

O Tempora, O Mores!

More British Race Riots

Almost exactly a month after the town of Oldham went up in flames in the worst British race riots in 15 years, the nearby town of Burnley saw three days of street battles between Asians (mostly Pakistanis and Bangladeshis) and whites. The trouble began late Friday night, June 22, when Asians asked



white neighbors to turn down the music at a noisy party. There was a standoff, with whites and Asians throwing bricks and rocks at each other, and an off-duty Asian taxi driver got a broken cheek bone.

The next day, rumors spread that the man had been beaten to death, and that police had been slow to help. Asians went into the street looking for trouble



This was once a grocery store.

and met whites happy to oblige. Rioters battled each other and burned cars, and a mob of Asians broke out the windows of a pub they said was a “racist” hang-out.

Sunday was even more violent. Asians poured into the streets after rumors whites were going to invade one of their neighborhoods. They burned

down a pub and threw petrol bombs at the police. For two-and-a-half hours, riot police kept whites and Asians apart as they burned cars and looted stores. It took hundreds of officers and a helicopter overhead to keep mob violence from going into a fourth day.

On Wednesday, a car-load of Asians pulled up beside several whites and taunted them. The car pulled away but returned and ran down one of the whites. “This was a very dangerous incident and the victim suffered a broken leg, but he could have been much more seriously injured or killed,” said a spokesman for police, who consider the incident a racial assault. Two days later, in the nearby town of Accrington, the home of an Asian family was set on fire for what may have been racial reasons.

Burnley has a relatively small Asian population—about five percent—and did not have the reputation for tension that had put Oldham in the news months before the rioting began. Residents claim race relations had generally been good, but not any more. “We weren’t racists before, but we are now,” says a white woman who watched “a group of pakis” set fire to a pub. The injured taxi driver is said to be so frightened he plans to go back to Pakistan.

Government ministers and city leaders tried to blame the fighting on the British National Party (BNP) and outside agitators, but police reported no evidence of this. Maria Coulton was landlady of the Duke of York, one of the pubs burned to a shell. “This is a racist attack on

white people in my eyes,” she says. “I told the police I was afraid my pub was going to get torched and they assured me it wasn’t. The police said to stay put, and this is the result. I have absolutely nothing left. I have had to borrow clothes and shoes. My children have lost their toys.” She says that if she had not moved her children out of the pub in defiance of police assurances they would have

died in the fire. “We just don’t know who to blame,” she says. “We vote Labour. We have never met anyone in the BNP.” [Ed Cropely, Noise Row at Root of English Race Riot: Minister, Reuters, June 25, 2001. Angelique Chrisafis, Years of Harmony Wrecked in Days, Guardian, June 26, 2001. Ed Johnson, British Police Prove Hit-and-Run, AP, June 27, 2001. Chris Hastings and Charlotte Edwardes, BBC Race Row Over Burnley Today Show, Electronic Telegraph, July 1, 2001.]

Last Judgment

Giovanni Da Modena was a 15th-century Italian painter, whose “The Last Judgment” graces a wall in the cathedral of San Petronio in Bologna. A group calling itself the union of Italian Muslims has launched a campaign against the priceless fresco because it includes a tiny representation of the prophet Mohammed being cast into hell. The group wrote a letter to the pope and to Cardinal Giacomo Biffi, Archbishop of Bologna, insisting that the “barbarous” fresco be taken down.

They sent their letter to the wrong Archbishop. Cardinal Biffi has been outspoken in his opposition to Muslim immigrants who, he says, do not assimilate. He calls them a threat to the values of Christian Europe, and has urged European governments to encourage counter-immigration from Catholic countries. As for the fresco, a spokesman says it is “absurd suddenly to discover after 600 years that our most famous treasure is offensive to the Islamic religion.” [Richard Owen, Muslims Say Fresco Must be Destroyed, Times (London), June 29, 2001.]

