned to the West, whereas new members were non-aligned or even following 'foreign policies opposed to those of the United Kingdom'. In Britain, the factious nature of 1960s race relations, especially real or imagined racial discrimination, would also produce 'feelings of bitterness and resentment towards the Government and people of this country', MI5 argued, with 'significant security risks in giving access to classified information to immigrants from new Commonwealth countries'. As in the case of 'character defects', MI5 argued that dissatisfaction with the state of race relations could be used as leverage by Eastern Bloc and other hostile intelligence agencies to 'recruit them as spies' while the absence of 'wholehearted loyalty' to Britain meant black staff would be 'vulnerable to financial or other inducements'. In addition, MI5 also believed that subversive groups could be used to 'exploit any discomfort felt by coloured immigrants and attempt to recruit them as members'. As with homosexuality as a security risk, much of the concern was imaginary; MI5 admitted, there were 'no positive examples' of former Commonwealth nationals, predominantly black, spying for foreign agencies, and the threat remained a theoretical one rather than actual.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the Soviet Union's fierce denunciation of imperialism, its support for the first generation of Africa's post-colonial leaders and the opportunities for turning former Western colonies into new Cold War battleground remained a major concern for MI5's Overseas (E) Branch until its

closure in 1971, and one, MI5 concluded, it 'would be unwise to disregard'.⁸⁶ Moreover, the Communist Party of Great Britain had been consistently in support of the struggle for colonial freedom, criticising Britain's policy in Kenya during the Mau Mau uprising, while opposing racism and supporting the move to new legislation against race discrimination in Britain, attracting activists from across Britain's current and former colonies.⁸⁷ The 1960s also saw the emergence of a new British Black Power movement, influenced by the American Civil Rights struggle, the strong anti-colonial traditions of migrants from the 'new' Commonwealth, and a direct response to the inherent racism in British society, formed around the Universal Coloured People's Association (UCPA), that ultimately attracted the attention of Scotland Yard and Security Service as a domestic terrorist threat, though the JIC assessed Black Power was not a 'coherent international movement'.⁸⁸ Even if the JIC initially believed the movement would make 'little headway among coloured people in Britain' or have 'little impact in the Commonwealth Caribbean countries', later intelligence summaries argued that the movement needed to be 'taken seriously' with activists determined to overthrow governments in the Caribbean and reaching out to similar movements in the US.⁸⁹

MI5's concerns tapped into internal organisational culture and wider prejudices replicated across government. The Security Service of the time was a male dominated environment, with the majority of its staff having come from the white administrative services of the newly independent colonies. As with the rest of Whitehall and its growing network of in-house security departments⁹⁰, MI5 had always drawn on its imperial connections for recruitment; much of the old pre-1945 MI5 had included a large number of officers who had started their working lives in the Empire, including the service's wartime Director General Sir David Petrie who had served as head of the Delhi Intelligence Bureau of the Indian Police from 1924 to 1931, who maintained in 1945 that future DGs should have backgrounds 'out of the British Isles'.⁹¹ Petrie's successor Sir Percy Sillitoe also had considerable overseas experience, having served in the British South African and Northern Rhodesia police, and a political officer in Tanganyika. By the 1960s some 65 per cent of officers recruited in the previous ten years had come from overseas civil service and police posts; groups such as the 'Sudanese souls' (drawn from the defunct Sudan Political Service) and 'Malayan mafia', recruited from the Malayan

civil service by Deputy Director-General Graham Mitchell in 1957, formed at MI5's headquarters, with some rising to senior positions in the service.⁹² One of these was Sir Patrick Walker, MI5's DG from 1987 to 1992, who, having graduated from Oxford, started his career in the colonial service in Uganda, joining MI5 in 1963 and becoming Director FX (counter-terrorism) in 1984, before becoming Director-General.⁹³ Contrasting with Walker's distinguished career, MI5's first female Director General Stella Rimington recalled that some colonial recruits resorted to heavy drinking, while others, with a pension and secure employment, 'lack any motivation or drive and did not exactly exert themselves'.⁹⁴

Unsurprisingly, the environment contributed to an organisational culture that would be completely unacceptable today, with MI5's early Cold War records providing a snippet of what was often said behind closed door or written in files that were never due to be released. In July 1949, Deputy Director-General Guy Liddell, while dismissing claims that Communism was widespread in Britain's colonies, told Joint Intelligence Committee officials it 'was true that niggers coming over here often went to the C.P. [Communist Party]. This did not mean that they were Communists or that they understood anything about Karl Marx or dialectical materialism: it merely meant that they found Communists sympathetic because they had no racial discrimination and were all in favour of the niggers running their own show'.⁹⁵ During a visit to West Africa a year later, Liddell revealed similar disparaging views of black people, with the 'West African natives ... wholly unsuited' for self-rule. 'You only need to try and buy a set of stamps for 1/- at Accra Post Office on a hot afternoon', Liddell explained. 'After a long delay the black bank clerk will endeavour to add up the sum; it will come out wrong, but it is better not to argue as the delay and frustration would only be greater'.⁹⁶ Even into the 1960s and 1970s, there were 'certainly some pretty racist and misogynistic views around, with most of the focus on hostility to women wanting to make careers in intelligence'.⁹⁷ While admitting it might 'not as bad as I remember', Rimington later described a service 'unashamedly male-dominated. The men were the "officers" and the women were the "other ranks" in military parlance, and there were still quite strong military overtones', attitudes that were embedded in office politics.⁹⁸ MI5's wartime attitudes towards female recruits was 'profoundly restrictive' with women almost universally

