



**Centre on Migration, Policy and Society**

**Working Paper No. 152  
University of Oxford, 2020**

**The Weight of Public Opinion: Tracing the Social and  
Political Genealogy of the British Nationality Act 1981**

Carl Altaner

WP-20-152

COMPAS does not have a centre view and does not aim to present one. The views expressed in this document are only those of its independent author

## **Abstract**

By the time of Margaret Thatcher's election as Prime Minister in May 1979, it was clear that the UK's nationality and citizenship regime was no longer fit for purpose. Previous attempts to create a British Citizenship that delineated who 'belonged' in the UK in 1962, 1968 and 1971 failed to achieve cohesion. This paper traces the development of efforts by the Conservative Party to streamline nationality, both during its time in opposition and in office. Borrowing from Ruth Wodak's discourse-historical approach, I examine declassified government documents, relevant speeches in the House of Commons and polling data to assemble a partial picture of the 1981 Act's turbulent development. Polling data revealed the synonymy of immigration with race relations in public political discourse, and that the electorate is heavily opposed to further immigration. I examine how both Labour and Conservative governments attempted to address this anti-immigration sentiment, and how Thatcher's Conservatives ultimately were able to harness a palatable yet xenophobic discourse, in the vein of Enoch Powell, in order to push through their Act.

**Author:** Carl Altaner, [carl\\_altaner@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:carl_altaner@yahoo.co.uk)

**Keywords:** Margaret Thatcher, British nationality, Commonwealth, Conservative Party, immigration.

## Introduction

Few scholars, regardless of partisan leaning, deny that Margaret Thatcher was one of the most important politicians of the twentieth century. She was Britain's longest-serving Prime Minister, the first female leader of a major political party and the first to assume the highest office in the land and to bear that title through eleven years and three general elections. As a statesperson of such colossal reputation and international repute, her accompanying historiography is similarly large. As the academic EHH Green points out, 'politicians who enjoy such an extended period of high office have their reputations repeatedly assessed, reassessed, assailed and defended, both during and after their careers' (2006). Yet even now, there are glaring aspects of Thatcher's policymaking that have been neglected in academic research, particularly in migration studies.

Sarah Spencer, a public policy expert, argues that 'there are few issues that are of such significance to civilisation, or so consistently present on international, state and local political agendas, as migration.' (2003) For a politician who commented on the state of Western civilisation as much as Thatcher, migration appears much less in her speeches and in writing about her than one might expect, given its growing importance in the years after the Second World War. Moreover, Thatcher's reputation as one of the chief architects of 'the current globalization paradigm' of our modern world, a pioneer of 'neoliberal strategies', warrants closer attention to her role in shaping that most obvious hallmark of globalisation – migration (Castles et al. 2009). The process of migration policy development at the beginning of this neoliberalising process, in the countries that began it, has rarely been studied. Most studies of the 1970s and 1980s in Britain focus on the existential crises linked to the 'British disease' of economic decline: inflation, unemployment and chronic industrial disputes (Green 2006). There is therefore a large gap in the literature on this turbulent period of British history. Comparatively few scholars have examined its migration and citizenship policy, let alone how it came into being.

I address the research question: 'what social and political factors contributed to the development of UK migration and citizenship policy in the 1970s and early 1980s?' I examine archival and contextual evidence to delve into the multifaceted motivations behind key legislation, such as the 1971 Immigration Act and British Nationality Act 1981. During the long years of the Thatcher administration, the latter bill was the only major piece of citizenship or immigration reform. The policymakers behind this Act had a unique challenge. By 1979, Britain's citizenship regime, which dictated who had the right of abode in the UK, was outdated. The only significant category of citizenship before the 1981 Act was Citizenship of the United Kingdom and Colonies. This umbrella classification was created in 1948 shortly after India gained independence, and for decades, it gave the same migration rights within the Commonwealth to those born in Sri Lanka as in Scotland. The legislative consequences of free movement in the European context – restrictions, repatriation, rollbacks – have been discussed at great length in migration studies. However, a close parallel, the reaction of a major European state to its own newly post-imperial sphere of free movement, has received much less attention.

The puzzle I attempt to solve here is the contingencies of the way Britain's political establishment navigated this arcane nationality arrangement.

We know the outcome – after the 1981 Act, an exclusive British Citizenship was established that gave right of entry for settlement to those with a close link to the UK itself and not its colonies. However, we know less about how this outcome was reached. I show that in the face of a highly dated citizenship regime, legislators in both major political parties baulked. Each accused the other of exploiting or exacerbating racial issues, which essentially were synonymous with immigration in the British political lexicon. I show how this foundational link between race relations and immigration pervaded the thinking behind successive election manifestos, White Papers and ultimately legislation. Overall, the preliminary stage of policy is what I deconstruct – how certain MPs and their governments interacted in a multi-directional feedback loop. Most importantly, I seek to address how this wrangling interacted with public opinion. The documents I analyse trace the delicate process of the formation of policy. Its contingencies are what I explore, not whether the documentary reality contradicts a certain expectation.