Fighting Back at Ford

John Kovacs, 36, has worked in personnel for Ford Motor Credit Co. since 1992. He saw so much blatant discrimination against white men that on March 13 he wrote a letter to Ford chairman, William Clay Ford, explaining that these practices are illegal. He got no reply. Instead, in early April he was suspended from his job and is now suing in Wayne County Circuit Court. His filing papers

include many internal Ford documents that certainly give the impression of discrimination. Job openings were often designated “diversity candidate preferred” or “female candidate preferred.” Also, Ford had a system of “stretch” promotions, which meant someone moving up would require special assistance in the new job, and documents show white men never got “stretch” promotions.

For Mr. Kovacs the breaking point came during a November 13 meeting when a high-ranking personnel officer announced that in order to meet “diversity” goals, no more white men could be hired or promoted at management levels for the rest of the year. According to the minutes, this meant “delaying the hiring, promotion and referral of white males unless there is a good business case to bring them in by year end,” and also “the pulling ahead of any promotion, upgrades, referral etc. of non-white” candidates. It was Mr. Kovacs’ job to announce this new policy to management, and he couldn’t bring himself to do it.

Ford recognizes the high stakes in this case, and is fighting it on every front. “Ford’s best hope is to make it so miserable for this guy that he goes away or he settles,” says Ken Kovach, a professor of industrial relations at George Mason University. Mr. Kovacs swears he will fight to the end. [Mark Truby, Whistleblower Takes on Ford, Detroit News, July 1, 2001.]

Gruesome Prescription

On June 7, a federal district judge approved a \$192.5 million settlement in a class-action discrimination suit filed against Coca-Cola by black employees, each of whom will receive an average of about \$38,000. Now, as part of the settlement, the company has hired an outside committee to which it must submit all personnel policies and decisions. The list of members reads like the all-star team for racial preferences. Chairing the committee is Alexis Herman, a black woman who was William Clinton’s Labor Secretary, and whose confirmation was nearly derailed by corruption charges. Another member of the committee is Bill Lann Lee, former Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the Clinton Justice Department. Mr. Lee is perhaps the most fanatical supporter of discrimination against whites

ever to hold that job. Other members whose views are easy to guess are Gilbert F. Casellas, former chair of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and Rene Redwood, who was executive director of the federal Glass



Ceiling Commission that investigated alleged job discrimination against women. The other two members are M. Anthony Burns, chairman of Ryder System Inc., the Miami rent-a-truck company, and Marjorie Knowles, former dean of Georgia State University College of Law. Their ardor for race preferences is not so well known, but by all appearances Coca-Cola has hired a group of people who will make sure the company practices precisely the kinds of discrimination for which Ford Credit is being sued. Douglas Daft, Coca-Cola’s chairman and chief executive, claims to be ecstatic: “With this group of distinguished, committed individuals on board, I am very pleased that the task force will soon be able to begin working with us to accelerate the company’s progress on this vital front.” [Justin Bachman, Task Force to Oversee Coke Hirings, AP, July 2, 2001.]

Law Among the Blacks

Until recently Gene Gardner was police chief of the largely-black town of Midway, Florida. In April, he was arrested after a federal investigation determined he had been selling confiscated weapons and other seized property, and pocketing the money. Mr. Gardner hawked off so much merchandise he was able to convert one evidence room into a “lounge area.” When an officer asked what happened to all the evidence, he is reported to have said, “Sold, brother, sold.” Mr. Gardner’s lawyer, also black, says no crime was committed because Mr. Gardner did not realize what he was doing was illegal. “The evidence will show,” he argues, “there was no wrongdoing intentionally done,” so his client

should go free. [James Rosica, Chiefs Never Meant to Break the Law, Tallahassee Democrat, June 19, 2001.]

Preserving the Latino Core

The Lindbergh area of Atlanta has rising land prices that make it attractive for redevelopment. A group of apartment complexes built for young couples who came to Atlanta just after the Second World War is likely to be replaced soon with high-rise condominiums and fancy shops. The only obstacle appears to be that since the 1960s the apartments have been occupied by blue-collar Hispanics, many of them from Cuba. In a recent front-page story, the Atlanta newspaper wrote lovingly about the area, and quoted Teodoro Maus, the former consul general of Mexico: “If it’s lost, we are going to lose a lot more than just some apartments. This would be a great place for maintaining what its character should be.” Mr. Maus went on to say: “Lindbergh is not just those apartments for Latinos. It’s a whole concept. It’s a Latino core. There’s a character there.”