limited to subordinate roles, especially clerical and secretarial functions, with few breaking the glass ceiling into intelligence officer roles⁹⁹ – limitations that would continue into the 1970s, though the situation changed considerably from the 1990s onwards with MI5 having two distinguished female DGs.¹⁰⁰ While the senior leadership of MI5 saw the service as apart from the rest of Whitehall, wanting to avoid unwelcome interference to new equalities legislation, the new junior entrants ‘found all this quite extraordinary and were very supportive of those female colleagues who were pointing to the 1970s discrimination legislation to overturn artificial barriers to their advancement’, with attitudes towards women in the office slowly changing following the appointment of Sir Antony Duff as DG in 1985.¹⁰¹ In house attitudes towards minority groups was equally disparaging, especially amongst management. MI5 officials also had a deep distrust of Jewish recruits, some showing a degree of mild anti-Semitism.¹⁰² Liddell’s own diaries contain anti-Semitic references, in line with the rest of his class and generation.¹⁰³ In wartime, the service had recruited a number of Jews who served with distinction – the most significant, Victor Rothschild who became MI5’s in-house expert on sabotage, but the post-war emergence of Israel led the service to restrict recruitment owing to the belief that Jewish recruits would hold a dual loyalty to Britain and the new Jewish state.¹⁰⁴ By the mid-1950s, MI5’s Director of B Division John Marriott stated that the service should ‘avoid recruiting Jews if possible unless they have strong qualifications which are necessary for our work’, adding that ‘as a matter of general policy Jews were not now recruited to the Service’ – a bar only removed in 1974, though the discrimination against observant Jews and those with a distinctly Jewish ‘physical appearance and demeanour’ continued.¹⁰⁵ As MI5’s submission on ‘coloured’ staff also reveals, there were entrenched views on race. One former officer remarked, ‘I remember one incident when a senior member of staff ... was heard shouting in disbelief in his office having encountered a black security guard on the entrance to one of our buildings. We thought he must have been having a breakdown’.¹⁰⁶ Change only really began by the 1980s when MI5 started to recruit non-white staff in surveillance roles as ‘targets (notably the Russians) did not believe that we employed such people and, in consequence, did not “see” them’, drawn from the armed services. ‘The consensus ... was that this was a good thing’.¹⁰⁷

It was therefore unsurprising that MI5 argued in favour of tightening the existing regulations. Migrants from the new Commonwealth were eligible to work in the civil service and industry, and were able to become 'citizens of the U.K. and Colonies' having only lived in Britain for five years. While MI5 acknowledged the policy of defence departments to restrict employment to anyone with less than ten years residency, it was up to officials to decide whether this should extend across departments as a 'single rule'. A 'ten year residence rule' was advisable from MI5's perspective as it would allow anyone 'shown to be loyal to the U.K.' to join defence departments, even if, it was acknowledged, it would not deal with 'security risks arising from incidents of racial discrimination ... likely to be related to a person's colour and not his period of residence in this country' or give candidates born outside the UK access to 'information which is politically sensitive in relation to his country of origin and which might subject his loyalties to strain', which applied to individuals from 'old' and 'new' Commonwealth countries.¹⁰⁸ While the 'ten year rule' may have seemed logical to some, effectively ruling out the employment of non-UK staff in defence headquarters at home and abroad who had lived less than ten years in the UK, defence officials pointed out that servicemen with non-UK backgrounds overseas in the armed forces could have access to information just as damaging as that found in headquarters. In a paper in July 1967, officials found it illogical in allowing a 'Ceylonese-born rating of the Royal Navy, with two years' residence in this country, access to secrets in, say, a Polaris submarine, while preventing his brother from working as a lift operator in the Ministry of Defence Main Building'.¹⁰⁹ In a further paper, officials argued that the employment of non-UK born personnel was so serious that even markings such as 'UK EYES ONLY' would be ineffective in preventing information 'reaching other governments', especially if the definition of 'UK eye' depended on employment and not nationality, with anyone being defined as a UK eye if they were a 'member of the UK Armed Forces, or of the Diplomatic, Home Civil or Overseas Civil Service of the UK'.¹¹⁰

The issue of 'coloured applicants' to secret departments and the impact of new anti-discriminatory legislation by Ministers was finally addressed by Sir Lawrence Helsby in September 1967. 'Staff not of United Kingdom origin in general cannot be assumed to have an inherent loyalty to

this country', suggested Helsby. Even though officials had earlier ruled that MI5's assessment of the risks in employing 'coloured' candidates were 'theoretical and must not be overstated'¹¹¹, Helsby explained to Ministers that recruits could become 'disaffected through real or imagined acts of racial discrimination; consequently they may be vulnerable to inducements offered by hostile Intelligence Services', with the only real safeguard 'satisfactory evidence of their assimilation into this country and of their trustworthiness in handling its affairs'.¹¹² The issue of 'assimilation' – the suggestion that applicants should show evidence of their integration into society over time – and the criteria to gauge this received little attention from Helsby. As Bunce and Field suggest, 'demanding that minority communities assimilate, or making "British values" a "litmus test" of loyalty is a demeaning exercise; it is a sort of political equivalent to the Tebbit test where second-generation Britons of West Indian and South Asian heritage were required to cheer for the English cricket team to prove their allegiance'.¹¹³ Nonetheless, as Helsby told Ministers, there were real concerns for the vetting of staff, especially over positive vetting which examined 'the subjects career over at least the last ten years' and negative checks against MI5 and criminal records, if applicants had spent a few years living in the UK, which adversely affected 'coloured immigrants'. Few 'coloured people' were employed by government departments, with the majority focused on 'non-security departments'. For Helsby and officials, a ten year minimum rule for vetting purposes was desirable, even if MI5 believed that over five years would suffice ('less than five years would ... deprive their record check of any real value'), even if this meant a significant 'tightening up in some departments where current practice is less strict' with Ministers urged to issue a statement to that effect.¹¹⁴ Helsby's arguments were presented to the Ministerial Committee on Security, chaired by Home Secretary Roy Jenkins in October 1967 (soon to be replaced by James Callaghan), whose membership also included Secretary of State for Defence Denis Healey, the Paymaster General George Wigg and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Frederick Mulley. During the discussion Ministers believed a five year vetting period was 'little enough safeguard for security' but recognised that, whatever the required residency, 'total security could not be achieved' and that the 'difficulty over the coloured immigrant in this respect was primarily a matter of his loyalty to this country', which applied to anyone trying to enter the Diplomatic Service. Concluding, Ministers acknowledged that background checks should go back ten

years, while negative vetting against MI5's records would only be five, agreeing that any proposed race discrimination legislation should not apply to security departments because 'of the essential requirements of security'.¹¹⁵