Margaret Thatcher's gigantic reputation, as someone who 'impinged on every aspect of British self-understanding and on the understanding of the British abroad', means that myths about her abound and are ripe for examination (Urban, quoted in Green 2006). However, my project is not as simple as a myth-busting mission. Thatcher is useful as a foil for closer examination of the many-pointed relationships mentioned above, because as a political centre of gravity for the Conservatives in the late 1970s, the social and political issues of policymaking coalesce around her. Here, however, I prioritise the wider context of her party's actions. To concentrate a study of such a vast piece of legislation on the actions of one individual, regardless of personality, would be simplistic at best. My use of secret documents, some of which have just recently been declassified, together with analysis of parliamentary speech is a useful way to shed light on the decision-making process. What I find there, at the nexus of political change on a grand scale, is only fragmentary. However, the process of policymaking in this contentious area, walking away from the crossroads of empire, reveals a messiness that is reflected in the migration politics of today.

## **Methodology**

My source materials are the digital archive of the Thatcher Foundation and Hansard, the digitised record of all speeches made in the House of Commons and House of Lords. The Thatcher Foundation is an educational organisation, founded in 1991, in order 'to advance the cause of political and economic freedom.' Its director and digital archive editor is Christopher Collins, a professional historian who worked with Margaret Thatcher on her memoirs. Like any political organisation, it therefore conducts its activities with a clear agenda. The Foundation has 'five broad goals', some of which include the promotion of 'the widest possible acceptance of democracy, market principles, the rule of law and strong defence [...] [and] to further free trade throughout the world'). Its website, [margaretthatcher.org](http://margaretthatcher.org), hosts the Churchill Archive Centre Cambridge's digitisation

efforts of over one million documents relating to Margaret Thatcher and her political career. The physical archive, located in Churchill College Cambridge, consists of 'nearly three thousand archive boxes currently occupying around 300 metres of shelving', which contain photographs, transcripts, speeches, minutes, diaries, and papers of every kind (Churchill College Cambridge 2020). A vast but indeterminate proportion of this material is digitised and available at the Thatcher Foundation website. To answer my research question, I select certain documents marked 'key' or 'major', pair them with the relevant parliamentary debate in Hansard, and thereby build a narrative of the development of British citizenship and immigration policy in the 1970s and early 1980s.

The special value of the Thatcher Archive is its up-to-date photocopies of declassified paper documents. Entire folders of documents taken directly from Downing Street and Whitehall are available for view in PDF format. This is an invaluable resource for study, which is available for very few public figures. Entire boxes, collated by the civil service upon Thatcher's departure from office, have been digitised en masse, categorised by topic. For example, box PREM19/486 is the first part of the files dedicated to the 1981 British Nationality Act. It was released publicly in December 2011, after the thirty-year declassification as specified in the UK's freedom of information laws, and is over 150 pages long. Another box, PREM 19/797, simply covers 'immigration' from 1979 to 1982. They were categorised by hand as immigration-related – the word is written in pencil on each document, as Figure 1 shows – and are therefore nearly all relevant to my study.

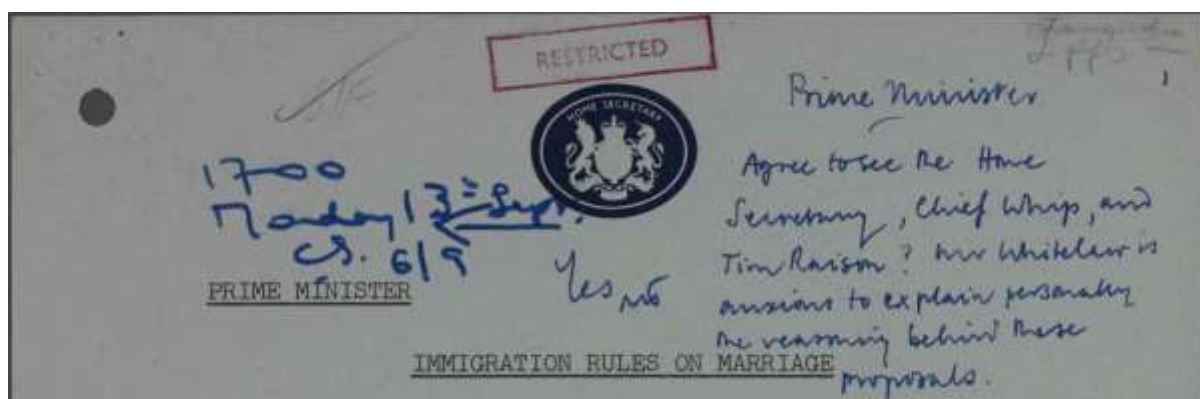


Figure 1: part of a typical photocopied document in the Thatcher Archive. Note the clerk's handwritten 'immigration' label for filing purposes in the top right.

I draw from these 'confidential filing' boxes, but it is unclear whether they contain all of the files that may be pertinent to the bill in its creation. Many documents were held back longer than thirty years, and certain files may have been deliberately kept out of archives. The sensitivity around issues of race and immigration may also have encouraged ministers to speak off the record or to destroy material, as Richard Vinen points out in reference to the Thatcher archives: 'extensive documentation does not equate to certainty' (2019). As a result, my limited selection of documents from these boxes came from sources that are very large, but limited too.

The comprehensive scale of this digital archive gives an artificial impression of completeness, and so my conclusions have epistemological caveats.

