

Not A River of Blood, But A Tide of Hope

Managed Immigration, Active Integration

Speech by Trevor Phillips, Birmingham, April 20 2008

"A week or two ago, I fell into conversation.....the black man will have the whip hand over the white man.....How dare I say such a horrible thing.....I do not have the right not to do so." - Enoch Powell, Birmingham, April 20 1968.

The Legacy of April 20 1968

40 years ago, Enoch Powell's speech in this hotel, made to a handful of activists, electrified Britain.

It elated some. It terrorised others.

Its timing was a tragedy for our nation.

Historically we are diverse, open-minded, and anti-racist. But every now and again we forget our true character. And April 20 1968 was the start of a forty year aberration for which we have since paid dearly.

Just at the moment when we were about to pass what were then the most progressive race relations laws in Europe we were plunged into a forty-year bout of racial introspection.

In the year that four young British musicians captivated the planet with their charm, confidence and their talent, our politicians were forced to wrestle with the fears of an anxious majority convinced that their rights were about to be usurped by a greedy minority.

And in the past forty years, when we could justifiably have been boasting of our success in creating a multicultural, multiethnic society, we found ourselves mired in a ghastly stand-off about race relations which has spawned unnecessary division and inequality.

Yet in spite of all this, today, I believe that Britain remains, at heart, that open-minded, anti-racist nation. And that this 20th of April offers us a chance to throw off the shadow of the past forty years.

I want to tell you why I believe that right now, the urgency of change demands a new social contract in which we the British people reap the benefits of managed migration by pursuing a positive policy of active integration.

In my lifetime there has never been a more vital moment for such a profound shift in thinking. There are no rivers of blood in prospect. Rather there is today a tide of hope that is carrying 200 million and more migrants across the globe in search of a better life. Some are British. Many are highly-skilled and qualified.

They look in our direction, but they have choices. Like every other prosperous developed nation we know that if we don't get our share of this wave of talent we risk becoming an economic backwater.

But we also know that with the benefits of migration come costs.

So my speech today is about how, we maximise the benefits and minimise the costs. If we fail, our children and our grandchildren won't be arguing about how many immigrants we can take into Britain; they'll be wondering how they can get a work permit to the dominant economies of China, India and Brazil.

Powell and Powellism

During the past four decades it has become common to suggest that the views in that speech on April 20 1968 were those of just one man. Powell himself suggested that he was the only public figure prepared to "speak for England".

But the truth is, these sentiments were not unique to Powell. What he said reflected one aspect of an underlying unease about race amongst Britons of all kinds. That didn't make him right, but it would be

wrong not to acknowledge that Powell's public rhetoric reflected the private thoughts of many white Britons.

This unease was felt very differently by black families like my own. And felt to the extent that the year before, my own parents decided that the friendly shore to which they had sailed in 1960 had turned into a hostile frontier.

My family had arrived with the brightest of hopes. They went to work with gusto in the Post office, in North London sweatshops and the NHS. I don't think that my parents quite expected me to arrive, I was their seventh child; but like most immigrants they made the best of a bad break. They were used to bad breaks. For many who came much of what they found in the promised land was not streets paved with gold, but drudgery, disappointment, and discrimination.

By the mid nineteen sixties, my mother, who had coped with years of Rachman style landlords, and dreary shift work decided she'd had enough. After all, she reasoned that if you found yourself at a party where you weren't welcome you shouldn't hang around.

In 1967 my family left for the United States. They sent me back to Guyana.

So on April 20th 1968, I, and most of my siblings had already departed for what seemed like less menacing territory. But when we read about Mr Powell's speech, we knew exactly what was happening.

The Britain of 1968 was a very different place. This was a Britain which had recently emerged from National Service and rationing. The nation had just discovered colour TV and we were hiding behind the sofas from the Daleks the first time around.

It was a country in which fewer women worked, and where the Chief Prosecutor could ask the jury at the trial of the publishers of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* "Is this a book you would wish your wife or your servants to read?"

Disabled, lesbian and gay people, to all intents and purposes, did not exist in polite society.

The sentiments in Powell's speech had been muttered quietly in workplaces, painted surreptitiously on walls, blustered openly in pubs for years. They were daily translated into the language of the playground, that christened every black or brown-skinned child "coon-features" or "nig-nog" or "wogface".

My brother was chased home by Teddy Boys. We learned quickly about the unspoken subtleties of racism. Some houses you just couldn't go into, some kids just weren't allowed to come to yours. My sister found the girl she thought was her best friend had thrown a birthday party and somehow forgotten to invite her.