CONCLUSION

The passage of the Race Relations Act (1968) went much further than the 1965 Act in making it illegal to discriminate on grounds of colour, race or ethnicity on grounds of employment, housing and commercial services, restructuring the Race Relations Board and charging it with overseeing the new changes.¹¹⁶ For many, the reform was a landmark moment in race relations and a 'step in the right direction', even if engrained racism remained a blight on government. 'In the matter of race relations, we got it right', Callaghan recalled of his time as Home Secretary. 'We were ahead of public opinion', though, writing in 1987, Callaghan lamented the absence of black people in the 'higher ranks of the law, the Civil Service ... and the armed forces' – a problem that Callaghan had ironically allowed to continue.¹¹⁷ Though the legislation was a notable attempt to end discrimination, fears about wider immigration from the 'new' Commonwealth led Labour to tighten the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act, limiting entry to those with 'partial' ties to British residents.¹¹⁸ While seemingly pragmatic, the Race Relations Act was also shaped by the fears of security officials, something not referred to by Callaghan in his memoirs; it gave government the right to discriminate on grounds of 'safeguarding national security', granting departments the right to reject non-UK born nationals if a Minister of the Crown, having seen 'conclusive evidence', signed a certificate justifying the exemption, granting secret departments the ability to circumvent the legislation.¹¹⁹ In December 1967, Callaghan, then Home Secretary, told Cabinet that the Crown would be subject to race relations legislation, adding the laws would contain 'suitable safeguards for security and nationality rules', with government departments given immunity from 'court proceedings'.¹²⁰ Ministers on the Home Affairs Committee noted that, while the new legislation was needed to protect 'immigrants against discrimination' and for 'educating public opinion', exemptions were needed 'to preserve the rules as to nationality and length of residence for entry to the Civil Service and the Diplomatic Service and to

protect the Crown's discretion where security is involved', even if grievances could be brought before the strengthened Race Relations Board.¹²¹ By April, Ministers agreed that race relations laws would apply to secret departments, subject to caveats on grounds of nationality and security, but it was realised that the issue went far beyond the armed forces and Diplomatic Service, extending to 'employees of firms holding defence contracts for which specific provision would have to be made'.¹²² In industry, companies engaged on secret government contracts (known as 'List X' companies) were already subject to rules on political vetting, with details on race an underexplored area, even if files shed some light. In March 1968, officials raised the case of 'an Indian' applying for a job in a secure area of EMI that required security clearance. The company, knowing that it would take longer for non-British nationals to be vetted, told the individual 'there were no vacancies'.¹²³ Other companies were equally reluctant to employ 'coloured workers' for a range of issues, often under the thin veil of security. In May 1968, Mr. W.J. Jones, the Group Personnel Officer of electronics company Plessey Ltd., revealed his company only had five Commonwealth nationals from a total workforce of 7,500, justifying the lack of diversity on security. While officials tried to push for increased recruitment, Jones 'preceded to raise relatively minor issues such as unsuitability and opposition from other workers' and engaged in a 'final speech about not opening the gates to a flood of immigrants, the need for the firm to make a profit and the alleged follies of the welfare state and the Inland Revenue Department', with officials blaming the lack of black workers on the 'prejudice of the Group Personnel Officer and, possibly, of his Directors'.¹²⁴ Just how entrenched such views were across the 'white heat' of Britain's defence industry is unclear, though engrained organisational cultures and workforce attitudes may have made them widespread.¹²⁵ By June 1968, Labour's Financial Secretary to the Treasury Norman Lever told the House of Commons that security considerations across government, irrespective of 'race or colour', guarded against candidates 'not of United Kingdom origin', who could only be recruited based on whether they had 'assimilated himself into this country', judged by the period of residency with the 'ten year rule' necessary for departments dealing in classified work.¹²⁶ While it is unclear how many applicants were rejected based on the policy, or the number of times the departmental opt out was used, its application to the industrial and civil service may have made its use common – a topic in need of greater exploration by historians.

This article moves far beyond the issue of just security vetting itself. Whitehall attitudes to security transcended the themes of Britishness, loyalty to the state, and assimilation by migrants from the ‘new’ Commonwealth and their acceptance by officials. In all this race ‘mattered profoundly’.¹²⁷ As historian David Edgerton observes, the term ‘new’ Commonwealth had no legal or official standing, artfully conflating the ‘very different imperial stories of the West Indies, India and Africa and implied that the last to leave the empire had the least right to live in the United Kingdom’, but was used here to exclude first and even second generation migrants who had chosen Britain for their home. For those pushing the ‘politics of whiteness’ – effectively creating a clearly defined ‘national’ population, migrants from the ‘new’ Commonwealth constituted a threat.¹²⁸ As this study shows, though organisations such as GCHQ, the Foreign Office and defence departments had valid reasons for restricting the recruitment of newly arrived nationals from the ‘new’ Commonwealth, officials and departments elsewhere in government often justified their lack of diversity and restricted opportunities to black or Asian candidates for a range of issues – an observation that could equally be applied to other ‘security’ concerns about the employment of gay men and women in parts of the civil service after 1951.¹²⁹ In many cases, the subject of security was often loosely applied to preserve organisational culture and workforce morale, far removed from just ‘security’ alone. Though officials were eager to deny it, in-house attitudes towards race were effectively a ‘colour bar’ denying members of the so-called ‘Windrush generation’ and their children from officially participating in secret departments, with consequences for the social history of Britain’s civil service and even the intelligence agencies. In the case of MI5, deeply engrained racist and misogynistic views that had become an accepted part of office politics, even into the 1980s, had a profound impact on how the service and their counterparts across the intelligence community (as in the case of other Whitehall departments) were viewed by the BAME community. By the 1990s, when MI5 began to step up its recruitment of black, Asian and minority candidates, the service faced an uphill struggle. As one former MI5 officer recalled, ‘we consulted a specialist in the employment of BAME staff and she told us that many people from ethnic minority communities would think “there were crocodiles in the corridors” (ie it was too frightening to think about working there)’.¹³⁰ The article also shows that security vetting went far beyond the established areas of political extremes and the so-called