Rather than trawling through 317 pages, I use the Thatcher Foundation's categorisation of documents according to their importance, in tandem with the search function. Because the digital archive is so large, and because the Thatcher Foundation hosts it in order to promote their organisational goals of promoting Thatcherite ideology, many documents have been labelled according to Collins' personal interpretation of their historical significance. This is done on a scale from one to four: 'key', 'major', 'minor' and 'trivial'. Thatcher's most important speeches, letters etc., such as her 1990 'No, No, No' speech to the European Council, are generally labelled 'key' whereas documents of less obvious importance are labelled 'minor' or lower. I use these somewhat vague categorisations as a loose guide, focusing most of my attention on those labelled 'key' and 'major'. This gave mixed results. There are no transparent criteria for what qualifies a document as 'key' or 'trivial', and it is not apparent what the difference is between a 'key' and a 'major' document. Under the 'immigration' search category, several documents are rather spuriously labelled 'major'. A short letter from Thatcher to a backbench Labour MP, Michael Cocks, repeated the basic points of the 1981 Act and the 1979 election manifesto: 'fears about continuing large scale immigration are directly inimical to race relations in this country.' (Thatcher 1980) Collins highlights this sentence in the brief summary of this 'major' document, so it appears that the Foundation is making a point about how 'MT's immigration policy is not at all 'racialist'.

A significant proportion of academic writing about the Thatcher period, 1979 to 1990, verges on the polemic. Journal articles written during this period are often useful more as historical documents, a sample of academic opinion of the time, than they are as dispassionate social scientific analyses. David Dixon of the University of Hull's 1983 article, 'Thatcher's People: The British Nationality Act 1981' interjects into his argument a counterfactual projection of a Labour version of the 1981 Act 'had a quite ideological significance for the two parties ... if the post-1974 government had passed new nationality legislation ... the result *would* have significantly differed from the 1981 Act' (Dixon 1983). My own evidence, drawn from documents that were classified at Dixon's time of writing, does not support this and no evidence probably could. The fierce partisanship that characterised the Thatcher period is reflected in the scholarly work of the time, which means that using it for my research calls for additional scepticism.

To consider the division between primary and secondary sources, a distinction made in the humanities but rarely in migration studies or social science in general, invites the question of my theoretical framework. I adhere to Ruth Wodak's discourse-historical approach (DHA). The narrative I construct from the documentary evidence is standalone; there is no deliberate theoretical 'lens'. This aspect of my research could be likened to the traditional historicist approach of mid-century scholars like GR Elton, who believed that history is a search for the objective truth as discovered in primary sources (Evans 1997). A caveat here, however, is that the nature of archives as constructed entities demands respect for the interpretivist emphasis on 'human volition.' According to Porta and Keating, the interpretivist stance is that 'it is impossible to

understand historical events or social phenomena without looking at the perceptions individuals have of the world outside.' (2010). In my narrative of internal government interaction, the world 'inside' of ministers and advisers is equally important. My approach is historicist in the sense that I have looked at archives and treated them as 'fonts of knowledge', so to speak, while acknowledging that the archive is itself constructed. Awareness of the partiality, of the fragmentary view, of the sources I analyse is also important here. My study is far from comprehensive and it would be misleading to give this impression, considering the sheer volume of available documents that could be cherry-picked to support almost any conclusion I so choose.

Modern Western societies consist of dizzying contradictions and tensions within and between nation states, and there are no easy answers to the 'challenges of globalization and neo-liberalist economies and ideologies' that have given rise to nationalism and xenophobia. These complexities can only be grasped by a 'model of multicausal, mutual influences between different groups of persons within a specific society' (Wodak 2001). I examine the internal operations of successive British governments. A simple story of causality is difficult to support given the complexities involved. I use DHA because it centres the vital role of history in the analysis of society, while providing the methodological dynamism to accommodate the intricacies of a modern Western government's records.

DHA's 'pragmatically oriented theoretical approach' focuses on clarifying conceptual tools as opposed to a universal 'grand theory' (Mouzelis 1995, quoted in Wodak 2001). An attempt to graft a more rigid theoretical framework, such the Marxist approach of Dixon's article, onto my archival narrative might distract from the material I uncover. Instead of following the typical formula in migration studies of examining a particular topic (often either well-worn or microscopic) through a new theoretical lens, I take new archival texts and introduce them to migration studies more or less as-is. The flexibility provided by DHA helps here. Its criteria of text critique, which 'aims at discovering inconsistencies, (self-) contradictions, paradoxes and dilemmas' suits the paper detritus of intra-government communications very well. Politicians and civil servants brief against each other, manifestos are upheld or contradicted, leaders quell dissent among their supporters. Such dynamic communication often fills the next criteria for DHA: 'the "socio-diagnostic critique" is concerned with the demystifying exposure of the – manifest or latent – possibly persuasive or "manipulative" character of discursive practices.' (Wodak 2001) Contextual knowledge outside of the 'discourse internal sphere' is key. Discussion in a Cabinet meeting will be influenced by preceding debate in the Commons, which will itself be shaped by events in the nation. I give a lot of space to historical context, which helps to provide a comprehensive picture of what is being said in a document, but may detract from or crowd out more critical analysis. DHA also to some degree inoculates against accusations of cherry picking. I interpret each document within its specific historical and critical context, corroborating my findings with the existing expertise of academic historians.