Some of it wasn't subtle at all. As a skinny, opinionated, possibly too-clever by half black kid, one of only half a dozen or so in my grammar school, I learnt the value of knuckledusters from my friend - let's call him Winston - at the secondary modern across the way. You could borrow them for those days when you thought the bigger boys might corner you in the playground and you wouldn't be able to talk your way out of trouble. I know that some people in this room are familiar with this scenario.

So even though I was thousands of miles away at the time, I understood the Britain into which this speech was launched only too well.

Much has been already said this week about Enoch Powell's words that day. But though the moment that took place here forty years ago mattered, I believe that what took place in the years afterwards mattered much more. Not because there were rivers of blood, or ever likely to be; but because the shockwave of fear that followed still reverberates through our society today.

As far as the facts are concerned, we know now that some of his forecasts were within hailing distance of reality. He suggested that there would be five to seven million Commonwealth immigrants in the UK by the year 2000; official figures say that there are today six million or so foreign-born residents in the UK.

But what was important in that speech was not the predictions but the principles it set out. In the years that followed others created a doctrine in his name that tried to build on and justify those principles. Today we would call that doctrine Powellism, and it is Powellism that I want to address rather than Powell himself.

At the heart of this doctrine are three key propositions.

First - racial integration is impossible. Powell called it "a dangerous delusion". Powellism argued that people of different races and traditions cannot, by their very nature, ever enjoy good relations unless the majority race or tradition is numerically so dominant that the minority eventually gives up all aspects of its special identity. We would today call this assimilation.

In effect Powellites believed that we are all prisoners of our race, our heritage or our religious beliefs. And just as they lost sleep over interracial relationships, I guess we could see a parallel with people who are today consumed with fear at sharing the planet with lesbian or gay people.

The second article of the Powellite faith, was that every single immigrant, no matter what skills or resource they bring, is one too many and adds to social fragmentation. Now there's no evidence or logic here, but neither is a feature of this particular doctrine. And the corollary is that if you can get rid of some - or all - immigrants by repatriation then you are on the way to creating a better society.

Third, if for some reason you are forced to accommodate different kinds of people in one society, then you must ensure, by any means necessary, an overwhelming cultural domination by the majority, so that all other traditions wither on the vine. This is socially engineered assimilation pure and simple, and it goes with repugnance for any law that protects the rights of minorities.

So how have these principles survived the past forty years?

Well we have certainly seen violent incidents involving different racial groups. Some have been monstrous. For example we will this week mark the fifteenth anniversary of the murder of Stephen Lawrence by racist thugs. But have we as a nation been consumed by racial war?

I don't think so. Let me clear. I do not underestimate the significance of some of the events that have taken place. This issue of racial violence is not an abstraction for me. As a student leader and a journalist over the past thirty years I have had cause on three separate occasions to wonder if I had personally contributed, however indirectly, to the death of someone else by not taking the danger of racial conflict seriously enough.

The first occasion followed the death of a young student, Kevin Gately, from Warwick University, killed in an anti-racist demonstration at Red Lion Square in 1978. As the then President of the NUS I had given the instruction to mobilise students, and had consented to the arrangements for the demonstration. Should I have been more aware of the risks?

Second, In 1983, as a young television producer, I made a film about the Broadwater Estate in Tottenham. In it young black men we interviewed prophesied that there could be lethal racial violence at any time. Two years later, in October 1985, PC Keith Blakelock, the beat police officer for the road in which I myself lived in Haringey was hacked to death during a ferocious riot on that estate. Had it been irresponsible, as some in our company believed, to broadcast those interviews in '83?

And also in 1985, David Hodge, a fellow journalist and good friend from my student days, was killed whilst covering the Brixton riots that year - riots which I too was reporting.

So I've had real reason to wonder whether I underestimated the significance of the racial conflict in Britain.

But the fact is that we know that almost all these disturbances were not about black against white.

Kevin Gately was a young white man, who died protesting against racism arm in arm with black and Asian students.

Keith Blakelock was the victim of an appalling crime that would repulse any decent person of any race - and did.

And David died because like the courageous journalist he was, he chose to cover the story from the no man's land between two sides of a vicious conflict.

Even if I hadn't had to reflect on it personally I think I would take the word of Mr Powell's most famous protégé, that the racial rivers of blood never materialised.

