11

Race Relations in the City

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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In multi-racial societies, racial conflict often occurs in cities. However, it is not the fact that multi-racial groups are living in cities that gives rise to conflict. It is conceivable that multi-racial groups could live in harmony. Thus, to understand why racial conflict occurs, one must probe deep into the *ideology* and behaviour of the dominant racial group.

Smith (1989: 4) argues that ideology is a fundamentally political, prescriptive medium through which the popular legitimacy of iniquitous social and economic arrangements are secured. Ideology involves collective decision-making and serves as a way to gain popular support for strategies adopted by the dominant group, particularly in democratic societies (Smith, 1989: 4).

Ideology provides a means by which one group of people carve out a certain vision of how things are and ought to be (Reeves, 1983: 3a). Giddens (1981) believes that ideology refers to the modes in which exploitative domination is legitimized. It is the dominant racial group that makes most decisions and establishes the racial climate, policies, practices and structure of the society. Cities are merely organizational constructs designed to accommodate the ideology of the dominant group. The role of the dominant group is examined in this chapter in two countries – the USA and Britain. Although spatial separation has resulted in some minor societal differences, the dominant group in the two countries share a common belief when the issue of race is involved. Whether in the USA or Britain, there is a widespread belief among the dominant group in the ideology of white supremacy.

In order to understand race relations in cities in Britain and the USA, it is necessary to understand this ideology which is held by most people of white European descent – that is, the dominant group in the two multi-racial industrial countries.

The ideology of white supremacy holds that in any *relations* involving people of colour, the white race must have the superior position (Rose and Associates, 1969: 68).

Thus, in economic relations, political relations and social relations, most whites believe that they must have the advantage. Any other arrangement, such as racial equality or control by people of colour, would threaten the 'white comfort zone' and therefore be unacceptable to most whites. The intensity to which most whites in Britain and the USA hold these views varies from very intense to passive (Figure 11.1). Indeed, there is a segment of the white population in each country that does not hold these views at all, but rather detests them and is actively working in the area of race relations to bring about racial equality. It should be clear, however, that such views of white supremacy are not merely a fringe element of white society in Britain and the USA; the belief in white superiority is held by a large segment of white society.

Depending on events in cities and the society involving people of colour, the degree of white support for racial equality or white supremacy may shift from a greater percentage of supporters for racial equality to a greater percentage of supporters for maintaining white supremacy (Figure 11.1). Events that may influence such shifts may involve black immigration, black movement into predominantly white areas, changes in the structure of the economy resulting in white insecurity, and black competition for white-held jobs. Such changes threaten the nature of race relations. The core of race relations in cities of Britain and the USA has been and continues to be that of inequality between whites and people of colour. Thus, changes which may result in reducing racial inequality or threatening the extent of white control or demographic dominance often lead to a shift in the percentage of supporters for maintaining white supremacy.
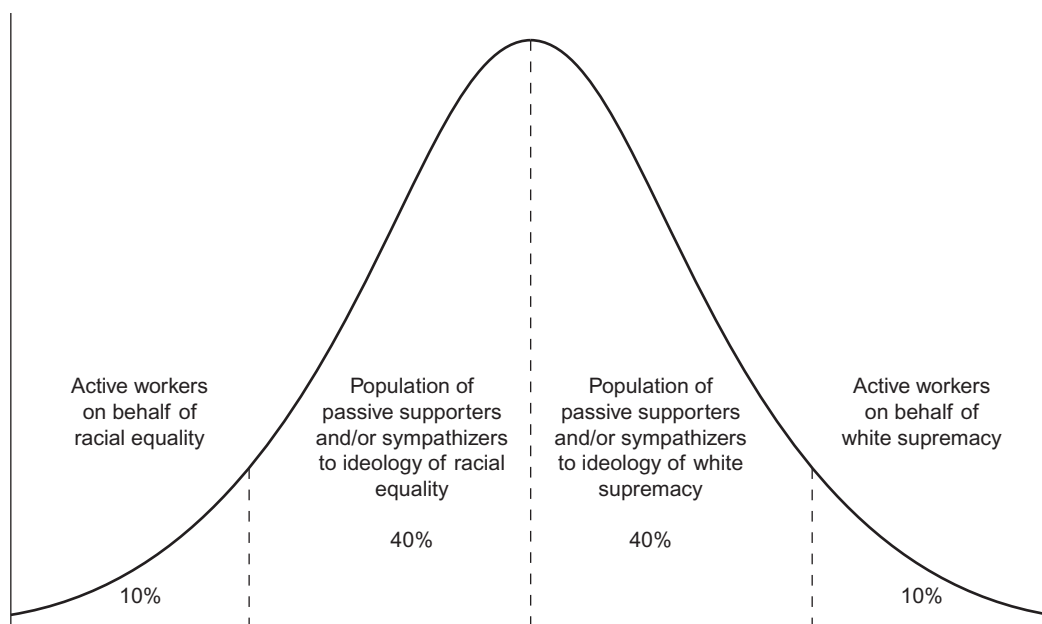
Figure 11.1   Model of race relations in a multi-racial society: conflict between
two opposing ideologies

Among the changes in cities of Britain and the USA which have shaped race relations are international immigration and internal migration of people of colour. To maintain white supremacy, such movement of people of colour has been controlled by immigration policies, racial segregation and discrimination in the housing and labour markets in each country.

It is the belief in white supremacy and the extent to which it is acted upon in policy and/or practice that has shaped the nature of racial conflict in the cities examined in this chapter. When the belief is strong and widespread, it results in policies and/or practices that deny equal access to jobs and housing and other amenities to people of colour. Such denial of equal access based on race results in observable racial inequality. Through policies and practices, whites are advantaged and people of colour are disadvantaged. Such inequalities along racial lines are observable in cities through examination of the quality of life of racial groups. Thus, underlying most racial conflicts in cities examined in this chapter is the factor of racial inequality, which is perpetuated by the dominant group. This chapter will demonstrate how such behaviour impacts on racial minority groups and their responses to such behaviour. Although racial minorities are impacted by the behaviour of the dominant group in all spheres of life, this chapter will focus primarily on the housing and labour markets.

It is important to note that although racial inequality provides the potential for racial conflict, such conflict does not occur until there is a degree of racial consciousness on the part of the minority group which leads to a struggle for racial equality. Such efforts are often manifest through a protest of racial injustices, a statement of grievances, or competition for better housing or jobs which are disproportionately held by the dominant group. It is the reaction of a dominant group towards minority demands for equality that racial conflict in cities of the USA and Britain must be understood. Given that the dominant group in each country shares a common racial ideology, their reaction to demands for change by people of colour is often more similar than different.

Although forms of blatant discrimination have been outlawed in each country, a second more subtle form of discrimination is increasingly apparent. This type of discrimination, which is practised in Britain and the USA, can be referred to as *institutional racism*. It has its roots in the ideology of white supremacy and can be defined as a process created by the dominant white population to keep persons in a position or status of inferiority by means of laws, policies, or actions or institutional structures which do not use colour itself as the subordinating mechanism, but instead use other mechanisms indirectly related to colour to get the desired results (Bullock and Rodgers, 1976; Dawns, 1970: 79).