There exists, however, the incontrovertible problem of archival research: the flawed transmission of real-life events from scribe, to paper, and to PDF, curated at each step by individuals with varying goals. The American

anthropologist Ann Stoler argues in her article 'Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance' that 'scholars need to move from archive-as-source to archive-as-subject.' Particularly pertinent to the Thatcher Archive, Stoler points out that archives are 'monuments of states' that produce as cultural agents, in addition to providing knowledge (2002). DHA acknowledges archives as sites of struggle and human endeavour, similar to any dataset that a researcher might use. While Stoler is an anthropologist describing colonial archives, the digital Thatcher Archive represents similar issues of epistemology. As a virtual repository that may be edited, censored or supplemented in real time, the Thatcher Archive exemplifies the new perspective on archives – as no longer being 'inert sites of storage and conservation. [...] What constitutes the archive and what systems of classification signal at specific times are the very substance of colonial politics.' (Stoler 2002) With the seamless fluidity of the searchable, digital Thatcher Archive, it possesses an artificial sense of completeness that can lull the unwary researcher into a sense of false totality. To counteract this, I place extra emphasis on historical context, as per DHA.

It cannot be argued that the Thatcher Archive is the very substance of all that was the Thatcher years, let alone the process of citizenship policy formation across several governments in Britain. However, both Stoler's archives and mine should be read 'against their grain.' Collins' classification of documents into 'key', 'major', 'minor' and 'trivial', a very clear grain, calls for this cautious approach. The implications of archival research are very much based in the power of the state; in this case, the British civil service and governmental departments – but they are not just monuments to the bureaucratic cogs of state. Archives are monuments to individuals too, who have professional expectations and unknowable political and/or personal inclinations.

We can read against the grain in reference to Collins, who has a great deal of control over the digital Thatcher Archive, as well as against the state. There are multiple grains in all archives – alongside the state there are that of charitable foundations and individual archivists, and each of these grains do not all move in the same way. At the heart of the concept of reading against the archival grain is 'Raymond Williams' pioneering treatment of culture as a site of contested, not shared, meaning.' (quoted in Stoler 2002). My approach addresses the contested site of the Thatcher archive by pairing it with the appropriate contests in Hansard, the record of parliamentary debate. Stoler points out that her 'students of colonialisms' must first 'move along their grain' in order to understand how to reverse it, to read it 'from below.' (2002). To an extent, my analysis does go along Collins' grain. Accompanied by the precepts of DHA, I use his helpful classifications of importance, 'key' to 'trivial', as a rough guide to the documents that deserve our attention; but I keep a firm eye on the wider historical context and Hansard throughout, to control for the archive's *raison d'être* as a handmade monument to Margaret Thatcher's legacy.



## Empirical analysis

### ***Imperial entanglements of British nationality in the 1970s and 1980s: introductory context***

In order to understand the relevance of my research question, it is necessary to give an overview of the British nationality regime in the post-war period. Today's model of citizenship is based on the British Nationality Act 1981, which was a major piece of legislation that split British citizenship into three distinct categories: British Citizenship, for 'people connected with the United Kingdom'; Citizenship of the British Dependent Territories 'for people connected with colonies, etc.'; and British Overseas Citizenship, which is for the remaining citizens mostly associated with former dependencies of the UK, such as in east Africa (Whitelaw 1978). These are the primary categories described by Willie Whitelaw, who was Home Secretary from the inauguration of the Thatcher administration in May 1979 until June 1983.

The 1948 British Nationality Act, enacted soon after a major Commonwealth conference following India's independence, established a blanket Citizenship of the UK and Colonies (CUKC) that allowed for complete freedom of movement within the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth of Nations is the successor organisation to the British Empire, describing itself as a 'voluntary association of 54 independent and equal countries [...] 'work[ing] together to promote prosperity democracy and peace.' (Commonwealth 2020) The pan-Commonwealth right of abode ended in 1962 with the Conservative government's controversial introduction of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act. It was strengthened in 1968 by the Wilson Labour government in a new bill, which added a requirement for entrants to have a parent or grandparent born or naturalised in the UK. The British Nationality Act 1981 formally redefined British citizenship, bringing it into line with other Western citizenship models by replacing CUKC with three new categories: British Citizen, British Overseas Citizen and British Dependent Territories Citizen. It entered into force on 1 January 1983, with the purpose of updating the 1971 Immigration Act, which itself was a refinement and further tightening of separate Commonwealth Immigrants Act(s) in 1962 and 1968.

These earlier bills were drafted in response to drastically increased immigration to the UK from what is termed the 'New Commonwealth', which is generally taken to mean the former colonies of the Indian subcontinent, east Africa, and much of the Caribbean. Its counterpart is the 'Old Commonwealth', consisting of New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and Canada. As the prominent Conservative MP Sir Frederic Bennett told his colleagues in the House of Commons while debating the 1971 Act, '[they are] our own very close kith and kin with particularly close ties with this country ... we owe a special duty to Australia and New Zealand' (HC Deb 17 June 1971) In order to streamline Britain's outdated citizenship regime, successive governments were required to balance postcolonial commitments to groups such as the east African Asians and public insistence on curbing the immigration of such groups. Ideally, links with 'kin' – i.e. whites – in the Old Commonwealth would be preserved. Reginald Maudling, the Conservative Home Secretary behind the restrictive 1971 Immigration Act, told MPs who accused his bill of racism that 'it is turning the whole argument on racial discrimination upside down to say that we cannot accord a *special* position to people with a parental

connection with this country. Every other country in the world does this. [emphasis added]' (HC Deb 17 June 1971). The seemingly necessary realignment with a more European, as opposed to an all-encompassing imperial style of citizenship, forced British governments across the 1970s and early 1980s to decide and codify which citizens 'belonged' and which did not. The 'detritus of empire', as one Conservative party researcher called it, was a persistent thorn in the side of both Labour and Conservative lawmakers as they tried to streamline British citizenship (quoted in Hansen 1999). The core of these Acts is their answer to the question of who is 'special' to Britain.