Miguel Fernandez, 89, who has lived in the same Lindbergh apartment for the last 31 years explains why it would be a tragedy for the renters to be scattered by redevelopment: “Spanish-speaking people prefer to be around other Spanish-speaking people. It’s more comfortable.” Somehow we cannot imagine a similarly sympathetic article about the imminent disappearance of any white neighborhood anywhere in America. [D.L. Bennett, Lindbergh Boom Puts Latino Enclave at Risk, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, July 2, 2001, p. 1A.]

Trouble in Paradise

The French island of St. Martin in the Caribbean is a well-run little corner of overseas Europe. Now, lured by permissive attitudes, such as allowing anyone to enroll in the local schools no questions asked, it is overrun with illegal aliens. French officials now estimate that illegals outnumber natives, and newcomers have brought crime and other problems that threaten the island’s number one industry: tourism. “We need to consider that it is impacting this little island and the economy and the society so badly that something will have to be done,” says Daniella Jeffry, a leading political figure. “The unemployment

rate is very high, it goes up to 30 percent," she adds.

Illegals happily send their children to the excellent public schools. "Of course it presents a problem because of the various origins of these people and their various linguistic backgrounds," says Frantz Gumbs, the vice-principal of Marigot College. "Spanish for those coming from the Dominican Republic, English for those coming from the British Commonwealth and Creole for those coming from Haiti." The students put the problem more bluntly: "We have too much violence and fighting and everything," says one girl. "With knives, guns—everything," adds another. [Jon Sopol, Caribbean Island Attracts Illegal Immigrants, BBC, June 26, 2001.]

'Testing' Diversity

Asian students in New York City are upset that the state of New York scheduled this year's Regent English exam on January 24. "Couldn't they have picked a better day for the test than the Chinese New Year?" asked Michael Kwon, a senior at Stuyvesant High School. Mr. Kwon and 500 other students circulated a petition to have the date of the exam changed out of sensitivity to Asian culture. The exam went ahead as scheduled, but the state will try to do better next year. "We have to be very sensitive to

calendars and holy days that people celebrate," said Rowena Karsh, deputy superintendent for high schools in Queens. "Everyone has a different day and a different way they celebrate."

[Leonard Greene, Cultural Holidays Pose Big Problem, New York Post, April 8, 2001.]



Tipping the Scales

Immigrants are flocking to Miami-area Publix supermarkets, but not to buy groceries. Instead they throw luggage on the free scales the supermarkets set out so customers can weigh themselves. The idea is to avoid excess-baggage charges on goods immigrants plan to take back to relatives when they fly home for vacation—airlines have special baggage surcharges on summer flights to South America and the Caribbean. Hispanics haul suitcases, garbage bags, boxes and duffel bags to the stores and load them

on the scales. If there is an excess they pull things out and repack right in the front of the store.

"We're frustrated," said Carmen Millares, community affairs manager for Publix's Miami division. "The scales are for people, not for suitcases. They were made to be stepped on gently. When people toss heavy bags on them, they break them." Publix is considering putting up signs that prohibit luggage weighing, or removing the scales entirely. When asked why the Hispanic immigrants weigh their luggage at white-owned Publix rather than at Sedano's, a Hispanic South Florida grocery chain, a spokesman for Sedano's said their scales "cost a quarter and they're not that accurate." [Annabelle de Gale, Publix Scales Prove Too Tempting for Travelers, Miami Herald, June 24, 2001.]