Unlike overt racism, which involves individual

whites acting against individual blacks or other people of colour, which may result in death, injury, or destruction of property and often involves a fringe element of white society, institutional racism originates and operates by and with the approval of the established and respected forces in society. It thus receives far less opposition and condemnation (Carmichael and Hamilton, 1967: 4). Yet, institutional racism is the primary mechanism by which racial inequality is sustained and white supremacy is maintained. With these concepts clearly understood, I turn now to a discussion of the many ways whites and people of colour came in closer proximity and the subsequent change in the nature of race relations.

RACE RELATIONS IN BRITISH CITIES

Although the concept of 'people of colour' consists of those population groups that are not white, this chapter will focus on those people of colour of African descent. Relations between people of European and African descent have been historically the most challenging. To be sure, such difficult race relations remain down to the present.

Black Immigration to Britain

Although blacks had lived in Britain for centuries (Freyer, 1984), due to post-war labour shortages the British recruited more blacks from the West Indies in the late 1940s. Prior to 1948, few white Britons came in contact with blacks. Although Britain has never been a 'promised land' for blacks, relations between the races appeared on the surface to be relatively peaceful and hospitable (see Holmes, 1982). There was no apparent threat to white dominance and sense of white control. After 1948, more white Britons came in contact with black people than ever before, especially in the cities of London, Nottingham, Birmingham and Manchester (Pilkington, 1988).

From the very beginning, black immigrants to Britain constituted a relatively marginal complement of labour located at the bottom of the occupational ladder of the highly industrialized, predominantly white society (Freeman, 1987). The West Indian immigrants found low-income jobs in the struggling textile and manufacturing industries. They were used as a replacement workforce, filling jobs vacated by upwardly mobile white workers and they were largely denied positions in the skilled and managerial workforce (Peach, 1968). The relatively low income of the West Indian immigrants (which reflected their

lack of employment opportunities, not their skills and experiences) obviously limited their housing options. However, these options were further constrained by discrimination in access to housing in both the private and public sectors (Smith, 1989: Chap. 4).

Coming in contact with white Britons, they were viewed as ex-colonial dependants, black immigrant workers of subordinate status. Although few in number at first, the arrival of these immigrants of colour was perceived as a threat to white society. Thus, a debate ensued about the status and future of black people in Britain. Some white Britons wondered whether their country would develop a 'colour problem' similar to the American South, where blacks and whites lived separately and unequally.

Anti-black racism in Britain had emerged by 1951 and was clearly evident within the political arena. The Labour Party undertook policies and propounded ideas which significantly influenced the creation of a racist Britain within the present context (see Joshi and Carter, 1985: 69–70). The intrusion of anti-black racism into domestic politics prior to 1951 was necessarily limited by the small size of the settled black population. With the onset of relatively large scale black immigration during the post-war period, racism flowered everywhere, poisoning the entire body politic (Jacobs, 1985–7). Black immigrants to Britain clearly entered an intensely hostile white world where racism was recent only in its domestic application (Segal, 1967: 300). The absence of overt racism in social legislation has been misinterpreted as evidence of British tolerance, when in reality, black people encountered discrimination on a massive scale (Jacobs, 1985: 11). From the British perspective, it was black labour that was wanted, not black presence (Sivanandan, 1976–352).

Racism, even when acknowledged, was almost exclusively explained as individual acts of prejudice by landlords, state agents, vendors and others. The powerful institutions, which control the property market, were rarely criticized even though building societies, for example, invented 'blue zones' to specifically exclude areas of black settlement from the mortgage loan market (Segal, 1967). In other words, white society chose to ignore the stark realities of racism.

The vast majority of the black immigrants from the Caribbean are today permanent settlers in Britain. They constitute about 500,000 people and represent 56 per cent of the total black population. Almost half of the African-Caribbean population was born in England (Owen, 1994: 1). However, when the figures are adjusted for census under-enumeration, the black-Caribbean population increases to 517,000 (see Owen, 1995: 46). African-Caribbean blacks represent only 1.7 per cent of the total British population.

Segregation and Discrimination in Employment

Although many whites came in contact with blacks for the first time in the 1950s, they had already held preconceived negative views about blacks. The stereotype view of blacks was that they were unskilled, poorly educated, lazy and stupid, but had extraordinary sexual powers (Pilkington, 1988). These prejudices affected the way white people *related* to black newcomers. Employers refused to hire black workers because they prejudged them to be lazy and unreliable. Yet, these ideas were not supported by the facts. The characteristics of the black immigrants to Britain reflected wide and diverse strata. Indeed, 46 per cent were skilled workers, 24 per cent had professional or managerial experience, 5 per cent were semi-skilled, and contrary to the perception of most whites, only 13 per cent of the West Indian blacks were unskilled, manual workers (Pilkington, 1988: 23).

Although unskilled West Indians had no difficulty finding manual jobs in manufacturing and service industries, skilled black workers who expected to find work equivalent to the abilities based on their merit were excluded by the British, qualifications not withstanding. For most blacks from the West Indies this was the first 'reality check', namely, that racial discrimination was a fact of British life. Such knowledge of the 'real Britain' began to spread as black teachers, carpenters, mechanics, tailors, doctors and journalists were all rejected for employment in Britain.

Such rejection was particularly shocking to black ex-servicemen, who had been accustomed to operating according to the principle of merit. However, upon entering Britain as civilians, they too learned that colour, not merit was the basis for employment. Not only did the private sector discriminate, but discrimination also occurred in the British government (Wrench, 1995).

The British government did not assess candidates for the Civil Service based on their competence alone. Race mattered as a critical factor in employment selection (Harris, 1991: 9). Whites were clearly given preference over people of colour.

A subtle means of discrimination was to mark the black candidate down so that he or she would have difficulty qualifying. Hard evidence that governmental recruitment officers unjustifiably marked qualified Afro-Caribbean applicants down can be found in memos of governmental officials cited by Harris (1991: 11). Persons were excluded, therefore, not based on merit, but based on colour. Discrimination was targeted primarily at black men due to the white stereotypes of black male sexuality. Blacks were particularly excluded from industries which brought them in contact with the public or placed them in positions of authority over white people (Harris, 1991).

Lindsey (1993) reveals how West Indians became marginalized in Britain's second largest city between 1948 and 1962. Specifically, racial discrimination was a major factor responsible for the split labour nature of the British job market. Such structure ensured that white British workers would maintain the higher level jobs and the West Indian immigrants, who were considered inferior, would occupy lower level ones. Such racial discrimination has continued in Britain. Blacks during the 1980s were more likely than whites to be unemployed whether in prosperous regions or depressed regions (Smith, 1989: 39).

Also, similar to the USA, is the degree of racial disparity in unemployment rates. Newnham (1986) found that unemployment rates among black workers are consistently at least twice those experienced by whites, irrespective of their qualifications and language skills. These discrepancies are even worse for young blacks, where it is not uncommon to have a third of those aged 16–24 years unemployed compared with only 17 per cent of young whites.

Similar to the occupational structure in the USA, black workers in Britain typically occupy lower status jobs than their white counterparts and are paid lower average wages (Cross and Johnson, 1989). Since such lower occupational status of blacks has not been attributed to their length of time in Britain, researchers have contributed it to persistent racial discrimination (Smith, 1989).

The post-war phase of non-interventionism on the part of policy-makers was a critical factor in the persistent inequality faced by blacks in Britain. In the absence of strong government directives, firms have instituted racial quotas and limited highly qualified blacks' access to skilled and supervisory jobs.