### ***The question of xenophobia in the Immigration and Nationality Acts – Powell, Labour and the 1979 general election***

Certain key figures had an outsized influence not only on Conservative policymaking, but also on successive governments' thinking about the direction of migration policy and immigration's role in British society. Enoch Powell, the Conservative and later Ulster Unionist MP, most vociferously articulated his view of Britain as in need of extricating itself from the spent obligations of empire, which meant no longer accepting its migrants. In his infamous 1968 'Rivers of Blood' speech, he argued that New Commonwealth immigrants made the native English 'strangers in their own land' (quoted in Whipple 2009). Violence would erupt if the inflow of West Indians and Pakistanis did not abate and their foreign cultures continued to make their presence felt: 'as I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. [...] Like the Roman, I seem to see "the River Tiber" foaming with much blood.' (quoted in Whipple 2009) Powell's anti-immigrant rhetoric, which posited them as a grave threat to Britain's identity, found significant support among the public (Green 2006). The historian Amy Whipple writes that Powell's subsequent ejection from the Conservative Shadow Cabinet sparked a 'mass outpouring of popular support for his message'; with London dock workers launching a well-publicised strike in his name (2009). Two major polls put the British public's agreement with Powell at 74 and 67 percent (Whipple 2009).

The Immigration Act of 1971 was the Conservative Party's attempt to catch up to Powell's worryingly resonant call and reinforce their image as 'tough' on immigration. The opposition Labour Party was aware that their own legislative effort to cut Commonwealth immigration, the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, was a short-term response to what had seemed to be a major political crisis at the time, the Kenyan Asian influx. Indeed, it was an amendment to the Conservative Macmillan's 1962 bill of the same name, which was subtitled 'an Act to make *temporary* provision for controlling the immigration into the United Kingdom of Commonwealth citizens' [emphasis added] (*Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962*). It remained on the statute books until 1971. Jim Callaghan, the Labour Home Secretary who had sponsored the 1968 Act, spoke of suffering 'a volley of abuse' during its passage (HC Deb 8 March 1971). Opposition to each immigration bill its reading stage in the Commons was an important factor in their development. It became clear to the Labour Party during and after the 1970 election that the creation of the 1968 Act, which heavily favoured white immigration, had left them open to accusations of hypocrisy. They had opposed the Tories' 1962 Act, and the popularity of Powell's broadside against immigration favoured them too, making Labour appear 'soft' on

immigration. They therefore committed to repeal the 1971 Immigration Act upon returning to government in 1974 (Dixon 1983). Labour's confused perspective on immigration, caught between needing to respond to anti-immigrant public opinion and their liberal instincts, probably contributed to their failure to make any meaningful reform to citizenship law in 1974-79.

Once Thatcher became party leader in 1975, her administration-in-waiting began preparing the case for their own reforms. Policy planning was done with the Conservatives' anti-immigration credentials foremost in mind ahead of the 1979 election. A senior adviser to Thatcher, Keith Joseph, wrote her a 'highly confidential' note in July 1976 detailing a 'few themes' she and her colleagues might like to 'hammer away' on during their time in opposition. 'Immigration' was the fourth point, after balancing the budget, inflation and unemployment. Fifth and sixth were 'housing' and 'education' (Joseph 1976). The Nationality Act 1981 would be the culmination of this pre-election hammering – 'short but contentious legislation' for early introduction by the new Conservative government (Conservative Research Department 1978, quoted in Green 2006). The ways in which the first Thatcher government attempted to reduce immigration from the New Commonwealth are complex and, like all major policy initiatives, subject to multifarious pressures from interest groups, and the legislative and parliamentary process. The notion that strict control of immigration – i.e. a comprehensive understanding of its volume and type in addition to its drastic reduction – is essential to ensure good race relations in Britain's communities, was a foundational plank of Conservative thinking at the time. It is shown consistently in public and private statements both before and after the 1979 election; it stemmed both from their personal sentiments and from their view of public opinion.

In the viewpoint of much of the Conservative leadership, in government and in opposition, to reduce the numbers of immigrants was to reduce their 'burden' on British society. While Powell had been expelled from the Conservative Party by Edward Heath, the party leader and Prime Minister from 1970 to 1974, his influence remained strong for years afterward. A brief missive, sent months after the election to Thatcher from her Parliamentary Private Secretary, Ian Gow, told the new Prime Minister that 'while I understand your concern at the wider implications of him [Powell] being seen arriving at Downing Street at the present time, I believe that Enoch is wholly trustworthy in his personal (if not political) dealings.' The Conservative Party had disowned Powell but he remained a figure of their respect and admiration. His outspoken xenophobia was enough to remove him from the party, but his former party subsequently chose to appropriate his brand of xenophobia. Gow described his own fondness for Powell: 'I retain a latent admiration for him.' Thatcher, in her own handwriting, added 'Agreed. MT' (Gow 1979).