‘character defects’ (drunkenness, drug addiction, homosexuality or loose living) already identified into race – an aspect of security vetting previously overlooked, with today’s problems about BAME recruitment attributable in part to past policy. For those involved in the vetting process, race and family background mattered. Just like today, the backgrounds of vetting officers (described by the ISC as largely ‘white, male and middle-aged’¹³¹) shaped attitudes. Over time they became increasingly, as David Vincent writes, ‘unrepresentative of post-war society in general, [and] far more confined in their views and background’ with consequences for BAME representation in the senior levels of the state.¹³² In effect, the politics of the Cold War, departmental cultures, the needs of the security state, and wider attitudes towards race and integration shaped vetting policy. Though organisational attitudes have fundamentally changed – thankfully, there are no more ‘crocodiles in the corridors’, the legacy of security vetting and race remains hard to get away from and a subject in need of greater understanding today.

References

Secondary sources

- Aldrich, Richard J. 'GCHQ and SIGINT in the early Cold War, 1945-70'. *Intelligence & National Security* 16, no. 1, 2001.
- Andrew, Christopher. *The Defence of the Realm: The Authorised History of MI5*. London: Penguin, 2010.
- Andrew, Christopher and Vasili Mitrokhin. *The Mitrokhin Archive II: The KGB and the World*. London: Penguin, 2006.
- Beesley, Ian. *The Official History of the Cabinet Secretaries*. Oxon: Routledge, 2017.
- Branson, Noreen. *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain, 1927-1941*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1985.
- Branson, Noreen. *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain, 1941-1951*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1997.
- Brinson, Charmain and Richard Dove. *A Matter of Intelligence: MI5 and the Surveillance of Anti-Nazi Refugees, 1933-50*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014.
- Brown, Mark. 'Spy agencies are worst at learning from the past, say experts'. *The Guardian*, 8 October 2018.
- Bunce, Robin and Paul Field. *Renegade: The Life and Times of Darcus Howe*. London: Bloomsbury, 2017.
- Callaghan, John. *Cold War, Crisis and Conflict: The CPGB, 1951-68*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 2003.
- Campbell, John. *Roy Jenkins: A Well-Rounded Life*. London: Vintage, 2015.

- Cell, John W. 'Colonial Rule' in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Vol. IV, The Twentieth Century*, edited by Judith H. Brown and Wm. Roger Louis. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Crawford, Charles. 'The love that dare not speak its name in the Foreign Office'. *The Independent*, 30 March 2010.
- Davies, Philip H.J. 'Twilight of the Joint Intelligence Committee'. *Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 24, no. 3, 2011.
- Easter, David. 'Code words, euphemisms and what they can tell us about Cold War Anglo-American Communications Intelligence'. *Intelligence & National Security* 27, no. 6, 2012.
- Easter, David. 'GCHQ and British External Policy in the 1960s'. *Intelligence & National Security* 23, no. 5, October 2008.
- Edgerton, David. *The Rise and Fall of the British Nation: A Twentieth Century History*. London: Allen Lane, 2018.
- Edgerton, David. *Warfare State: Britain, 1920-1970*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Emsley, Clive. *The Great British Bobby: A History of British Policing from the 18th Century to the Present*. London: Quercus, 2009.
- Ewing, Ann. 'Administering India: The Indian Civil Service'. *History Today* 32, no. 6, June 1982.
- 'Former Directors General'. <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/former-dgs>.
- 'GCHQ: Minority Report', BBC Radio 4, broadcast 27 November 2016. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0832fq3>.
- Harris, Clive. 'Configurations of racism: the civil service, 1945-60'. *Race & Class* 33, no. 1, 1991.
- Gildea, Robert. *Empires of the Mind: The Colonial Past and the Politics of the Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Goulbourne, Harry. *Race Relations in Britain since 1945*. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1998.

- Hannigan, Robert. 'The secret story of the Jewish codebreakers who helped win the war'. *The Jewish Chronicle*, 26 January 2017. <https://www.thejc.com/lifestyle/features/jewish-codebreakers-who-help-ed-win-the-war-1.431345>.
- Harrison, Brian. *Seeking a Role: The United Kingdom, 1951-1970*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2011.
- Hennessy, Peter. *The Secret State: Preparing for the Worst, 1945 – 2010*. London: Penguin, 2010.
- Hennessy, Peter and Gail Brownfeld. 'Britain's Cold War security purge: The origins of positive vetting'. *The Historical Journal* 25, no. 4, 1982.
- Hennessey, Thomas and Claire Thomas. *Spooks: The Unofficial History of MI5*. Stroud: Amberley, 2009.
- Hollingsworth, Mark and Richard Norton-Taylor. *Blacklist: Inside Story of Political Vetting*. Chatto & Windus, 1988.
- Johnson, Chris. 'Guerrilla Ganja Gun Girls: Policing Black Revolutionaries from Notting Hill to Laventille'. *Gender & History* 26, no. 3, November 2014.
- Leppard, David. "'Racism" at GCHQ is undermining the fight against terror'. *The Sunday Times*, 11 July 2010. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/racism-at-gchq-is-undermining-fight-against-terror-zh3gn9swx6w>.
- Lomas, Daniel W.B. 'Alan Turing was one of many persecuted by Whitehall for their sexuality', *The Conversation*, 21 April 2016.
- Lomas, Daniel W.B. *Intelligence, Security and the Attlee Governments, 1945-1951 – An uneasy relationship?* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017.
- Lomas, Daniel W.B. and Christopher J. Murphy, 'Security or Scandal: Homosexuality and the Foreign Office, 1945 – 1991', in *Cultivating the Garden: The Five Eyes, and the Security Paradigm, 1946-1977*, edited by in Dennis Molinaro. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, forthcoming.