Such segregation of black immigrants in a limited number of jobs as a result of discrimination based on race has denied blacks economic mobility. Moreover, it has perpetuated racial inequality. Such actions by white British private and public sectors have planted the seeds for black grievances, which has inevitably led to racial conflict as blacks strive for racial and social justice and the whites refuse to yield to black demands.

Racial Segregation and Discrimination in Housing

The residential concentration of blacks is another dimension of race relations leading to racial conflict. In general, people of Afro-Caribbean

origin have been heavily concentrated in the South-East and West Midlands regions of Britain. Within these areas, 58 per cent of the black population reside in Greater London and 16 per cent live in metropolitan areas of the West Midlands. They live in the largest urban areas, and within such large areas, they are much more concentrated in inner and south London and Birmingham (Owen, 1995). Smaller concentrations of Afro-Caribbeans are located in Yorkshire and Humberside (4 per cent) and Greater Manchester (3 per cent).

Clearly segregated within metropolitan areas, this pattern of population concentration, which started during the period of black immigration to Britain, had been essentially set by 1961 (Smith, 1989: 27). However, Peach (1996: 227) found that Afro-Caribbean segregation in Greater London declined between 1961 and 1991. He also found that average levels of Afro-Caribbean segregation in British cities was much lower in 1991 than those for Bangladeshi, Pakistanis and Indians.

Even though the overall numbers of blacks in Britain are small, because of colour and the fact that they are heavily concentrated in certain cities, their numbers appear larger than they actually are. Eighty-one per cent of the Afro-Caribbean population lived in metropolitan counties in 1989 (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, 1991: 25). Moreover, 43 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans lived in inner city zones of London, Birmingham and Manchester, while only 6 per cent of the white British population lived there (Small, 1994: 64; Smith, 1989: 26). Wherever blacks have lived, most have been relegated to the most deprived urban areas (Brown, 1984).

In the beginning, most black immigrants were relegated to housing in the private market. Thus, most lived in inner city slums, condemned to the worst housing in the least desirable areas where high rent and inflated prices were charged for property that was on average inferior to that occupied by whites (Jacobs, 1985: 14). Moreover, during the early post-war period, the relatively few blacks who managed to acquire council housing were invariably housed in the poorest properties also (Jacobs, 1985: 19).

Rapid building in the 1960s, often below standard and based on new techniques, had led to the development of 'new slums'. This polarization in the quality of housing was to allow the 'public sector urban gatekeeper' to allocate housing on the basis of 'deserving' and 'non-deserving' categories. The non-deserving were often allocated poor quality housing – these included the homeless, lone parents, large families, the unemployed and so-called 'problem families'. In most cases, blacks were overrepresented in the 'non-deserving' category (Luthera, 1988: 23). Race was a key factor in the overrepresentation of blacks in

this category. Such a pattern of unjust treatment based on race, which emerged during black immigration in Britain, has been sustained, resulting in a continued potential for racial conflict. While black residential segregation in Britain is not at the same level as in cities in the USA, residential location, nevertheless, has been a critical factor in determining the subordinate status of blacks (see McKay, 1977).

Such segregation seems to be related to discrimination. For example, in 1967, when it was not illegal to refuse people accommodation on racial grounds, Daniel (1968) revealed that Afro-Caribbeans were often told that furnished accommodations had been rented already in 63 cases out of 120 properties in which 'phone enquiries were made. In five cases, the Afro-Caribbean person was quoted a higher rent than the white British person. When enquiring in person, the Afro-Caribbean person was told the properties had been rented already on 40 occasions out of the 60 properties in which enquiries were made. On six occasions, the Afro-Caribbean person was quoted a higher rent. Unfurnished accommodation was hardly ever made available to blacks (Daniel, 1968: 155–9). A repeat of the test six years later showed that discrimination had been reduced (Smith, 1977: 287), but had not disappeared.

Follow-up interviews with the discriminating landlords and real estate agents showed that two stereotypes existed. The first was that blacks were, amongst other things, 'unclean and noisy' and would 'upset' the existing white tenants, and secondly, blacks would be bad payers, break the conditions of their tenancy or contract of repayment and reduce the area to a slum (with a consequent fall in property/rental values) (Luthera, 1988: 110).

In fact, Patterson (1963) found just the opposite in Brixton (a heavily black section in London). There, not only did managing estate agents report black settlers to be prompt payers of rent, but they also paid at a level above the average rent paid by all dwellers. In the early years, this was regarded as a 'colour tax' paid by blacks to induce landlords to rent to them. It was not as if blacks were receiving any better facilities in return. Instead, blacks, like other immigrants, enjoyed the least in terms of access to facilities, such as hot water (Davison, 1964: 107).

Many of the early surveys reported white home owners who refused to sell to blacks and estate agents who either refused to show them any properties or explicitly limited them to the least saleable ones on their books (PEP, 1967: 170–6; PEP, 1977). Some estate agents in Brixton reported sales to West Indians at inflated prices (Patterson, 1969: 194). During the 1970s, private sector racial discrimination in housing took a

more sophisticated form with estate agents giving limited information to blacks and *steering* them into existing areas of concentration (PEP, 1976).

Thus, due to white British fear of black competition and the widespread belief by most whites that blacks have no rights in the labour and housing market that whites are bound to respect, white discrimination against blacks has occurred in both employment and housing. Such patterns of discrimination, which have led to continued racial inequality, were the seeds that would inevitably lead to racial conflict in British cities. Discrimination also leads to poverty, which is in turn related to crime.

Race, Poverty and Crime

Poverty and crime are highly correlated. When the poor perceive their condition as related to racial injustice and discrimination, the potential for violent rebellion heightens. Although crimes have been disproportionately higher among blacks, those who often are arrested for crimes are also disproportionately poor, unemployed and disadvantaged. It is this condition that has led to what I call 'political crimes'. Such crimes can be characterized as a form of rebellion against an oppressive system. Such rebellions occurred in cities in the USA during the 1960s. Rebellion against racial oppression occurred in British cities during the 1980s. During 1980 and 1981, urban unrest was observed in the St Paul's area of Bristol, the Brixton area of London, parts of Liverpool, Manchester and the Handsworth area of Birmingham. There were also disturbances in Leeds, Bradford and other cities.

Researchers who investigated the underlying reasons for the disorders related them to the reaction of Afro-Caribbeans and Asians to persistent racial discrimination, high unemployment, deprivation, political exclusion and powerlessness. Moreover, there was hostility and mistrust towards the white police officers who harassed, abused and assaulted them (Benyon, 1987; Scarman, 1981). Whether in cities in Britain or the USA, the behaviour of white police officers towards black male residents has been a key factor that has triggered urban rebellions.

Behaviour of the Police as a Factor in Racial Conflict

In the 1960s in Britain, written evidence began to emerge related to the role of the police in racial conflict. In 1965, the West Indian Standing Conference published a study of police–black relations. The Committee concluded that racial prejudice was interwoven into the fabric of police and black immigrant relationships. Moreover, the police were considered malicious and hostile (Hunte, 1965).