Thatcher's Powellism appeared on television and radio. The most important example of Thatcher's public argument that an overabundance of immigrants is problematic for British communities is her television interview of January 1978 on *World in Action*, a popular current affairs programme. On the date of the third anniversary of her election as Conservative Party leader, Thatcher began the interview by predicting that 'by the end of the century there would be four million people of the new Commonwealth or Pakistan here.' She

went on to propose that these shockingly high numbers would threaten the integrity of Britain's indigenous culture: 'that is an awful lot and I think it means that people are really rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture'. Thatcher's language was soft and conciliatory, her argument couched in a colloquial air of reasonableness. Hedges abound 'I think it means ... really rather ... might be rather ... different' (Granada 1978). Thatcher's careful presentation of herself as a common-sensical, reasonable middle England moderate was intended to endear herself to the electorate while lay the ground for drastic legislative reform.

Her appeal was firmly aimed at mainstream opinion, even as her party advocated a complete moratorium on immigration: 'if you want good race relations, you have got to allay people's fears on numbers. [...] Willie Whitelaw said ... we must hold out the clear prospect of an end to immigration'. As Labour had done in 1968, the Conservative leadership in 1978 suffused their plan of action in the language of urgency. The numbers were too high and the nation's good character was at stake. In 1968, the Labour government's actions were justified as 'regrettable but necessary' (HC Deb 8 March 1971). For Thatcher, however, her main concern was that they had not gone far enough in 1971.

The interview electrified the immigration debate in Britain. After *World in Action*, the Conservatives' credentials as opponents of immigration solidified. The response to Thatcher's interview was very positive, according to opinion research commissioned by the party: 20 percent of those surveyed stated they were more likely to vote Conservative 'if the party promised to stop all immigration.' (Green 2006) Without a doubt, all those in the House of Commons could observe Powell's lasting influence. As Ian Gow admitted, despite his ejection from the party following the 'Rivers of Blood' speech, they owed him their 'admiration' for his force of character that they knew had won them votes. A summary of the general post sent to Downing Street for the week beginning 18 August 1979 counted 27 letters received about immigration, an unknown number of which were described as 'support for Enoch Powell' (10 Downing Street 1979). The fact that Thatcher's office was receiving letters from the public expressing support for a backbench MP, who had not been a member of the Conservative Party for 11 years, suggests that as far as many voters were concerned, Powell and the Tories were one.

'Powellism', then, was a powerful force behind the development of both the 1971 and 1981 Acts. The ideology's central argument, that the stressed British public can only endure so many foreigners in their midst, that (New Commonwealth) immigration is tolerable only up to a point, was a major part of the impetus behind the 1981 Act. 'The effective control of immigration', argued the 1979 election manifesto, 'is essential for racial harmony in Britain today.' (Conservative Party 1979) This populist sentiment was the backbone of Tory policy on immigration throughout the 1970s and 1980s – as ministers point out in their correspondence to one another, it insulated them from accusations of racism while assuaging the perceived fears of the white majority.

The minutes of a June 1980 meeting Thatcher held with nine of her MPs reveal the racially motivated fears of some in the parliamentary party. Tony Marlow and eight colleagues requested a discussion of their belief that

the party's manifesto commitments of ending immigration had not yet been achieved, an unacceptable delay considering 'recent statistics for births and immigration [...] show that for every six new ethnic Britons there is one new coloured citizen'. Thatcher held the meeting, and brought up the high financial cost of repatriation and the risk of inflaming racial tension by bringing 'improper pressure' to repatriate upon immigrants. 173 were repatriated in 1978-79 under the 1971 Immigration Act, explained the Secretary of State for Immigration. Marlow insisted that 'a sufficient number of people of different cultures come into Britain to populate a parliamentary constituency once every other year [...] whatever noises Opposition member may make [sic], it is a matter of [...] the general public's proper concern'. Thatcher repeated the 1979 manifesto's commitment to good race relations in Britain. Her Parliamentary Private Secretary Ian Gow wrote in pen on the document: 'Willie – I think that this should be regarded as entirely a private meeting. Do you agree, please?' (Gow 1980)

By late 1978, the Conservative Party, the former party of Empire, had stumbled upon and then embraced their new role as anti-immigration populists. By calling for a total end to immigration in a mode of language and reasonable style that appealed to broad swathes of the electorate, Thatcher was able to capitalise on Labour's weakness from the Left, for they too had clamped down on Commonwealth immigration in the 1960s. Powell enabled her to attack from the Right – the Tories were tougher on numbers. The pressure of public opinion was strong, as all those in the Commons understood. However, Powell's outsize influence on the direction of Tory policy, despite his vilification in parliament, showed that his ideology of fear had more currency than detached pragmatism. The clear link they made between racial harmony and the reduction of immigration successfully married moderate opinion with hard-line anti-immigrant views.

### ***The beliefs and statistics of immigration: Thatcher, her party and the British public***

At this juncture, it is important to demonstrate how the British public thought about immigration in the late 1970s and early 1980s. We have established that according to Ipsos MORI polling data, immigration and race relations were seen as much less important issues than unemployment or inflation, for example. The House of Commons largely shared these priorities, and so did the governments of the period. The association of immigration with race relations was almost a given in public discourse; the two terms were 'inseparable' in the British political vocabulary of the time (Green 2006). The fact that Ipsos Mori themselves chose to combine the two in putting the question to the public also suggests this. Figure 2 shows the frequency per million words of 'immigration', 'citizenship' and 'raci\*'<sup>1</sup> in Hansard, the official record of speech made in the House of Commons.