- Lowe, Rodney. *The Official History of the British Civil Service: Reforming the Civil Service, Volume 1: The Fulton Years, 1966-81*. Oxon: Routledge, 2011.
- Luff, Jennifer. 'Covert and Overt Operations: Interwar political policing in the United States and the United Kingdom'. *American Historical Review*, June 2017
- MacAskill, Ewen. 'UK spy agencies criticised for lack of black leaders'. *The Guardian*, 18 July 2018.
- Mason, David. *Race and Ethnicity in Modern Britain, Second Edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- 'MI6 speaks to Diversity Dashboard'. 25 October 2017.
<https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/article/section/civil-service-careers/mi6-speaks-bhm/>.
- Morgan, Kenneth O. *The People's Peace: British History, 1945-1990*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Murphy, Philip. *The Empire's New Clothes: The Myth of the Commonwealth*. London: Hurst and Company, 2018.
- Olusoga, David. *Black and British: A Forgotten History*. London: Pan Books, 2016.
- Onley, James. 'The Raj reconsidered: British India's informal empire and spheres of influence in Asia and Africa'. *Asian Affairs*. XL, no. 1, March 2009.
- Parveen, Nazia. 'MI5 believed black people posed security risk, papers reveal'. *The Guardian*, 15 October 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/oct/15/mi5-believed-black-people-posed-security-risk-papers-reveal>.
- Prince, Simon. "'Do what the Afro-Americans are doing": Black Power and the start of the Northern Ireland Troubles'. *Journal of Contemporary History* 50, no. 3, 2015.
- Robbins, Keith. *The Eclipse of a Great Power, 1870-1975*. London: Longman, 1983.
- Sengupta, Kim. 'MI5 and MI6 have "glaring lack" of ethnic minority and female staff at senior levels, report concludes'. *The Independent*, 18 July 2018.
- Smith, Anna Marie. *New Right Discourse on Race & Sexuality: Britain 1968-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

- Southern, James. *Black Skin, Whitehall: Race and the Foreign Office, 1945-2018*. History Notes: Issue 21, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, 2018.
- Southern, James. *Homosexuality at the Foreign Office, 1967-1991*. History Notes: Issue 19, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, 2017.
- Toy, Rosemary Florence and Christopher Smith. 'Women in the shadow war: gender, class and MI5 in the Second World War'. *Women's History Review* 27, no. 5, 2018.
- Vincent, David. *The Culture of Secrecy: Britain, 1832-1998*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Walton, Calder. *Empire of Secrets: British Intelligence, the Cold War and the Twilight of Empire*. London: Harper Press, 2013.
- Wild, Rosalind. "'Black was the colour of our fight": Black power in Britain, 1955-1976'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Sheffield, August 2008.
- Young, John W. 'George Wigg, the Wilson government and the 1966 report into security in the diplomatic service and GCHQ'. *Intelligence & National Security*, 14, no. 3, 1999, 203-5.

¹ HC 1297, 'Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament: Diversity and Inclusion in the UK Intelligence Community', 18 July 2018, 1. On the coverage of the report, read Sengupta, 'MI5 and MI6 have "glaring lack" of ethnic minority and female staff at senior levels, report concludes' and MacAskill, 'UK spy agencies criticised for lack of black leaders'.

² HC 1297, 14. On ethnicity across government, read *A Brilliant Civil Service: becoming the UK's most inclusive employer – The Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy*. London: Open Government Licence, 2017, 13.

³ HC 1297, 15.

⁴ On current UK vetting policy, see 'Guidance: United Kingdom Security Vetting', 3 July 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/security-vetting-and-clearance>.

⁵ HC 1297, 29-30.

⁶ Sengupta, 'MI5 and MI6 have "glaring lack" of ethnic minority and female staff'.

⁷ HC 970. 'Women in the UK intelligence community: A report by the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament', 5 March 2015, 13.

⁸ On the issue of historical amnesia, read Brown, 'Spy agencies are worst at learning from the past, say experts'. The report covers a talk by MI5 authorised historian Prof. Christopher Andrew.

⁹ Read Emsley, *The Great British Bobby*, 263-5, 269.

¹⁰ SIS's Chief Sir Alex Younger gave an interview to the Black History Month website, 'MI6 speaks to Diversity Dashboard'.

¹¹ For an overview, read Hennessy, *The Secret State*, 81-104, Hollingsworth and Norton-Taylor, *Blacklist*.

¹² On early vetting, see Luff, 'Covert and Overt Operations', 748-9.