Black males, particularly young black males, have a higher chance of being apprehended by the police than do young white males (Willis, 1983). Moreover, black males have been subjected to general harassment from the police, which has resulted in black mistrust of the law enforcement system in general. Similar to the behaviour of the police towards blacks in the USA, the behaviour of the British police has been the immediate precipitant that has triggered rebellions by blacks in British cities.

Police behaviour is usually influenced by political power. If most whites prefer that police stop blacks unjustly, or engage in differential behaviour based on race, such police behaviour is likely to continue. Therefore, change in race relations in Britain will be slow since blacks have little influence on the political process.

Prospects for Black Political Power

Unlike the USA, Britain's small black population has little political influence. Blacks in Britain remain grossly underrepresented as MPs and at local levels (Commission for Racial Equality, 1999). Even where there are substantial, homogeneous black communities, political leadership often remains under white control (Norris and Lovenduski, 1993). Therefore, policy-makers largely ignore the needs of poor urban black residents. It is not surprising that the social and economic disadvantage experienced by urban blacks has not changed (Thomas and Krishnarayan, 1994).

Policy Implications and Implementation

In the years immediately after the end of the Second World War, the British provided Afro-Caribbeans freer access to Britain in order to fill a labour shortage. Fearing increased immigration by non-whites, policy-makers in 1962 reversed their policy and established a quota system, which strictly controlled and reduced the number of Afro-Caribbeans and Asians who could settle in the country.

At least since the 1960s, strong opposition to black immigration has been on the rise in Britain. However, policy-makers set out early to formulate immigration policies that would reduce black immigration, but not appear racially discriminatory. One such invention was the concept of partiality. This allowed entry into the country if one could demonstrate a historical family link. Therefore, a white-skinned immigrant from

Africa or India could obtain entry, while black-skinned immigrants could not. The British introduced such policies, while at the same time stating that such policies were not racist since race was not specifically mentioned.

Yet, as is typical of those who hold the ideology of white supremacy, black people in and of themselves were being defined by the British as 'a problem'. In other words, the problem was not immigration but 'black immigration'. Since Britain's immigration control policies have been inseparable from race, such policies have been a factor in establishing a climate for racial conflict in British cities. Most British policy-makers have had a history of side stepping the issue of race in Britain. Such a history is reflected in their approach to anti-discrimination policies.

British housing and labour market anti-discrimination policies have evolved from a mistaken belief that discrimination did not exist in Britain and that Britain was an example for the world of 'good race relations'. Insofar as racial segregation was a problem, in Britain it was seen as only temporary, resulting from the period of immigration (Smith, 1989: 113). Most Britons adopted the myth that segregation was merely a cultural adaptation experienced by people who possessed the same rights and opportunities as white Britons.

Given such beliefs that racial discrimination did not exist in Britain, it was not surprising that many policy-makers felt that no anti-discrimination policies were necessary. As has been documented, however, racial discrimination became widespread in both the housing and labour markets (Harris, 1991; Pilkington, 1988).

Until inhibited by the 1968 Race Relations Act, local authorities persistently evaded their responsibilities to house black applicants and made no bones of their intentions to give priority to the white population (Jacobs, 1985: 20). While the house allocation system was not specifically designed to discriminate against blacks, in practice it clearly did so at every turn (Jacobs, 1985: 23). All involved in the allocation process, from housing managers and senior councillors to clerks and housing vectors, would have a common set of values about black inferiority (Jacobs, 1985: 24).

British policy-makers have taken a non-interventionist approach to the discriminatory treatment of blacks in Britain. Policies have been weak. As a result, some employers have continued to institute race-based quotas that limited black access to high-level jobs regardless of their qualifications. This denial of opportunity in the labour market impacts on their status in the housing market. Discrimination has also occurred by which blacks in Britain received virtually none of the benefits associated with governmental subsidized council housing following the Second World War (Smith, 1989: 115). This exclusion, based on race, forced blacks to seek housing in the decaying private housing sector in the inner cities.

It was not until 1965 that the first major piece of legislation to address racial discrimination was passed in the form of a Race Relations Act (1965). (The Act was updated in 1968 and 1976.) The Race Relations Act of 1965 was passed in response to racial violence against West Indians and a mounting tide of racist speeches made at well-publicized meetings in the early 1960s (Lester, 1987: 22).

The first act of 1965 was extremely narrow in scope. It failed to touch the real problems of discrimination in housing. Three years later, it was replaced by the Race Relations Act of 1968. This act was much more ambitious in its scope. It made it unlawful to discriminate on racial grounds in employment, housing, education and the provision of goods, facilities and services to the public. The act, however, continued to be weak in the area of enforcement. The emphasis was upon conciliation and friendly settlement rather than legal rights and remedies (Lester, 1987: 23). Only the Race Relations Board could bring legal proceedings and only after elaborate conciliation procedures had been exhausted.

Another weakness of the Act was that it was confined only to deliberate or intentional discrimination. Traditional practices that were not intentional (but had discriminatory effects) were not included (Lester, 1987: 23). Furthermore, the definition of discrimination was not flexible enough to permit 'positive action' to be taken to overcome the effects of past discrimination or disadvantage. By action is meant special training programmes to equip people of colour for areas in which they have been underrepresented.

Finally, the 1965 and 1968 Acts dealt only with individual acts of discrimination and with direct discrimination. According to Wilson, the Acts:

> assumed that the main problem was that of active discrimination against individuals (generated by prejudice), that this could and would be curbed by a widespread positive reaction to the law by those in a position to discriminate and that any residual discrimination would be brought to light and dealt with as a result of complaints by people concerned to assert their rights. (Wilson, 1973: 4)

The results showed that the conciliation procedure did not remedy the wrongs, and individual complaints as a procedure were ineffective in eliminating pervasive and entrenched discriminatory practices (Lester, 1987: 23).

More importantly, according to Smith (1989), the Act came too late to guard against institutionalized racism in housing allocations. Other

researchers have pointed out the lack of enforcement and lack of coordination of anti-discrimination measures (Cross, 1982). Similar problems were found with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in the USA, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

However, one should not overlook a major obstacle to eliminating discrimination which is the persistent and strong opposition by white males to equal opportunity and racial equality. Jenkins and Solomon (1987: 215) have pointed out how the lack of commitment and hostility towards equal opportunity occurs among management, trade union representatives and among the average white British workers. Most see genuine racial equality for black workers as reducing their own mobility. Such views are very common among those who fear competition with people of colour and is related to their belief in the ideology of white supremacy.

RACE RELATIONS IN CITIES IN THE USA

Interregional Migration – South to North

Unlike Britain, the forces underlying racial divisions and racial conflict in the USA must first be understood through an examination of black migration from the rural South to the urban North. Until recently, immigration to the USA of people of colour has played less of a role in racial conflict.

Black migration to the North had two waves. The first wave followed the First World War and the second wave came after the Second World War. Together, these mass movements of blacks changed race relations in the North. When blacks were few in number and relatively 'invisible' to whites, race relations appeared calm. As black migration increased, Northern whites viewed black migration with alarm and fear. Such fear of black competition for jobs was especially prevalent among working-class whites, many of whom were first or second generation immigrants (Massey and Denton, 1993: 29). Although many were as unskilled as blacks, they found satisfaction in their 'whiteness' in a society where white colour gave immediate advantages in the area of employment and housing over people of colour.