Margaret Thatcher robustly refused to attribute the riots in 1981 and 1985 to a fundamental incompatibility between races. She instead cited economic causes - unemployment and urban decay. Indeed it was she who memorably said on the night of her 1987 election victory that her government's first task would be to regenerate the inner cities.

Our true British instinct has been shown time and again in times of crisis - after the eighties disturbances, the Northern riots in 2001, after the 7/7 bombings, we chose not to isolate and attack the minority, but to respond with unity and compassion rather than conflict.

Yet the fear that followed Powellism still stalks Britain.

The gap between people's real experience and their politically-inspired fears is illustrated in virtually every survey of opinion. Asked about their own experience British people always describe a country that is tranquil where people that they know get along with each other. Asked about Britain as a whole they describe a country awash with conflict and tension.

Yet the principles that underlie Powellism still govern political debate about immigration and race.

And the forty year shadow persists even though it has largely achieved the opposite of what the Powellites hoped.

To begin with, they wanted to make immigration the touchstone political issue. In fact, for four decades serious political debate about immigration has been suppressed in every part of the political spectrum with smears and name calling standing in for genuine debate.

On the right immigration has remained a taboo subject. Conservatives fear being associated with Powellism and condemned as racist. The right's public justification for reticence is usually that political correctness has unfairly silenced them. Somewhat comically, this point of view has been widely and consistently peddled by writers and publications which hardly ever stop yelling about immigration, only pausing from time to time to complain that they are being gagged, before resuming a deafening roar of outrage.

But the left too has played its part in this deadly silence. Centre left politicians have, since the late 1960s persuaded themselves that immigration is an issue which favours the right. The left still fears that a free and open debate on these issues would lead to the release of a caged beast of an essentially reactionary public opinion.

So for forty years we have, by mutual consent, sustained a political silence on the one issue where British people most needed articulate political leadership.

But the shockwave of fear hasn't just affected what politicians said. It also critically determined what they did. And that too has mostly been the opposite of what the Powellites hoped.

To start with by closing down debate about immigration, they allowed successive governments to avoid having much of a policy at all. In essence Powellism so discredited any talk of planning that we've limped along with an ad-hoc approach to immigration whose only consistent aspect has been its racial bias; a non-policy that may have led to Britain admitting more immigrants rather than fewer over this period.

Worse still, the Powellite attack on integration so scared lazy officialdom that they colluded with old-guard ethnic leaders to warp a progressive and very British recognition of diversity in the early nineteen eighties into a bureaucratic version of multiculturalism which today keeps many communities closed and separate. We know the result - people who want to scale the cultural walls that separate them, are blocked by institutions which insist on pigeonholing them by their race, colour and religion.

And in the end Powellism failed in its most important aim - to demonstrate the prophetic vision that ethnic diversity would lead to chaos and hatred. It just hasn't happened.

This week's survey from for the BBC shows that the perception of racial prejudice is down yet again with just 20% of British people admitting to feeling any prejudice.

According to the government's citizenship survey in 2007, 81 per cent of people in England agreed that their local area is a place where people of different backgrounds get on well together. Of course this may well reflect the English propensity to get on with other people by not talking to them at all - but I'll return to that later.

And though I am always cautious about interpreting the popularity of marriage as an indicator of goodwill, it must stand for something that rates of intermarriage in this country are a) rising and b) higher than anywhere else in Europe and of course the United States.

So why, given its impact, did Powellism fail so dismally?

I think there are three reasons.

First the doctrine utterly failed to understand the essential attitude of British people to difference. We are not racists. How could we be? We are an ancient multilingual state forged from at least four different ethnicities, with a people built on and used to intermarriage, compromise and negotiation.

Our defining monarch, Elizabeth 1 set out the doctrine of toleration, asserting according to Sir Francis Bacon that she would not open a window into men's souls - that is to say that this is a nation which would not judge people according to their faith, as long as they followed the rule of law and observed the common good. This lies at the heart of the live and let live philosophy that makes cities like London and Birmingham vibrant, multicultural places.

And when we get it right, British tolerance isn't some grim passive acceptance of difference. It is an active enjoyment of different food, music and ways of worship for example. And at its finest it is allied to a passion for justice that has become part of our culture, perhaps best summed up in the expression "standing up for the underdog".

Our greatest playwright, William Shakespeare, wrote a famous speech which he put in the mouth of one of our sturdiest advocates of the British tradition of dissent, Sir Thomas More. More quells a London mob bent on violence against asylum seekers with these words:

"Would you be pleased
To find a nation of such barbarous temper
That breaking out in hideous violence
Would not afford you an abode on earth....
...what would you think
To be thus used? This is the strangers' case,
And this your mountainish inhumanity"

I think the second reason for the Powellites' failure is that they wanted to promote a British identity rooted in an Empire that by 1968 was already in rapid decline.