-
- ¹³ Read Lomas, *Intelligence, Security and the Attlee Governments*, 201.
- ¹⁴ Cmd. 9715. *Statement of the Findings of the Conference of Privy Councillors on Security*. London: HMSO, March 1956, 3.
- ¹⁵ On the Commonwealth and Britain, read Murphy, *The Empire's New Clothes*.
- ¹⁶ Goulbourne, *Race Relations in Britain since 1945*, 25.
- ¹⁷ Harrison, *Seeking a Role: The United Kingdom, 1951-1970*, 217.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ For an overview of the figures, read Haskey, John. 'Population review: (8) The ethnic minority and overseas-born populations of Great Britain'. Office for National Statistics, HMSO, 1997, 13-30. On the wider impact for British society, read Gildea, *Empires of the Mind*, 123-128.
- ²⁰ Harris, 'Configurations of racism: the civil service, 1945-60', 3. I am especially grateful to Miss Sophie Rowlinson for bringing this to my attention.
- ²¹ The National Archives, UK (TNA): CAB 158/4, J.I.C. (48) 98 (Final), 13 September 1948.
- ²² On the rules, read TNA: FO 1093/366, Memorandum on the main provisions of the British Nationality Act 1948.
- ²³ The Indian Civil Service numbered around 1200 and was the 'elite' of administration in British India. Thought the first Indians were appointed in 1869, it remained overwhelmingly British in composition until the very eve of decolonisation. By 1919, the Government of India had committed itself to the gradual 'Indianisation' of the service anticipating the evolution to Dominion status; by 1939 one quarter of officials were Indian born, by 1947 over half (see Cell, 'Colonial Rule', 235 and Ewing, 'Administering India', 43-8).
- ²⁴ The Indian Political Service was effectively the diplomatic corps of British India, running a number of posts in the states and territories surrounding British India. As with the Indian Civil Service, the IPS was predominantly white (for more, see Onley, 'The Raj reconsidered').
- ²⁵ Harris, 'Configurations of racism', 7.
- ²⁶ Ibid., 8.
- ²⁷ See TNA: CAB 176/19, P. Gleadell to Secretary, Cypher Security Committee, 27 August 1948 and TNA: CAB 158/4, J.I.C. (48) 98 (Final), 13 September 1948.
- ²⁸ TNA: T 216/987, SM (0) (PS) (67), Access to classified information by coloured staff employed by departments in the UK. Note by the Security Service. 27 June 1967.
- ²⁹ TNA: CAB 134/3253, SM (67) 3, 'Employment on classified work of staff and service personnel not of United Kingdom origin', September 1967.
- ³⁰ TNA: T 216/987, SM (0) (PS) (67), 3rd Meeting, 17 July 1967.
- ³¹ TNA: CAB 134/3253, SM (67) 3, 'Employment on classified work of staff and service personnel not of United Kingdom origin', September 1967. On the early development of positive vetting (or PVing) read Hennessy and Brownfeld, 'Britain's Cold War security purge', 965-973.
- ³² TNA: CAB 134/3256, SM (0) (67) 2nd Meeting, 24 May 1967.
- ³³ TNA: CAB 134/3256, SM (0) (67) 3rd Meeting, 28 July 1967.
- ³⁴ TNA: T 216/987, SM (0) (PM) (67) 49, 'Use of UK EYES ONLY marking', 11 July 1967.
- ³⁵ The list of 'security departments' was wide ranging and included the Cabinet Office, Central Office of Information, Ministry of Defence, Diplomatic Wireless Service, Department of Economic Affairs, Diplomatic Service (but not the Passport Office), Government Communications Headquarters, London Communications – Electronic Security Agency, Home Office, Post Office Northern Ireland (Clerical Officer and Clerical Assistants), Director of Public Prosecutions, Ministry of Public Building and Works, Ministry of Technology, Treasury, Board of Trade, Treasury Solicitor (Professional Classes Only) and the Ministry of Overseas Development (TNA: T 216/987, 'Appendix: List of Security Departments'). Under earlier vetting regulations Whitehall had been divided into 'safe' and 'unsafe' departments (see TNA: CAB 130/20, GEN 183/1, 'The employment of civil servants, etc. exposed to Communist influence', 29 May 1947).
- ³⁶ On the act, read Olusoga, *Black and British*, 495-6.
- ³⁷ TNA: FO 366/3560, Civil Service Commission: General Information for Candidates; TNA: LAB 10/3402, nationality rules.
- ³⁸ Details regarding SIS recruitment can be found in the Seymour Report, read TNA: CAB 301/133, The Secret Intelligence Service: Report of Enquiry by Sir Horace Seymour, G.C.M.G, C.V.O., June 1952.
- ³⁹ TNA: CSC 5/1139, J.H. Somerville (GCHQ) to C.J. Hayes (Civil Service Commission), 27 February 1956; Southern, *Black Skin, Whitehall: Race and the Foreign Office*, 8.
- ⁴⁰ TNA: CSC 5/1139, J.H. Somerville (GCHQ) to C.J. Hayes (Civil Service Commission), 27 February 1956. For the rules on nationality, see TNA: FO 366/3540, Civil Service Commission: General Information for Competition Candidates.
- ⁴¹ TNA: CSC 5/1139, J.H. Somerville (GCHQ) to C.J. Hayes (Civil Service Commission), 27 February 1956. On Somerville, read 'Obituary: John Somerville'. *The Times*, 1 December 2005.
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/john-somerville-llms35ppt5p>.

⁴² Private information.

⁴³ In 1961, a Chinese spy ring was discovered in Hong Kong, including a translator working on SIGINT collection at RAF Little Sai Wan (Easter, 'GCHQ and British External Policy in the 1960s', 688).

⁴⁴ See, TNA, HW 80/7, 'Appendix B: Principles of Security and Dissemination'.

⁴⁵ For an excellent study on COMINT security, read Easter, 'Code words, euphemisms and what they can tell us about Cold War Anglo-American Communications Intelligence', 875-895.

⁴⁶ Aldrich, 'GCHQ and SIGINT in the early Cold War, 1945-70', 90-91.