From 1930 to 1940, about 400,000 blacks moved from the rural South to the urban North (Farley and Allen, 1987: 113). When they arrived, they faced not the 'promised land', but a severe housing shortage combined with housing discrimination. Blacks found that Northern whites, like whites in the South, did not want racial residential integration. One mechanism for avoiding racial integration was the construction of black ghettos, that is, areas where the population was majority black and separate from white areas. The black ghetto became an institutional tool to subordinate and exploit blacks in cities. Such ghettos were usually not only racially separate, but also unequal. In the South, laws passed by state governments kept blacks separate and unequal, whereas in most Northern cities the primary mechanism for achieving the same results was the construction and maintenance of black ghettos. According to a report of a National Advisory Commission appointed by former President Lyndon Johnson, 'what white Americans have never fully understood, but what the Negro can never forget, is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it' (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968: 2).

Over the years, black migration to cities has occurred at an accelerating rate. As a result, the black population has become more urbanized, and more metropolitan than the white population. Almost all black population growth is occurring within metropolitan areas, primarily within central cities.

On the other hand, the vast majority of white population growth is occurring in suburban portions of metropolitan areas. As a result, central cities are becoming more heavily black, while the suburban areas surrounding them are remaining heavily white. Moreover, the black population reside disproportionately in the largest metropolitan areas; those with populations of one million or more.

It is important to note that due primarily to discrimination based on race, the black pattern of settlement and spatial expansion in metropolitan areas diverge sharply from that typical of the white immigrant. As white immigrants arrived in cities, most were integrated into the larger society obtaining better jobs and housing, that is, social and spatial mobility in the suburbs. On the contrary, black migrants were generally not integrated into the larger predominantly white society. Instead most blacks remained segregated in central cities.

Such divergent patterns led the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders to conclude that 'our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal'. Such a statement incorrectly assumed that there had once been unity and equality between the races, when in fact there has always been a situation of 'separate and unequal' between blacks and whites in cities in the USA. We will examine later whether these patterns of separation and inequality are increasing or decreasing.

Recent Immigration and Changing Racial Diversity in the USA

The USA is now experiencing the largest wave of immigration in the country's history. Whereas early immigration consisted of people predominantly from Europe, immigration since the 1970s has consisted of people predominantly from Asia and Latin America. Mexico, which borders the USA, supplies the largest share of both legal and undocumented immigrants. Within the Caribbean and Central America, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica supply a high proportion of the legal immigrants. The impact of recent immigration by people of colour can have a profound effect on race relations in metropolitan areas.

Debate is already intensifying over the issue of immigration. Some Americans are arguing that the 'new immigrants of colour' will not integrate as easily or move up the economic ladder as quickly as earlier white immigrants from Europe and will therefore place strain on US public resources. Others have argued that immigrants take jobs away from American citizens and lower wages overall (Beck, 1996: A11). In spite of the evidence that immigrants have little or no impact on wages or jobs, efforts to control immigration (legal and illegal) continued during 1995. These efforts are discussed later in the section on immigration controls.

One reason for the aggressive increased concerns over immigration is the perceived *threat* of an increasing population that is different in characteristics from the majority white population. An important variable in understanding race relations is the 'dissimilarity factor'. In general, the greater the dissimilarity of the minority group from the majority group, the greater the discrimination, segregation and denial of equal access to jobs and housing imposed on the minority group.

Segregation and Discrimination in Housing

Racial residential segregation is a tool in which the dominant white population excludes people of colour in cities from the benefits of society. The ultimate outcome of racial residential segregation is racial inequality. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (1968: 10) recognized that fact when it concluded that 'pervasive discrimination and segregation in employment and housing have resulted in the continuing exclusion of a great number of blacks from the benefits of economic progress'.

Blacks are also excluded more often than other groups, making them the most residentially segregated racial minority group in the country. Support for this statement is provided through calculations of indexes of dissimilarity between the dominant white population and three racial minority groups in the largest metropolitan areas with a population over one million (Table 11.1). The three racial groups are blacks, Asian/Pacific Islanders and Hispanics. The results show that blacks, the most racially visible group, are the most segregated from the white population, with an average level of segregation of 66 per cent compared with 42 per cent for Hispanics and only 38 per cent for Asian/Pacific Islanders (Li, et al., 1995).

Thus, residential segregation in US metropolitan areas occurs along a colour continuum. Whites exclude some racial minority groups more often than others. Darden's (1989) study of multiple minority groups revealed that Asians experience the smallest amount of residential segregation from whites, have the highest level of suburbanization, and have the greatest opportunity for social, economic and spatial mobility. Blacks, on the other hand, experience the greatest amount of residential segregation, the lowest level of suburbanization and have the least opportunity for social, economic and spatial mobility of all racial/ethnic minority groups.

Race, more than ethnicity or class, drives residential segregation in American housing markets. Due to persistent discrimination in housing based on colour, blacks are residentially segregated and largely excluded from the suburbs, regardless of their level of education, income and occupation. Thus, future improvements in the social and economic status of blacks will not necessarily lead to residential integration and greater suburbanization. Such a pattern differs from that of any other minority group and reinforces the significance of colour – that is, black colour – in explaining the unequal status of blacks compared with members of the other minority groups. This conclusion is also supported by others.

After examining an overwhelming amount of evidence, Massey and Denton (1993) came to three conclusions. First, black residential segregation continues unabated in the nation's largest metropolitan black communities, and this spatial isolation cannot be attributed to class. Secondly, although whites now accept open housing in principle, they have not come to terms with its implications in practice. Whites in practice are unwilling to tolerate more than a small percentage of blacks in their neighbourhoods. Thirdly, discrimination against blacks is widespread and continues at very high levels in urban housing markets (Massey and Denton, 1993: 109).

In general terms, racial discrimination in housing exists whenever individuals, in this case blacks, are prevented from obtaining the housing

Table 11.1   *Racial residential segregation indices in the largest metropolitan areas, 1990*