---

<sup>1</sup> The asterisk denotes a wildcard search term, to include all linguistic variants of 'racism', e.g. 'racist', 'racial' etc.

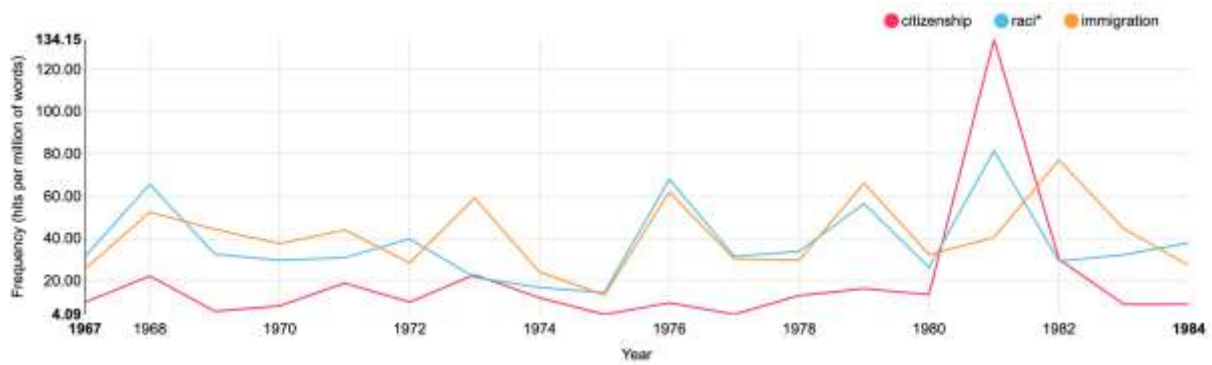


Figure 2. Salience of terms ‘citizenship’ ‘immigration’ and ‘raci\*’ in the House of Commons 1967-1984. Data and graph sourced from Hansard at Huddersfield.

There is a strong correlation between ‘raci\*’ and ‘immigration’. A minor spike occurred in 1968, the year of the Kenyan Asian influx, Enoch Powell’s ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech and Labour’s Commonwealth Immigration Act. ‘Immigration’ again resurfaced shortly before the 1974 election, and was reignited as a highly racialised issue in 1976 following the Notting Hill Carnival riots and the passage of the Race Relations Act. One backbench Conservative MP, soon to become the first director of the Commission for Racial Equality, set out the line his party would take on immigration in the coming years: ‘there has been a spread of fear and anxiety among the white majority ... Britain can set an example to the world in race relations, but this will depend more than anything else on reassuring the white majority that immigration is being strictly controlled at a manageably low level by a determined Government.’ (HC Deb 5 July 1976) Throughout Commons debates, the parliamentary Conservative Party predictably showed its ideological alignment with their Shadow Cabinet members. This unity of view, while far from perfect, strengthened the government’s efforts to reform policy.

The idea that the white majority was pining for immigration control was lodged in the minds of many frontbench and backbench MPs of both parties. Figure 3 shows, however, that despite the clamour in the Commons over the Notting Hill riots and Commonwealth immigration, in 1976 the British public were focused on other issues. Just 16 percent of those polled in September 1976 believed race relations and/or immigration were among the most important problems facing Britain. Hansard reveals that MPs’ concern about immigration stemmed in large part from their ‘postbags’ full of ‘critical letters from our constituents’ (HC Deb 5 July 1976). The seeming contradiction between the data shown in these graphs and parliamentarians’ worry illustrates how public opinion is often ephemeral, and measures of it are inevitably partial or incomplete.