Corporate Folly

The newest board member of Sears, Roebuck and Co. is Raul Yzaguirre, president of the National Council of La Raza. La Raza, which means "the race" in Spanish, is a Hispanic advocacy group, heavily funded by liberal foundations, and champions affirmative action, bilingual education, mass immigration, and more hate crime laws. It claims immigration control violates civil rights, and described the 1996 effort by Congress to cut back on handouts to immigrants as "a disgrace to American values." In announcing Mr. Yzaguirre's appointment to the board, Sears Chairman and CEO Alan J. Lacy said, "Raul Yzaguirre's experienced leadership will bring a valued perspective to the business opportunities and public policy issues we face today." [La Raza Press Release, June 7, 2001.]

Supreme Folly

On June 18, the Supreme Court let stand an appeals court ruling that overturned the murder conviction of Wilbert Rideau, a confessed bank robber and murderer, because the Louisiana grand jury that indicted him had only one black on it. The appeals court ruling concluded this was racial bias—contradicting two state rulings. Mr. Rideau had appealed in state court on the same grounds back in the 1960s but the Louisiana Supreme Court twice found no evidence blacks were excluded from the grand jury. The

current ruling came as a result of a 1994 federal habeas corpus appeal.

Mr. Rideau, who has celebrity status as a "prison journalist" and claims to be "the most rehabilitated prisoner in America," has been in jail for the past 40 years for murdering a white bank teller and wounding two hostages during a Louisiana robbery in 1961. He shot the teller and then stabbed her and cut her throat when she tried to crawl away. He must either be tried again within a reasonable period or set free, but Louisiana authorities are afraid that after 40 years it will be impossible to put on a convincing case. Mr. Rideau has already had three trials, and been sentenced to the electric chair every time. His sentence was changed to life imprisonment in the 1970s when the Supreme Court overturned the death penalty. [James Vicin, US High Court Sides With Prison Journalist on Bias, Reuters, June 18, 2001.]

Another Hoax

Rubie Lee Mandy is a black who worked at REM Oak Knoll, a group home for adults with mental problems, in White Bear Lake, Minnesota. One day the home's van disappeared, and the garage was spray-painted with anti-black graffiti. Miss Mandy told police four whites had shouted racial slurs at her the day before. When police recovered the vehicle, which had been similarly defaced, they noticed the steering column showed no signs of the tampering necessary to operate it without a key, and that it had been damaged in an accident. Police started investigating the employees of the group home, where the only key was kept. Miss Mandy confessed to police she had damaged the van while joyriding, and then painted the racist graffiti and concocted the story about the slurs in order to cover her trail. She is charged with motor vehicle theft and first degree criminal damage to property. [Cynthia Boyd, Woman Who Claimed to be Victim of Hate Crime Accused of Stealing Van, St. Paul Pioneer Press (Minnesota), June 12, 2001.]

Not Bulletproof

We reproduce this dispatch, unedited, from the Reuters News Service:

A Ghanaian man was shot dead by a fellow villager while testing a magic spell designed to make him bulletproof,

the official Ghana News Agency reported on Wednesday.

Aleobiga Aberima, 23, and around 15 other men from Lambu village, north-east Ghana, had asked a jujuman, or witchdoctor, to make them invincible to bullets.

After smearing his body with a concoction of herbs every day for two weeks, Aberima volunteered to be shot to check the spell had worked.

One of the others fetched a rifle and shot Aberima who died instantly from a single bullet.

Angry Lambu residents seized the jujuman and beat him severely until a village elder rescued him, the report added.

Tribal clashes are common in Ghana's far north, where people often resort to witchcraft in the hope of becoming invulnerable to bullets, swords and arrows. [Reuters, Ghana Man Shot Dead as Bulletproof Magic Fails, March 15, 2001.]

Bowlerized Bugs

The Cartoon Network recently planned a retrospective of every Bugs Bunny cartoon ever made, but got cold feet and cut about a dozen that were "insensitive." In one, Bugs distracts a black rabbit-hunter by rattling a pair of dice, and in another he parodies Al Jolson. Network executives also cut a cartoon in which Bugs calls an oafish, buck-toothed Eskimo a "big baboon." [Bugs Bunny Retrospective Coming, AP, May 2, 2001.]