MSA/PMSA	Black	% in pop.	Asian	% in pop.	Hispanic	% in pop.
Los Angeles–Long Beach, CA PMSA	72.97	10.5	46.19	10.2	61.07	37.8
New York, NY PMSA	82.18	23.2	48.11	6.2	65.78	22.1
Chicago, IL PMSA	85.78	21.7	43.36	3.6	63.19	12.1
Philadelphia, PA–NJ PMSA	77.14	18.8	43.07	2.1	62.57	3.6
Detroit, MI PMSA	87.63	21.4	43.45	1.3	39.71	1.9
Washington, DC–MD–VA MSA	66.07	26.2	32.33	5.0	40.91	5.7
Houston, TX PMSA	66.80	18.1	46.14	3.7	49.30	21.4
Boston, MA PMSA	78.32	6.0	36.81	3.0	36.37	5.0
Atlanta, GA MSA	67.83	25.8	40.26	1.8	34.48	2.0
Riverside–San Bernardino, CA PMSA	43.75	6.5	33.30	3.6	35.84	26.5
Dallas, TX PMSA	63.10	15.8	40.82	2.5	49.54	14.4
San Diego, CA MSA	58.12	6.0	47.91	7.4	45.20	20.4
Minneapolis–St Paul, MN–WI MSA	61.95	3.6	41.24	2.6	35.42	1.5
St Louis, MO–IL MSA	76.99	17.2	38.48	0.9	22.88	1.1
Anaheim–Santa Ana, CA PMSA	37.49	1.6	33.16	10.0	49.92	23.4
Baltimore, MD MSA	71.36	25.7	38.31	1.8	30.16	1.3
Phoenix, AZ MSA	49.89	3.3	27.44	1.6	48.09	16.3
Oakland, CA PMSA	67.75	14.2	39.23	12.4	38.78	13.1
Tampa–St Petersburg–Clearwater, FL MSA	71.24	9.1	35.10	1.1	46.80	7.0
Pittsburgh, PA PMSA	71.03	8.1	50.58	0.8	29.77	0.6
Seattle, WA PMSA	56.23	4.0	36.56	6.7	20.37	2.8
Miami–Hialeah, FL PMSA	71.76	19.1	26.88	1.2	50.32	49.2
Cleveland, OH PMSA	85.11	19.3	36.76	1.1	55.31	1.9
Newark, NJ PMSA	82.50	22.4	29.48	2.8	66.74	10.3
Denver, CO PMSA	64.47	5.7	29.02	2.2	46.47	13.0
San Francisco, CA PMSA	63.93	7.4	50.22	20.0	49.81	14.5
Kansas, MO–KS MSA	72.55	12.7	33.13	1.1	39.35	2.9
San Jose, CA PMSA	42.79	3.5	38.39	16.8	47.80	21.0
Sacramento, CA MSA	55.69	6.7	48.11	7.4	36.98	11.6
Cincinnati, OH–KY–IN PMSA	75.75	13.1	40.25	0.8	25.39	0.5
Milwaukee, WI PMSA	82.76	13.6	42.23	1.3	56.35	3.6
Norfolk–Virginia Beach–Newport, VA MSA	49.44	28.2	34.27	2.4	29.57	2.3
Columbus, OH MSA	67.33	11.9	44.20	1.5	27.55	0.8
Fort Worth–Arlington, TX PMSA	61.90	10.6	40.30	2.2	45.06	11.3
San Antonio, TX MSA	54.22	6.5	30.20	1.1	53.75	47.6
Bergen–Passaic, NJ PMSA	76.77	7.5	34.48	5.1	58.80	11.6
Fort Lauderdale–Hollywood– Pompano Beach, FL	72.22	15.7	27.18	1.4	30.73	9.1
Indianapolis, IN MSA	74.28	13.7	37.25	0.8	25.73	0.9
Portland, OR PMSA	66.43	3.1	29.99	3.7	26.87	3.6
New Orleans, LA MSA	68.80	34.4	49.72	1.6	31.00	4.3
Charlotte–Gastonia–Rock Hill, NC–SC MSA	53.44	19.9	42.99	0.9	32.09	0.9
Orlando, FL MSA	60.45	12.1	25.32	1.8	26.46	9.0
Salt Lake City–Ogden, UT MSA	47.12	17.2	31.05	2.3	32.23	5.8
Middlesex–Somerset–Hunterdon, NJ PMSA	53.96	6.5	36.36	5.4	49.88	7.0
Rochester, NY MSA	67.36	9.1	40.70	1.4	55.39	3.1
Means	66.33	13.5	38.23	3.9	42.35	10.8

Source: Computed by the author from data obtained from the US Department of Commerce, *1990 Census of Population and Housing. Summary Tape File 1A*. Washington, DC: Data User Services Division, 1991

they want in the location they prefer for reasons of race. Such discrimination by race hampers the possibility of integrated neighbourhoods, despite improved white attitudes towards blacks and increases in the socioeconomic status of blacks (Foley, 1973).

Prior to the 1968 Fair Housing Act, white real estate brokers simply refused to show or sell blacks homes in predominantly white areas. The most effective, subtle and widespread discriminatory technique still used today by white real estate brokers is 'racial steering'. This is a practice by

which a real estate broker directs buyers toward or away from particular houses or neighbourhoods according to the buyer's race (Aleinikoff, 1976: 809; Openshaw, 1973; Saltman, 1975: 43–5; US Commission on Civil Rights, 1971: 60–1). Black homeseekers are steered away from white areas, while whites are directed to them. Conversely, white homeseekers are steered away from black areas while blacks are directed to them.

Widespread discrimination in housing has continued to affect various racial and ethnic groups. However, the most serious and persistent discrimination has been against blacks. It is no accident that blacks are the most residentially segregated and the least suburbanized minority group.

Discrimination typically is uncovered through the use of an investigative procedure called paired testing. Two individuals, one white and one from a minority racial group, are trained to pose as homeseekers and are given fictional identities which render them virtually identical in terms of income, family size, preferences etc. Both team-mates separately contact a real estate agent or landlord and attempt to acquire housing. The testers independently complete reports following their contacts, and analysis of dozens of such testing studies conducted during the 1980s has revealed the alarming frequency with which housing discrimination occurs in the sale and rental of housing (Galster, 1990a, 1990b, 1990c). More recently, the results of the Housing Discrimination Study (HDS) have been released by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (Turner et al., 1991). Thirty-eight hundred paired tests of housing discrimination against blacks and Hispanics were conducted in 25 metropolitan areas in 1989. On average, both black and Hispanic renters and would-be owners were likely to be discriminated against 50 per cent of the time when they responded to advertisements in major metropolitan newspapers.

Such restrictions on black spatial mobility due to discrimination have important social and economic consequences for the black population. Blacks, more than any other group, are disproportionately concentrated in central cities. Moreover, within central cities, blacks are disproportionately concentrated in poor areas away from economic opportunity.

Race, Lack of Economic Opportunity and the Emerging Underclass

In the period since the end of the Second World War, many blue-collar jobs that once constituted the economic backbones of cities and provided employment opportunities for their poorly educated residents, have either vanished or been moved to the suburbs (Kasarda, 1989: 4). Thus, newer and better job opportunities are locating further away from the places of black residence, forcing black families to spend more time and money commuting to work or looking for work (Darden, 1986: 112).

Given that blacks have more restricted residential location choices than members of other racial minority groups, the cost associated with distance reduces access to some jobs. In addition, there is a tendency for employers to hire workers who reflect the racial character of the area in which they are located – resulting in an indirect effect of housing segregation on employment opportunities (Kain, 1968; McDonald, 1981: 28).

The decline of jobs in central cities has been most pronounced in certain cities of the North Central Region, which includes such metropolitan areas as Detroit and Chicago (Darden et al., 1987: 2–3).

Discrimination in the Labour Market

In addition to a lack of economic opportunity due to housing segregation and discrimination, blacks also continue to face discrimination in the labour market regardless of residential location resulting in higher rates of unemployment and lower wages.

With rare exception, black men and women experience higher unemployment than whites at all levels of schooling. Thus black men who have graduated from college, are more than twice as likely to be unemployed as white college graduates. Moreover, blacks experience higher unemployment regardless of their metropolitan residence, although inequalities tend to be greatest in central cities (Darden et al., 1992).

In addition to higher unemployment and underemployment, blacks are more likely than whites to be in jobs offering fewer opportunities for career growth. Corcoran and Duncan (1979) found that blacks receive less on-the-job training than whites. Controlling for characteristics such as education and marital status, Boston (1990) concluded that the probability of black men and women moving from secondary jobs (jobs characterized by low levels of training) to primary sector jobs offering more training is about one-half the corresponding probability for whites.