⁴⁷ The reference to GCHQ can be found in TNA: T 216/987, SM (0) (PS) (67), Access to classified information by coloured staff employed by departments in the UK. Note by the Security Service. 27 June 1967.

⁴⁸ Southern, *Black Skin, Whitehall: Race and the Foreign Office, 1945-2018*, 5.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁰ For an overview, read Goulbourne, *Race Relations in Britain since 1945*.

⁵¹ Olusoga, *Black and British*, 511.

⁵² Robbins, *The Eclipse of a Great Power*, 286.

⁵³ TNA: CAB 129/120/23, C. (65) 23, 'Racial discrimination and incitement to racial hatred', 17 February 1965.

On Jenkins and the legislation see Campbell, *Roy Jenkins*.

⁵⁴ TNA: T 216/987, SM (0) (PS) (67), Access to classified information by coloured staff employed by departments in the UK. Note by the Security Service. 27 June 1967.

⁵⁵ TNA: CAB 134/3256, SM(0) (67) 2nd Meeting, 24 May 1967.

⁵⁶ TNA: T 216/987, SM (O) (67) 10, Employment of Coloured Staff by Defence Departments, May 1967 and T 216/987, note by A. Duke, May 1967.

⁵⁷ TNA: CAB 134/3256, SM (0) (67) 2nd Meeting, 24 May 1967.

⁵⁸ TNA: T 216/987, SM (O) (67) 10, Employment of Coloured Staff by Defence Departments, May 1967 and T 216/987 and TNA: T 216/987, A. Duke to Mr. Pitchforth, 15 June 1967.

⁵⁹ TNA: FO 366/3540 D.H. Fowler to Mr. McGhie (Foreign Office), 11 November 1965.

⁶⁰ On the security concerns of the Foreign Office towards gay men, read Lomas and Murphy, 'Security or Scandal: Homosexuality and the Foreign Office, 1945 – 1991'. Read also Lomas, 'Alan Turing was one of many persecuted by Whitehall for their sexuality', Crawford, 'The love that dare not speak its name in the Foreign Office' and Southern, *Homosexuality at the Foreign Office*.

⁶¹ TNA: FO 366/3540, McGhie to Fowler, 11 November 1965.

⁶² On the Foreign Office Security Department, read 'The organisation for security in the diplomatic service and Government Communications Headquarters', reproduced in Young, 'George Wigg, the Wilson government and the 1966 report into security in the diplomatic service and GCHQ', 203-5.

⁶³ TNA: FO 366/3540, Olver to McGhie, 3 December 1965.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ TNA: FO 366/3540, P.E.S. Finney to Morgan, 4 May 1966.

⁶⁶ For Fergusson's recollections, read British Diplomatic Oral History Programme (Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge), 'Sir Ewen Fergusson, GCMG 1993 (KCMG 1987); GCVO 1992', 5.

⁶⁷ TNA: FO 366/3540, paper by E.A.J. Fergusson, 20 September 1966.

⁶⁸ TNA: T 261/988, R.J. Smith to A. Duke, 27 September 1967.

⁶⁹ TNA: FO 366/3540, 'Coloured workers in the Passport Office', 7 December 1966.

⁷⁰ TNA: FO 366/3540, Ministry of Technology: Employment of Coloured People'.

⁷¹ TNA: FO 366/3540, Note – H.M. Treasury.

⁷² TNA: T 216/988, WP 48/07, 13 September 1967.

⁷³ TNA: T 216/988, E.A. Slater to A Duke, 2 October 1967.

⁷⁴ TNA: T 216/988, David Heaton (Cabinet Office) to Alex Duke (Treasury), 7 September 1967.

⁷⁵ TNA: FO 366/3540, U.K. Atomic Energy Authority: Employment of Coloured People.

⁷⁶ TNA: T 216/988, N.E. Robins to A Duke, 14 September 1967.

⁷⁷ TNA: T 216/987, Purnell to Pitchforth, 19 June 1967.

⁷⁸ Smith, *New Right Discourse on Race & Sexuality*, 60.

⁷⁹ TNA: CAB 134/3256, 'Employment of coloured staff by defence departments: Memorandum by the chair of the Personnel Security Committee', 18 May 1967.

⁸⁰ TNA: CAB 134/3253, SM (67) 3, 'Employment on classified work of coloured staff and service personnel not of United Kingdom origin', 29 September 1967. The Ministry of Aviation, Department for Economic Affairs, and Treasury each recruited just one black officer in the clerical class between 1964-1966. The Home Office recruited just three over the same period (see TNA: T 216/987, Candidates for appointment to the Civil Service Assignment of coloured candidates to Security Departments').

⁸¹ Lowe, *The Official History of the British Civil Service*, 337.

⁸² TNA: CAB 134/3256, S.W. (00) (67) 14, 'Access to classified information by staff not of United Kingdom origin: Note by the chairman of the Personnel Security Committee', 24 July 1967.