Poetic Justice

In a recent statewide referendum, Mississippi voters overwhelmingly elected to keep their state flag, of which the Confederate battle flag is a prominent part. The same choice was denied the people of Georgia when earlier this year, Governor Roy Barnes (D) and a black-white liberal coalition of state legislators—citing NAACP boycott threats—decided to change the flag themselves, without input from the public. The new flag, in which the battle flag has been demoted to the size of a postage stamp, is widely derided outside corporate offices of Atlanta, and has finally gotten the kind of respect it deserves. Members of the North American Vexillological Association (study of flags) have declared the new Georgia

flag the ugliest in North America. In an on-line survey, the "Barnes flag" came in dead last among the 72 state, provincial and territorial flags of the United States and Canada. "It was the only flag



Ugliest flag on the continent.

people said 'I wish I could give negative points to,' " said Ted Kaye, who compiled the survey. [Dan Chapman, Experts Vote Georgia's Redesignated Flag 'the Ugliest'—By Far, Atlanta Constitution, June 21, 2001, p. C-1.]

Walking Away MAD

The National Association of Minority Auto Dealers (NAMAD) is a group that tries to get more car dealerships for non-whites and to get better terms for existing dealers. It has traditionally pushed the interests of blacks, and Hispanics are tired of sitting in the back of the bus. NAMAD was "founded by blacks for blacks," says Silvestre Gonzales, a Daimler Chrysler dealer in California who is leading a breakaway group to be called the Hispanic Auto Dealers Association. He says the defection is rooted in "the frustration of the Hispanic community that has been growing for 20 years." George Mitchell, a black Ford dealer from Tennessee, thinks the Hispanics are Johnny-come-lately cry-babies. He says he is "old enough to remember the civil-rights movement, the genesis of where we are today." "I remember when the fighting was going on," he adds. "Where were they?"

NAMAD has been slow to elect any of its growing number of Hispanic members to executive positions. Martin Cumba was the first, joining the 20-member board in 1994. He says he had tense moments with black board members but thinks Hispanics should stay in NAMAD and present a united front to the white man. He says automakers will be better able to "divide and rule" if there is more than one non-white organization. [Linda Bean, Civil War? Some Hispanics Secede From Minority Auto

Dealers' Group, DiversityInc.com, March 12, 2001.]

Aborting Crime?

In a recent study, John J. Donohue of Stanford Law School and Steven D. Levitt of the University of Chicago, support the view that the legalization of abortion in the early 1970s may be partly responsible for the drop in crime in the 1990s. The authors cite studies that indicate unwanted children are twice as likely to be criminals as those who are wanted. As Prof. Levitt explains, "a difficult home environment leads to an increased risk of criminal activity. Increased abortion reduced unwantedness and therefore lowered criminal activity." Children of poor teenage mothers, unmarried women and black women—all of whom have above-average rates of abortion—are more likely to commit crimes when they grow up. [Alexander Stille, New Attention for the Idea That Abortion Averts Crime, New York Times, April 14, 2001.]

IQ and Life Expectancy

Scottish researchers have discovered a possible link between IQ and life expectancy. While following up on an intelligence test given to more than 2,000 eleven-year-olds in 1932, they found that the average IQ of those who had died by January 1, 1997 was 97.7, compared to 102 for those still living. A score 15 points below average meant a 20 per cent less chance of surviving to age 76, while those 30 points below average were 37 per cent less likely to live that long. [Celia Hall, People with High IQs 'Live Longer,' Electronic Telegraph (London), April 6, 2001.] IQ differences may help explain longevity differences between the races, with higher-IQ Asians and whites living longer on average than blacks.

White Cops Claim Bias

Seven white Chicago police supervisors have filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, accusing their district commander, Marianne Perry, of discrimination against whites. They say Commander Perry favors black officers for promotion, unfairly launches internal investigations against whites, and uses racially inflammatory language. "She's

gone so far as to make statements that when people of the 2nd District walk into this station, they expect to see a black face,” said Jeff Wilson, president of the Chicago Police Lieutenants Association. Mr. Wilson believes Marianne Perry is one of several black police commanders who have been “promoted beyond their competency level because of pressure to increase minority participation.” Commander Perry denies charges of discrimination, and senior police officials attribute the friction to Perry’s management style, but white officers are transferring out. Seven white police lieutenants have left the district in the past 19 months, as have two white desk sergeants. [Frank Main and Fran Spielman, *White Cops: Black Boss Biased*, Chicago Sun-Times, April 13, 2001.]