And finally, perhaps most important of all, the Powellites fatally confused race and immigration. We can see today why this is a mistake. In the last decade, when we have had higher net immigration than at any time in the past forty years, large numbers - over half a million between 2004 and 2006 of immigrants are white.

On the basis of Powellite doctrine we should welcome today's immigrants, since they dilute even further the non-white presence here. A true Powellite should today be encouraging more, not less migration from eastern Europe. In fact, anti-immigrant groups still don't quite know what to say about the Poles.

Because I am a pedant, and had the benefit of the sort of British colonial education that Mr Powell would have valued, I can't resist pointing out that even the Latin reference that gave Powell's original speech its name does not in reality point to discord.

The warning of the River Tiber foaming with much blood comes from the Cumaean Sybil, one of the prophetesses of Roman legend. Virgil says that she told Aeneas, the Trojan, not to go to Rome because there'd be trouble. In fact he ignored the warning, he went on to found the dynasty that built Rome - we remember Romulus and Remus - the centre of arguably the most successful multiethnic and multi-faith empire in the history of the world.

Perhaps what happened to the Sybil is a warning. She was granted eternal life by the God Apollo, but forgot to ask for an eternal body. So though she still had the gift of prophecy, she withered away until she was just a disembodied voice. Eventually she disappeared never to be heard from again. I think that's food for thought for all aspiring prophets.

So in short, after forty years I think we can say with confidence that we don't need to ask if Powellism was ever right. All we need to know is that it wrong now.

That story is over. Goodbye Alf Garnett.

Immigration Now : The New World

But that does not mean that the political challenge of immigration is over. On the contrary. We've only just begun to prepare the ground to debate the greatest challenge of our time.

I believe that there are two fundamental challenges facing western nations today. One is how we live with our planet. The other is how we live with each other. The second - in Sir Isaiah Berlin's phrase - "living together graciously" - is in my view the more urgent.

If we cannot get along with our neighbours we have no hope of taking the concerted action we need to reverse climate change. There's just no mileage in talking about car pools if you loathe your neighbours so much that you can't bear to share a car ride with them.
So how should we approach this great challenge?

A New Social Contract: Managed immigration, Active Integration
Let me start with some straight views of my own.

I do not believe in an open door immigration policy. I support unreservedly, for example the government's managed migration points system. I welcome how Liam Byrne is cutting through the paralysis of the last 40 years. However, though we might want to be more selective about who comes into Britain, managing immigration is not automatically the same as reducing numbers of immigrants.

Nor do I believe that good race relations has to be dependent on reducing migrant numbers. There is no evidence that reducing numbers has anything to do with better race relations. And the so-called commonsense view that "we can't take any more" is daily refuted by the migrants who have added to the richness and prosperity of our society.

So I want to propose first that we simply abandon the unproven Powellite assertion that if we get immigration numbers down, we'll have less trouble.

Instead I want to argue that our history shows that immigration and integration are reciprocal. That is to say, that if we needed, perhaps for economic reasons, to admit more immigrants we would have to work harder at integration; but equally, that if we are better at our integration, we can probably accommodate more immigrants.

And just as Powellism had its three central principles - assimilation, separation and domination - I want to propose three new principles for an integrated society, based on our Commission's core values - equality, human rights and good relations.

But first, central to any approach to immigration today is an acceptance of reality, recognised even by Enoch Powell's own heirs.

Last October here is what David Cameron had to say:

"The gaps in the labour market are very naturally being filled by migrant workers. That in itself is a good thing, not a bad thing. We should not try to unlock the potential of our own citizens by locking out the citizens of other countries... skilled foreign workers expand our economy and make us more competitive."

Whatever we feel about immigrants, immigration is part of our future. The real question will be whether we can, as a modern economy, seize the restless tide of talent that is currently sweeping across the globe in search of a place to deploy its skills and its ambitions. So far we are lagging behind our competitors.

According to a World Bank study of 52 million migrants in 20 rich countries, one in three migrants worldwide has a university education. But while we cower in fear and fret about whether to admit clever foreigners from other nations - America, Australia and Canada are already sailing on that tide of talent.

Canada for example predicts that by 2011 all long term population growth will be due to immigration; and by 2021 every single extra worker in Canada will be an immigrant - already the case in the booming city of Toronto. The Canadians are making it easier, not harder for immigrants to become citizens so that they can compete with the pull of the US.