Beyond the statistical record, controlled experiments using paired testers have investigated hiring discrimination. In these experiments, minority job applicants are paired with non-Hispanic white applicants. The applicants are given similar backgrounds and are chosen and trained to be as similar as possible in job-related characteristics such as appearance, articulateness, and apparent energy level. How the minority

applicants are treated in job applications can then be observed and compared with the treatment received by their non-Hispanic white 'twins'.

A study targeted at entry-level jobs concluded that in one out of five paired tests the white applicant was able to advance further through the hiring process than his or her equally qualified black counterpart (Turner et al., 1991: 31). Such experiments provide irrefutable evidence of pervasive hiring discrimination in US labour markets.

Racial discrimination in employment contributes to blacks' inferior rates of employment and wage levels. This occurs both directly and through discriminations' effect upon occupational segregation. Segregation of blacks into occupations associated with low pay, minimum on-the-job training or chances for advancement, and cyclica instability intensifies interracial economic disparities and enhances the probability of racial conflict.

Thus, by limiting physical access to work, the means by which people became productive workers, and the occupations through which economic success is promoted, discrimination and segregation in housing and employment systematically create and perpetuate a host of socioeconomic inequalities between blacks and whites. These disparities manifest themselves in many ways, but perhaps most dramatically in higher black rates of poverty, unemployment, school and labour force dropouts, welfare dependency, crime and substance abuse (Darden et al., 1992).

These economic and social inequalities reinforce the stereotypes held by some whites and serves as a rationale for continuing white supremacy. It legitimizes white prejudices about the 'undesirable characteristics' supposedly possessed by all members of the black population.

Such reinforced prejudices make it more likely that white households will want to perpetuate all dimensions of segregation. Some may be unwilling to remain in their neighbourhoods once blacks begin to move in or attend local schools. When seeking different accommodation, they may be reluctant to search in areas where blacks live or go to school. These actions directly reinforce housing segregation. Finally, white employees' hostility toward potential black workers might encourage employers to discriminate for the sake of maintaining work place tranquillity, or they may discriminate due to their own ideology. Black households bear crushing costs from the perpetuation of this vicious circle. Elimination of employment discrimination should close nearly half the gap in incomes between white and black males (Price and Mills, 1985), and reduce the high proportion of blacks in poverty and living in high poverty areas.

The Spatial Concentration of Poverty: New or a Continuing Trend?

Researchers are continuing to debate whether the spatial concentration of black poverty is a new or a continuing trend. Wilson (1987) argues that the concentration of black poverty is not only a post-Second World War phenomenon, but it occurred in the 1980s as civil rights laws provided new opportunities for middle- and working-class blacks to move out of the ghetto in large numbers leaving behind an isolated and truly disadvantaged black poor population lacking the institutions and human resources necessary for success. Massey and Denton (1993), on the other hand, have taken the opposite view. They argue that the geographic concentration of black poverty is not new – poverty was just as concentrated in the ghetto of the 1930s as in the black underclass communities of the 1970s. They also do not attribute the causes of black poverty concentration to civil rights laws. Instead, they argue that black poverty is attributed to a high degree of segregation from the rest of society and a great deal of hardship stemming from larger economic changes (Massey and Denton, 1993: 117–18).

Whatever the cause, the recent studies suggest a growing trend in the number of poverty areas. Kasarda (1993) analysed census tracts in the 100 largest central cities and found that the percentage of all central city poor persons living in extreme poverty areas increased from 16.5 per cent to 22.5 per cent in 1980 to 28.2 per cent by 1990. Moreover, the spatial concentration of blacks was the most severe compared to other groups.

Using 1990 census data, Jargowsky (1994) analysed changes in ghetto poverty among blacks from 1980 to 1990. Defining 'very poor' to mean census tracts with poverty rates in excess of 40 per cent, Jargowsky concluded that ghetto poverty among blacks increased both in terms of the number of blacks living in ghettos and as a percentage of the black population.

Whether the concentration of ghetto poverty is new or a continuing fact of black life in America's cities, it is clear that the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (1968) recognized its existence in the late 1960s and warned white Americans to act to avoid a permanent separation along the lines of race and class. Since most white Americans ignored the warnings, by the end of the 1970s many large American cities were populated by an increasingly black, unemployed, poorly educated population with single-family households forced to live in endless poverty with no hope of social mobility.

Observing this phenomenon, researchers began to coin the phrase 'the urban underclass' (Katz, 1989). Although researchers disagree over what

constitutes an 'urban underclass', and whether it is growing, the concept in its most general form refers to a population that is highly segregated and poor with few tools or skills to change their condition. Thus, a feeling of hopelessness is a common characteristic (Jencks and Peterson, 1991; Ricketts and Sawhill, 1988; Ruggles and Marton, 1986). Several authors have attributed the black underclass condition directly to white racism, residential segregation and discrimination, and the systematic failure of white American institutions to address the needs of poor blacks in America's cities (Glasgow, 1980; Massey and Denton, 1993).

The continuous existence of an underclass has serious and costly consequences for America's metropolitan areas. Among such consequences is the potential for rising crime and racial conflict.

Race, Poverty and Crime

The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (1968) noted more than 30 years ago that concentrating the poor in certain sections of cities may lead to rising crime. In America's largest cities, the most concentrated poor population is disproportionately black. They reside in areas where crime rates have been historically higher than anywhere else.

The National Advisory Commission mentioned two facts that are still true today. First, most crimes in these poverty-ridden, inner city areas are committed by a small number of the residents, and secondly, the principal victims are the residents themselves. In terms of race relations, most everyday crimes committed in America's large cities are not crimes committed against a member of another race. Throughout America's metropolitan areas, most crimes committed by blacks involve other blacks as victims, just as most crimes committed by whites involve other whites as victims.

Such crimes, however, do have implications for race relations. Although most crimes in the black ghetto are committed by a small percentage of young black males (aged 14–24), they have a tendency to create fear in the minds of many whites, i.e., fear of blacks in general and black males in particular. Such fear reduces interracial interaction and the opportunity for productive race relations. Moreover, high black crime rates provide a rationale for those whites who wish to rationalize segregation by any means necessary. Instead of focusing on the poverty which is related to the crimes, they focus instead on race, which leads to such behaviour as 'keeping the blacks in their place'. Many blacks, however, view the relationship between blacks and crime with a much broader and different meaning, which inevitably speaks to the racially unequal, unjust and oppressive American metropolitan system.

The concept that these concentrated areas of poverty are analogous to white controlled internal colonies emerged following the civil disorders of the 1960s. Staples (1975), for example, viewed black crime as a function of a group's power to define what behaviour can be classified as criminal or legitimate.

In a society such as the USA, blacks share many of the characteristics of natives in colonial countries, such as political and economic oppression, cultural subjugation, and control of their community by an alien group. Race is the major factor why nearly one in four young black men in the USA were in prison or jail or on probation in 1990 (Mauer, 1990). Five years later, the number of black men in their twenties, who were imprisoned or on probation or parole, had risen to one in three. Mauer, the report's author, warned that if one in three white men were under criminal justice supervision, the nation would declare a national emergency (Butterfield, 1995).