De-Policing Seattle

Stung by accusations of racial profiling, police in Seattle are doing exactly what one would expect: backing off from enforcing the law against blacks. Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske acknowledges there is “de-policing,” but denies it is widespread. His men aren’t so sure. “It’s real. It’s happening,” says Eric Michl, a patrol officer for 17 years. “Parking under a shady tree to work on a crossword puzzle is a great alternative to being labeled a racist and being dragged through an inquest, a review board, an FBI and US Attorney’s investigation and a lawsuit.”

Officer Michl, who is white, says he recently pulled over a black man who was driving without a license or registration and seemed high on cocaine. “If he were any other race, I would have probably arrested him on the spot,” he says. “But then I started thinking, ‘What if he’s on cocaine, what if we get in a fight and he dies, and then we find out he’s only guilty of a suspended license.’ I don’t want to see my name in the papers.” Officer Michl went back to his police cruiser to request a background check on the car, and the suspect fled. The car turned out to be stolen, and the man was captured later, but Officer Michl is annoyed he can’t follow his instincts. “There are a lot of us who are extremely frustrated about this,” he said.

Black officers are frustrated, too. Al Warner, who is black, recently caught four black men smoking marijuana in a car. They accused him of racially profiling them. “It’s the catch phrase now,”

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he says. “If I were an African-American drug dealer here, that’s the way I’d play the game. It intimidates officers.” Another black police officer, Tyrone Davis, says police are reluctant to use force of any kind for fear of starting a brawl.

De-policing has already had deadly results. During the Mardi Gras riots in February (see AR, April 2001), police brass held officers back for fear television images of police battling black rioters would be broadcast nationwide “It

wouldn’t have looked good,” explains Officer Michl. There were dozens of assaults, and blacks beat a white man to death during several hours of deliberate de-policing.

Officers see the racial profiling debate as a pointless distraction from their jobs. “It’s a ghost. It’s a phantom” says Ken Saucier, a black policeman with 16 years on the force. “As long as you can get people chasing the smoke, you won’t have to deal with the real problem.” The real problem, according to Officer Saucier and other policemen, is black crime. They cite U.S. Department of Justice statistics that show black men, only six percent of the population, commit 40 percent of violent crime. They say it only makes sense to put more police in black areas. It is the people who live there who are hurt most when de-policing means less law-enforcement and more crime. Says Officer Saucier of black agitators who want to stamp out racial profiling: “Be careful what you wish for because you might get it.” [Alex Tizon and Reid Forgrave, *Wary of Racism, Police Look the Other Way in Black Neighborhoods*, Seattle Times, June 26, 2001.]

No Hate in Patterson

Patterson, New Jersey, is a city of about 149,000 that is half Hispanic and one-third black. Students at John F. Kennedy High School reflect this ethnic mix, and administrators have started “conflict resolution” and “peer counseling” programs to curb racial violence. On June 20, police had to break up a fight between young blacks and Hispanics near the school. Shortly afterwards, blacks swarmed through the streets and came across 42-year-old Hector Robles, a homeless Hispanic man. According to witnesses, they took his beer bottle and smashed him over the head with it before beating him to death. “They kicked him like a dog,” says his sister Miriam. “It looks to me like it was a racial thing. It was only blacks and he was Hispanic.” Police have arrested eleven blacks, ages 15 through 17, for the murder and may try them as adults. News of the killing has increased racial tension in this drab industrial city, but prosecutor Robert Corrado doesn’t think race was a motive. “From what we’ve gotten, it hasn’t even been mentioned,” he says. [Wayne Parry, *Homeless Man Killing Stirs Concern*, AP, June 25, 2001.] 