Yet our businesses are being asked to compete for talent against a background of politically inspired anti immigrant noise which risks discouraging the very people we want to coax here.

Curiously we ignore the fact that we have here in Britain probably the clearest example anywhere in the world of why any country with its act together will want to attract talented immigrants. And it's an example that illustrates some of the principles by which we could marry a policy of managed migration with active integration and gain popular support for both.

Imagine a British business whose revenues have risen tenfold in the past fifteen years, making it the largest of its kind outside the USA. Consider a business whose exports are so lucrative that it has a presence in more than 200 countries. Think of a sector in which 62% of the key employees are immigrants, some here for the long term, some here just for a few years. And marvel that though the non-whites in this business were once the subject of vicious abuse, today, they are the idols of millions.

Beginning to get the picture?

Britain's Premier league football is watched each week by half a billion people in over two hundred countries. It is the most successful sporting league outside America. Its revenues are touching two billion. Its foreign stars can earn in excess of 100,000 pounds every week - but their good fortune does not depress the wages of the home-grown talent.

We have an effective system of controlling entry; and none of the teams for which the foreigners play needs some kind of bureaucratic multiculturalism to effect their integration to their club. No-one has had to abandon their flair and brilliance in order to fit in. In fact the migrant players have for the most part played by the rules, learnt our habits, and I would say many have become better at their jobs for learning British ways.

Didier Drogba (my own team is Chelsea) has learnt that he should try not fall over when a defender breathes too heavily in his direction. Cristiano Ronaldo finally grasped that it wasn't smart to get someone sent off. And far from displacing the best of our players these immigrants have lifted the standards and the earnings of the game. Today three out of Europe's top four sides are English. Eight of the richest twenty clubs in the world play in the Premier League.

I'll go further. These people don't just take the money and run. The best of the foreign players set a wonderful example in their contribution to British life. Many do charitable work with young people.

And for those who worry that promoting the use of English is somehow an imposition on immigrants, I wish you could have seen, as I did, the recent pregame pep talk by William Gallas the French Arsenal captain, delivered in English and with the passion ironically that we usually associate with Henry V before Agincourt.

Foreign players like Eric Cantona stood together with Brits, in launching the campaign to kick racism out of football. A few years back a drive led by Thierry Henry and others to sell anti racist wrist bands resulted in a fund of a million pounds which we were able to give to local amateur sports clubs for activity directed at racial equality and integration.

One result of all this is that in spite of legitimate worries about the quality of the English team there is no real appetite for limits on the numbers of foreign players in British football. And no-one has seriously questioned the appointment of foreigners to manage our national side because they are foreign. We probably should have had Jose Mourinho but there you go.

I'm not naive. Football is a metaphor not a model. We are talking about a few hundred incredibly privileged men who are more likely to buy a bus for their children than ride in one. They aren't jostling with us for space in the Tube and they won't be standing in front of us at our GP's surgery. Their children won't be adding to the churn confronting many teachers in our inner city schools.

But the metaphor does suggest some lessons about immigration in the 21st century world that we would do well to heed.

First that the need of the market for skilled labour is more important than anxieties about cultural difference. No-one asks players where they come from; clubs and fans only ask what they bring. Our immigration laws have therefore made it relatively easy to bring in these talented people without too much trouble.

Second, the shared desire to win status and rewards means that players find ways of communicating and accepting that they need to make some compromises for the common good. Those that don't accept that don't stay long.

Third, the fact that we have foreign players in our game does not make our own home-grown heroes less bankable or less part of the game. And our country as a whole has benefited in a way that no-one could have imagined just twenty years ago.

Fourth none of this happens by accident. There has been control and regulation that governs who is admitted. We know what the facts about numbers of players are. Everyone plays to the same rule book; there is no special treatment for any cultural group.

And there has been a relentless effort by the authorities to put a stop to the kind of abusive and discriminatory treatment that used to be doled out to foreign and minority players - led by the way by one of our Commission's forerunners, the CRE.

It hasn't all been sweetness and light. We still don't have very many minority authority figures in the game - managers or referees for example.

But it shows that we can manage this new world.

However we have urgently to get our house in order, because that world is changing by the day. We read anxiously about the millions poised to come to the UK. But we shouldn't kid ourselves. We are not the automatic destination of choice for this wave of talent.

A study of Polish immigrants in Britain, conducted by Warsaw's Centre for International Relations showed that we weren't their first choice - a third, for example, sought jobs in Germany before turning to Britain.