Miller (1992), who has studied the damaging impact of the US criminal justice system on blacks, considers the pervasive criminalization of black youth today as analogous to the white slave owners' practice of crippling young black male slaves to prevent them from escaping to freedom. Moreover, white collar crimes, which are mostly committed by the white population, are rarely or lightly punished. The real relationship between crime and race is the systematic exploitation of blacks, reducing them to levels of poverty below the standard of living of most whites, a situation which produces a disproportionate number of economic crimes among the black population. Some blacks in prison are defined as political prisoners because their status is determined by the economic conditions imposed upon them by the political state, not their criminal activity.

As long as blacks remain segregated and denied equal opportunity to leave poor areas of cities, the potential for violent racial conflict is always present. Although there are periods of remission, such areas remain potential powder kegs ready to explode. The lesson for such prediction can be derived from past civil disorders in America's cities. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (1968: 10) concluded that the primary factors responsible for the 'mood of violence' among many blacks in urban America was the attitude and behaviour of white Americans towards blacks.

The Behaviour of the Police in Racial Conflict

Most of the black violent protest in America's cities has been set off by the behaviour of white police officers in particular who are viewed by many poor urban blacks as the oppressor. They are sent into black neighbourhoods to *control*

blacks by any means necessary. Thus, many blacks firmly believe that police brutality and harassment occur disproportionately in black neighbourhoods. This belief, which is frequently supported by documented incidents, is one of the major reasons for intense mistrust and resentment against the police (Hawkins and Thomas, 1991).

The role of the police, as representatives of the dominant group, is critical. Depending upon the definition of their role as 'keepers of the peace' or as enforcers of 'law and order', they may inhibit a propensity toward violence or, in an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust, they become the catalyst, their actions serving as a principal precipitating event. When a reputation for brutality or the frequent harassment of racial minorities occurs, even routine investigations and arrests may become occasions for onlookers to react violently. The same may be said of court hearings and sentencing decisions if these are perceived as racially unjust. Such was the reaction following the not guilty decision in the Rodney King beating. To many blacks, the decision represented the reality of those infamous words spoken by Supreme Court Justice Roger Taney in the Dred Scott Decision, 'Blacks have no rights that whites are bound to respect'.

Changing Black Political Power and Consequent White Reaction

Debate continues over whether there has been much improvement in the condition of life in the black ghetto since the disorders of the 1960s. Although one may question progress in the social and economic arenas, one area where there has been clear and measurable progress has been in the political arena. When the civil disorders occurred in the late 1960s, only two major cities had black mayors – Cleveland, Ohio, and Gary, Indiana. Since then, blacks have served as mayor of several major American cities including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, and San Francisco.

Moreover, the number of black elected officials has steadily increased. From 1990 to 1993, the total number of black elected officials increased from 7,370 to 8,015 (Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, 1994). Although blacks still represent only 1.6 per cent of all elected officials, their presence in positions of decision-making, particularly in America's cities, may be a key factor that explains why some cities have remained calm even though the social and economic conditions of some urban blacks may have not improved. Blacks in decision-making roles seem to have a positive and moderating effect on racial relations in cities. Moreover, city governments with black elected officials have

been found to be more responsive to the needs of urban blacks. This has been especially true in the promotion of black business development (Bates and Williams, 1993) and employment of blacks in city government.

Policy Implementation

As the USA continues to undergo a profound racial demographic shift, it is moving to tighten its policy on immigration and loosen its enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation. Important to race relations were changes in US immigration laws enacted in 1965. Those changes made it easier for immigration to occur resulting in increased numbers and changes in the racial composition of the American population. However, larger numbers of immigrants from non-European countries coupled with a large illegal flow from Mexico and other developing countries, has prompted policy-makers to reexamine immigration policy.

Because of disproportionate immigration of people of colour, non-Hispanic whites constituted 73.6 per cent of the population in 1995. The remaining percentages were: blacks 12 per cent, Hispanics 10.2 per cent, and Asians 3.3 per cent. If the present trends continue, the white non-Hispanic population will constitute 61 per cent of the population by 2030; Hispanics will be 19 per cent, blacks 13 per cent and Asians 6.6 per cent (US Bureau of the Census, 1996). However, these projections are fuelling the racial flames of fear, which are leading to changes in immigration legislation.

Republican members of Congress are sponsoring bills to change immigration laws. These bills are aimed at reducing immigration and stopping the increased racial diversity. As America moves to implement new policies to restrict immigration, it is becoming more loose concerning enforcement of anti-discrimination laws in the housing and labour markets.

Moreover, similar to the efforts in Britain, past federal efforts to eradicate housing market discrimination have been hampered by weak legislation and lack of enforcement since the Fair Housing Act of 1968. The present system is fundamentally flawed because it continues to rely on individual victims detecting discrimination against them and then filing suit. As a result, current anti-discrimination efforts provide little deterrence for prospective discriminators because they rightly believe that their actions are unlikely to be challenged. Victims typically cannot detect such illegal acts and, even when they do, their prospective benefits from seeking redress often fall short of their prospective costs of doing so (Darden et al., 1992). Moreover, relatively few victims of housing discrimination realize that

they have been victimized because discriminatory techniques have become more subtle (Turner et al., 1991).

Current civil rights enforcement policy in the labour market has its origins in the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Withers and Winston, 1989). Title VII of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination in all aspects of employment and compensation on the basis of race, colour, religion, gender or national origin. Title VII also established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to investigate complaints of such discrimination. The EEOC receives and investigates discrimination charges, resolving them through conciliation and, if necessary, court action. As such, current enforcement policy generally relies upon individual reported discrimination. In its authority to file 'pattern and practice', or systematic suits against private employers, the EEOC also may initiate investigations without a specific charge being filed.

Unlike the more limited measures in Britain, affirmative action programmes (established to implement Executive Order 11246 in 1965) are another measure to aid American minorities in their employment. As implemented by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) of the Department of Labor, this policy requires companies with $50,000 or more in federal contracts and 50 or more employees to take 'affirmative action'. Due to a white male 'backlash', however, 'affirmative action' is presently under attack.

In sum, the USA, like Britain, is becoming increasingly racially tense. Evidence suggests that racial incidents involving attacks against people of colour are on the rise. Yet, policies to address the issue are increasingly retrogressive or not enforced. It appears that the forces of white supremacy are gaining strength which further weakens the prospects of progress towards racial equality in cities in the USA.

CONCLUSIONS

The major thesis of this chapter has been that race relations, including racial conflict, have been formed and motivated by a common ideology, that is, white supremacy. Such an ideology has been deeply ingrained in the white British and white American cultures. It is this ideology that has shaped immigration policy related to people of colour. It is also this ideology that has caused similar patterns of racial residential segregation in cities and occupational segregation in the workplace.

The ideology of white supremacy, which holds that in any relations involving whites and people of colour the white population must have the advantage, has led to racially discriminatory immigration policies in both countries. It has also led to racial discrimination in housing and employment. Such discrimination occurs due to white fear of losing control over the better jobs, housing and neighbourhoods to an increasing population of blacks.

The ultimate results of the implementation of this ideology have been the perpetuation of racial inequality. African-Americans in the USA and Afro-Caribbeans in Britain have experienced a common fate of exploitation, segregation and deprivation. In both Britain and the USA it has been the denial of equal treatment of blacks by whites in housing, employment and in the criminal justice system that has been most responsible for racial conflict in cities.

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