-
- ⁸³ On the committee structure, read Davies, 'Twilight of the Joint Intelligence Committee', 427-446. The committee is briefly mentioned in Beesley, *The Official History of the Cabinet Secretaries*, 112.
- ⁸⁴ TNA: CAB 134/3256, SM (0) 2nd Meeting, 24 May 1967. For context, see Parveen, 'MI5 believed black people posed security risk, papers reveal'.
- ⁸⁵ TNA: T 216/987, SM (0) (PS) (67), Access to classified information by coloured staff employed by departments in the UK. Note by the Security Service. 27 June 1967.
- ⁸⁶ Ibid. For a detailed account of the KGB's activities in Africa, see Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive II: The KGB and the World*, 423-470.
- ⁸⁷ Read Callaghan, *Cold War, Crisis and Conflict*, 130-138 and Branson, *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain, 1927-1941*, 58 and Branson, *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain, 1941-1951*.
- ⁸⁸ Johnson, 'Guerrilla Ganja Gun Girls', 668.
- ⁸⁹ Read Prince, 'Do what the Afro-Americans are doing', 531, 533. See also Bunce and Field, *Renegade: The Life and Times of Darcus Howe*, 48 and Wild's excellent, "'Black was the colour of our fight": Black power in Britain, 1955-1976'.
- ⁹⁰ Both the Foreign Office and Ministry of Supply security departments recruited from former members of the colonial police services, see TNA: CAB 21/4035, Annex: Background of present team of Investigating Officers employed by Ministry of Supply, February 1956.
- ⁹¹ TNA: WO 258/91, 'Qualifications of the Director-General, Security Service'. On MI5's imperial links, read Walton, *Empire of Secrets*, 26-27.
- ⁹² See Andrew, *Defence of the Realm*, 331.
- ⁹³ Ibid., 560. Walker was also reportedly the first Roman Catholic DG having converted from Church of England (Private information).
- ⁹⁴ Rimington, Stella. *Open Secret: The Autobiography of the Former Director General of MI5*. London: Arrow, 2002, 101, 120.
- ⁹⁵ TNA: KV 4/471, entry for 20 December 1949.
- ⁹⁶ TNA: KV 4/472, entry for 21 December 1950.
- ⁹⁷ Private information.
- ⁹⁸ Rimington, *Open Secret*, 101. See also, Hennessey and Thomas, *Spooks: The Unofficial History of MI5*, 560.
- ⁹⁹ Toy and Smith, 'Women in the shadow war', 688-706.
- ¹⁰⁰ 'Former Directors General'.
- ¹⁰¹ Private Information.
- ¹⁰² See Walton, *Empire of Secrets*, 87.
- ¹⁰³ Brinson and Dove, *A Matter of Intelligence*, 18.
- ¹⁰⁴ Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm*, 363.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid. By contrast, GCHQ did recruit Jewish officials. In wartime, GC&CS's war station at Bletchley Park included a number of Jewish staff, some continuing to work post-war for GCHQ, especially Rolf Nockwith. Hannigan, 'The secret story of the Jewish codebreakers who helped win the war'.
- ¹⁰⁶ Private Information.
- ¹⁰⁷ Private Information.
- In 2010 a report leaked to *The Sunday Times* found there was a 'very small pool' of black and Asian staff at GCHQ. Several dozen staff interviewed for the review suggested there was a racist culture. Among the complaints recorded were: 'I wasn't born here, and although I have been security cleared I am constantly challenged about my loyalty to Britain by my colleagues'. Another said: 'The security officers ask questions which are culturally inappropriate, insensitive and offensive'. Read Leppard, "'Racism" at GCHQ is undermining the fight against terror'.
- ¹⁰⁸ TNA: T 216/987, SM (0) (PS) (67), Access to classified information by coloured staff employed by departments in the UK. Note by the Security Service. 27 June 1967.
- ¹⁰⁹ TNA: T 216/987, SM (O) (PS) (67) 10, 'UK employment of non-UK staff in the Ministry of Defence and the services: Note by the Ministry of Defence', 12 July 1967.
- ¹¹⁰ TNA: T 216/987, SM (0) (PM) (67) 49, 'Use of UK EYES ONLY marking', 11 July 1967.
- ¹¹¹ TNA: T 216/987, SM (0) (PS) (67), 3rd Meeting, 17 July 1967.
- ¹¹² TNA: CAB 134/3253, SM (67) 3, 'Employment on classified work of coloured staff and service personnel not of United Kingdom origin', 29 September 1967.
- ¹¹³ Bunce and Field, *Renegade: The Life and Times of Darcus Howe*, 48. On definitions, read Mason, *Race and Ethnicity in Modern Britain, Second Edition*.
- ¹¹⁴ TNA: CAB 134/3253, SM (67) 3, 'Employment on classified work of coloured staff and service personnel not of United Kingdom origin', 29 September 1967.
- ¹¹⁵ TNA: CAB 134/3253, SM (67) 1st Meeting, 19 October 1967.
- ¹¹⁶ Race Relations Act, 1968. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1968/71/enacted>.

-
- ¹¹⁷ Callaghan, James. *Time & Chance*. London: Collins, 1987, 269. On the impact, read Goulbourne, *Race Relations*, 102.
- ¹¹⁸ Read, Morgan, *The People's Peace*, 286.
- ¹¹⁹ 'Acts done to safeguard national security' in Race Relations Act 1968.
- ¹²⁰ TNA: CAB 129/134/25, C(67) 197, Race Relations Legislation: Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, 15 December 1967.
- ¹²¹ TNA: CAB 129/135/12, Race Relations Legislation: Memorandum by the First Secretary of State, 8 January 1968.
- ¹²² TNA: CAB 128/43/4, CC (68) 4th Conclusions, April 1968.
- ¹²³ TNA: LAB 10/3402, F Taylor to Ministry of Labour, 4 March 1968.
- ¹²⁴ TNA: LAB 10/3402, Race Relations: The Plessey Co. Ltd., Ilford Group of Factories.
- ¹²⁵ For a study of the defence industry, read Edgerton, *Warfare State: Britain, 1920-1970*.
- ¹²⁶ Hansard, HC Deb 28 June 1968, vol. 767, c. 148W.
- ¹²⁷ Edgerton, *The Rise and Fall of the British Nation*, 258.
- ¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 261.
- ¹²⁹ See, Lomas and Murphy, 'Security or Scandal: Homosexuality and the Foreign Office, 1945 – 1991'.
- ¹³⁰ Private information. These views echo those of potential BAME recruits to GCHQ, covered by BBC Radio 4's 'GCHQ: Minority Report', broadcast 27 November 2016.
- ¹³¹ HC 1297, 29-30.
- ¹³² Read Vincent, *The Culture of Secrecy: Britain, 1832-1998*, 205.