And in case we ever become arrogant enough to believe that once people have tasted the delights of a British summer they'll never return to their homelands, the same survey showed that though a quarter wanted to stay, 51% had no intention of remaining permanently in Britain. Their target would probably be to return home or to move on to richer pastures like the USA.

So in the coming years, the key question we will be asking ourselves is not how many of the wrong sort of immigrants we can afford; it will be how many of the right sort immigrants we can attract.

This wave of human talent carries huge benefits for us.

But it also carries some costs.

The Cost of Immigration

It may be true that as suggested by the recent report by the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Economic Affairs that each of us individually would be hard put to identify the addition to the Gross Domestic Product of our own households, made possible by recent migration.

But as much as I respect the economic expertise of their Lordships, I think we should also pay attention to the opinion of people who actually create wealth. Bill Gates, the boss of Microsoft, frustrated by what he sees as the restrictive immigration policies of the United States Congress, has decided to expand the company's vital research and development operations not in the USA but across the border in immigration friendly Canada.

And what their Lordships didn't do was to address what is nowadays called the counterfactual: what would life for our society as a whole be like without the immigrants?

In the real world we know some real people who would have their lives transformed and not for the better. Take three examples which apply to millions of British people.

To start with many families have benefited from the fact that they now have two salaries coming in - mostly because women have joined the workforce. But that was made possible for some only by of the availability of capable and qualified immigrant carers.

In the next twenty years our need for personal care for the elderly will double. Unless women are forced out of work, we know who will fill the void. Tens of thousands of qualified care workers from the rest of Europe, Africa and elsewhere.

Immigration is also changing some of our public services for the better. We all know that there would be no NHS without foreign doctors, nurses, cleaners and administrators. We all know that there will be no Crossrail in London, no Olympics, no new wave of housing starts without immigrant carpenters, electricians and bricklayers.

And many of our schools are benefiting from the presence of clever immigrant children. For example, Paul McAteer, the Head of Slough's Langleywood School, described a few years back by the Daily Mail as "the worst school in Britain" now says that migrant pupils have been a "big factor" in transforming its performance. He goes on to say that "Foreign children have improved our results...white British parents who live close to the school want their children to come here again".

So as a nation we have travelled a long way from the view that immigration is in and of itself a danger to our social tranquillity.

The Political Costs of Immigration

But it would be a return to the worst days of our forty-year silence to ignore the fact that many people are deeply unsettled by the pace and nature of change.

It is true that the small minority of people in this country who are genuine racists are obsessed with immigration. But that does not mean that the large number of people who do worry about immigration are all racists.

Any policy of managed migration and active integration has to be a policy embraced by the whole nation.

And that policy has to acknowledge the pressures that come with the benefits of immigration.

To deal effectively with those pressures we need to confront four key problems.

First, the poverty of timely information about the impact migration is having on our communities. We can see on the ground that the systems of funding for local services are not keeping up with the rate of change; leading to irresponsible rumour mongering about immigrants committing more crime and cheating the housing system.

Most of this is froth and nonsense. Police chiefs this week said there was no basis for the first allegation; independent research commissioned by ourselves and the Local Government Association show there's no evidence of the second. But we do need more timely, and independent information so that ordinary people can see what is true and what is not.

Second, though there are benefits to migration, they aren't shared out equally. The problem is that though the inequality may actually be caused by a lack of public investment, it may be attributed to the presence of immigrants.

Thus, for every professional woman who is able to go out to work because she has an Eastern European nanny, there is probably a young mother who watches her child struggle in a classroom where a harassed teacher faces too many children with too many languages between them.

Wanting a better deal for her child doesn't make her anti-immigrant - but if we can't find a better response for her frustration, then she soon will be.

For every boss whose bacon is saved by the importation of skilled IT professionals or skilled craftspeople or health professionals, there are a thousand people who are wondering every morning why they have to put up with the misery of a packed train carriage or bus - if they can get on in the first place.

Wanting an infrastructure that doesn't make getting to work daily hell does not make someone a natural voter for an anti-immigrant party. But it soon will.

As the novelist Rose Tremain told the Guardian yesterday in describing Britain as "bipolar" on immigration "I do worry about immigration. Just the sheer crowds....it certainly feels vexing when you can't even get a doctor's appointment. Yet I don't like the fact that I worry about it."

Third, there is unfairness in the workplace. There is very little evidence that home-grown workers' wages are depressed because of migration, so the likelihood is that there has been little impact on current workers. If there is an economic slowdown, that may change. But we're not there yet.

There are however, two major issues which do demand action now.

One is the sheer exploitation of some low paid immigrants, illustrated by the fate of cockle pickers who died in Morecambe Bay in 2004. They were just the tip of an iceberg of human-trafficking and near-slavery, which can only be held in check by better policing and sharper regulation.

The other major issue is the question of why employers should invest in training and skills for home-grown workers when they can get the readymade thing from abroad? Easyjet delivers easymigrant to your door with all his or her skills, readiness to work over the hours and probably a university degree to boot. How can our million or so young people who are not in education, employment or training possibly compete?

The fourth key problem is the ever-present challenge of how to keep communities which are changing faster every year from fragmenting. Powell predicted "hot" conflict and violence. We don't see too much of that, and where it does occur it tends to be within specific communities - gun crime in some black communities for example.

However we have seen the emergence of a kind of cold war in some parts of the country, where very separate communities exist side by side, increasing the likelihood of little interaction and with poor communication across racial or religious lines. This is not purely an old style anti-black phenomenon. There are divisions between minority communities as we saw here in Lazelles two and a half years ago and increasingly there is little difference in attitudes to immigration between ethnic minorities and the majority. So how do we reconcile good relations and stable communities with our need to ride the tide of global migration?

There is perhaps another way to put all these questions.

How can we use a policy of managed migration and active integration to create a Britain that is fairer, built on dignity and respect, and where people are confident in all aspects of their diversity?

The Commission's mandate and brief don't run to controlling the immigration system, I'm happy to say. That's someone else's job. But our job is above all fostering good relations, and within that to make a reality of a policy of active integration.

So I want to end this morning by briefly setting out three key principles for our integrated society.

Three Principles for An Integrated Society.

The First Principle is that Integration is a two-way street

I know that some people are nervous about the use of the word integration. But most British people know what it means, and frankly, I can't help feeling that if Powellites were against it I should be for it. But let me say what I mean by it in practice.

Immigrants change us, mostly for the better. They don't just bring their labour with them - they create more choice for everyone - of food, of music, of literature - all aspects of the benefits of two-way integration. They compete hard, they lift our standards. And in a global economy they are beginning to give us the edge in markets - India for example - that we would not otherwise enjoy.

Most immigrants change too. We expect those who come to Britain to play by the rules and to do their best to share in the responsibilities of living together as well as enjoying the rights - for example by learning English so that they can participate fully in the workplace and in the life of the community. And if people want the rules to be different they campaign to change them by the democratic means we have available.

But an integrated society isn't only the sum of what individuals do. It's also what governments and civil society do too. So that means we all - immigrant and home-grown - have the right to expect that we will be treated fairly, not exploited and that our dignity is respected.

That means we need to redouble our efforts to stamp out trafficking and exploitation at work. Our Commission is already starting to work closely with trades unions on these issues and I look forward to sitting down with employers too.

It means that the Equality and Human Rights Commission has launched a 10 million pound grants programme much of which is going to local voluntary organisations dedicated to bringing different groups together.

It means that this summer we will pilot a programme of summer camps expressly designed to get young people of different backgrounds to learn more about each other.

And it means that when we talk about active integration let me repeat: we are not talking about assimilation. But because integration is a two way street, we know that on this two way street, that there will sometimes be friction.

It is our job as a Commission, to help to minimise those frictions by establishing some rules of the road. These need to be more than traditional British courtesy and good manners - though frankly that would be a good place to start these days.

We need some more fundamental agreement on common values. These in my view are best based on our human rights principles.

I don't mean by this the distorted view of human rights in which clever and malicious people take advantage of the rest of the community.

I mean the commonsense approach to human rights that is deeply ingrained in our British history, that tells us for example, that while free speech cannot be traded for cultural sensitivity, the right to offend does not imply an obligation to insult.

I also mean that these basic values and freedoms must apply to all. For example, that while the equality of women and the protection of children can never be modified in any way by cultural tradition, where fundamental protections are not undermined, we have to be ready to accept that minorities of which we are not a part ourselves have the right to be different.

For example we make a legal distinction between forced marriage - illegal - and arranged marriage, perfectly legal. I guess arranged marriages are unlikely to catch on in a big way outside some

communities, they are now a legitimate part of British life. That is what being at ease with our diversity means.

And it also means that where law may not compel we have to find new ways of creating change.

For example our political parties remain desperately unrepresentative. They need to change. Pronto.

What legitimacy is there in a Parliament which makes crucial decisions on immigration with just fifteen ethnic minority MPs when there should be more than sixty? How can a House of Commons expect its decisions on counter-terrorism to be taken seriously by Muslim communities when there are only four Muslim MPs in the House of Commons?

I also believe that we should take opportunities to celebrate those new neighbours on our two-way street who make it a better place.

Our system of honours currently does not fully recognise those who have made a contribution here if they were born outside the Commonwealth. Bob Geldof, for example can't properly be addressed as Sir Bob because he is not a Commonwealth citizen - surely a relic of our imperial past.

Well, we can't change that but later this year our Commission intends to announce a special annual scheme that will celebrate the contribution to British life of individuals who were born elsewhere but have made the UK their home.

The Second Principle: Fairness is not just for minorities

We can no longer identify those who are not flourishing in our society by colour-coding them. For example, it has recently become clear that when it comes to educational failure and that million young people I mentioned earlier, the people with whom the system is having least success and who should today most concern us are young white men emerging into adulthood with no qualifications, no skills and in some cases no aspirations.

Our equality effort should be directed at them too, especially at a time when so many jobs that are available are going to immigrants simply because they are better qualified.

Our equality work should deal with mainstream issues. So when the government's welcome plan to build 3 million more homes and five new eco-towns by 2020 is put into practice, good relations must be the heart of the design of those homes and those towns - so that they become mixed communities that bring people together rather than drive them apart.

We will only win popular support for an integrated society if we are seen to be fair to everyone, majority and minority. That is why we need better, more transparent information about the impact of immigration.

That is why I intend to propose to our Commissioners that we should publish, every year from next year, an annual good relations barometer which sets out honestly the state of relations, positive and negative, in communities across the country. It will draw on independent survey evidence, the experience of our frontline networks and the views of our voluntary sector partners.

And in our effort to provide a better evidence base, the Commission today publishes on its website a series of maps that show exactly where migrant communities are concentrated across Britain. (you can view the maps [here](#))

We see this kind of openness as a platform for a no doubt difficult, but ultimately honest and better informed debate about how we live together graciously.

The Third Principle: We Must Share the benefits and burdens of migration fairly

Much of the reason for unease over immigration is no longer about foreigners' difference. It is about whether those who benefit from their presence are also bearing their share of cost. There are two aspects to this.

One is whether all parts of the country are benefiting in the same way. All the evidence suggests that they aren't. Many areas of England are accommodating many migrants for economic reasons without having had the time or resource to build up the necessary infrastructure. On the other hand some parts of the country aren't getting enough migrants. That is why we think balancing measures are vital - such as incentives under the points system that will draw migrants to under-populated Scotland; and we'd like to see more funds going faster to parts of the country which are experiencing population surges.

The other aspect is the question of how we share the costs between settled communities, migrants and employers; to what extent should those who benefit from immigrants' presence including immigrants themselves also bear some of the increased costs.

The government has recently acknowledged this by suggesting that whilst English lessons might be made free for those who intend to settle here, it is right that those who come just work - the easymigrant - and their employers should bear the cost of their English classes. I believe that this is right.

In other countries, many experts are considering whether there is value in the idea of a migrant tax, which would be used to defray some infrastructure costs.

But there are many complex issues here, and I believe that our Commissioners would object to anything which smacked of back-door discrimination. And anything which actually turned the tide of talent away from Britain would be utterly counterproductive.

So we need to do some thinking. Later this year the Commission, in partnership with the Migration Policy Institute of Washington, will hold an international summit of bodies like our own and NGOs which will consider these issues. We will draw on the expertise of people here and abroad to try to understand how we can start to reconcile the claims of those who are settled with those who come to support us and our economy for a period.

Conclusion

These are just some of my own ideas to start with. There will be many more as we debate these issues, starting this morning.

But the best ideas will emerge if we are now willing to have an open, honest and informed debate about a new social contract, about managed migration and active integration.

I believe that the more we talk about immigration the better. Many think that this isn't the time or place for this debate. And I understand their anxieties.

I know that I will somehow be misquoted.

I know, without doubt some people will misuse the opportunity of open debate to cloak their racist motives.

But if not now, when?

We cannot allow discussion of race and immigration forever to be seen as playing into the hands of extremists. The forty-year old shockwave of fear has gagged us all for too long.

Our aim is the integrated society - one built on fairness, respect and dignity, confident in all aspects of its diversity.

We need to start a new conversation about how we get there, a dialogue has to be guided not by fear, but by hope.