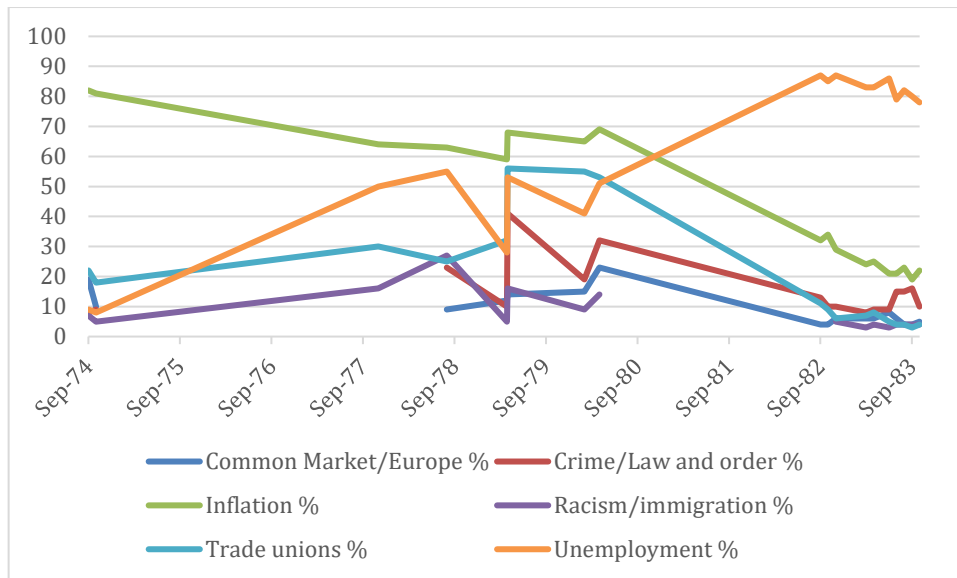


Figure 3. Ipsos Mori Issues Index: Trends 1974-1983

There is some early evidence of Margaret Thatcher’s personal views on immigration. A Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) minute of a meeting in September 1976 between Thatcher, then Leader of the Opposition, and officials of the British High Commission in New Delhi, illustrates this in part. Thatcher is recorded as inquiring after an Inland Revenue estimate of some 500,000 dependents of immigrants domiciled in Britain (wives, children), whom she points out are not statutorily entitled to enter the UK but are being treated by the Commission ‘much as if they were’. An official points out that ‘the Delhi dependents queue stood at a little over 100’ and that ‘Bombay, while considerably larger, would not begin to dent her 500,000’. The writer continues, saying ‘she remained puzzled’ and offering his assessment to the High Commissioner that ‘Mrs Thatcher arrived, I think, holding firmly a somewhat black and white view that immigration has increased, is increasing, and should be stopped.’ (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 1976) Her personal convictions about immigration played a large role in policymaking, though it is hard to say to what extent.

The FCO staff responsible for producing the statistics that Thatcher and her cabinet relied upon expressed unease over how the data would be used. An internal memo of August 1976, before Thatcher arrived in Delhi, said ‘we [the British High Commission New Delhi] were already concerned about the prospect of talking about immigration to Mrs. Thatcher ... the reason for our concern is that discussing immigration now poses very real problems’. Civil servants were evidently aware that by 1976 the issue was thoroughly politicised. A recent high-profile leak of a government report on immigration, the Hawley Report, had revealed that a January 1975 relaxation of administrative procedures in overseas FCO offices for vetting visa applications resulted in over 12,000 new immigrants over the 1974 figure, most of whom were dependents of those already settled (Aitken HC Deb 21 October 1971). The political furore generated by this leak – it was cited several times in

Conservative Shadow Cabinet discussions – emphasises the high level of sensitivity to immigration numbers at the time. Fears about numbers filtered through to every stage of policymaking.

Other statements of the opposition period demonstrate that Thatcher’s personal views were mirrored on a policy level long before 1981. One culmination of this wide-ranging reassessment was ‘The Right Approach’, a landmark 1976 policy statement that acted as a blueprint for the election manifesto three years later. Out of the document’s 23,200 words, ‘immigration’ occurs 15 times. In the 1979 election manifesto, it occurs nine times. The lack of prevalence of immigration as an issue in Conservative policy is mirrored in the House of Commons, where it was dwarfed by the larger issues of the time. Figure 4 shows that while discussion of ‘immigration’ peaked in 1976 and 1979 respectively at 62 and 66 hits per million words, ‘unemployment’ occurs 380 and 253 times per million. The data here puts this into perspective. ‘Race’ tracks almost perfectly with ‘immigration’, while both are dwarfed in significance by ‘unemployment’

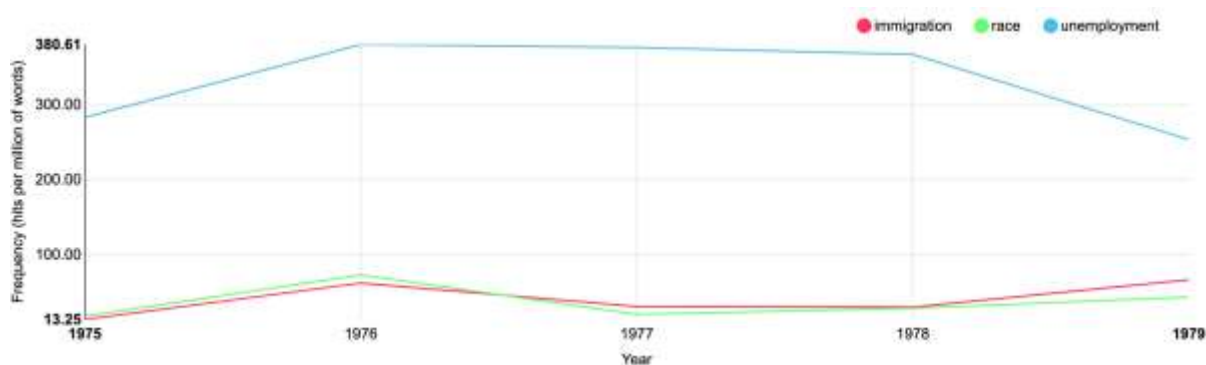


Figure 4: prevalence of the terms ‘race’, ‘immigration’, ‘unemployment’ in the House of Commons 1975-1979. Data and graph sourced from Hansard at Huddersfield.

The fact that immigration was less salient than other issues of the time does not detract, however, from the perception that it was an important and explicitly ‘popular’ issue in the electorate. The British public’s thinking on immigration was in one sense clear – they opposed it. Figure 5 shows the results of three different polls tracking opposition to immigration from 1964 to 2018. Polls taken by the British Election Study in 1964, 1966, and 1979 asked respondents if they thought ‘too many immigrants have been let into the country’. The first two polls showed over 85 percent of Britons agreed, with 86 percent agreeing in the election year of 1979 that there were too many immigrants in Britain (British Election Studies 1964, 1966, 1979). This was a powerful influence on politicians’ approach to developing citizenship policy. As Ford et al. point out, ‘public views about immigration are responsive to changes in immigration levels and differences between migrant groups, and [...] policy-makers are sensitive to these changes.’ (2015)



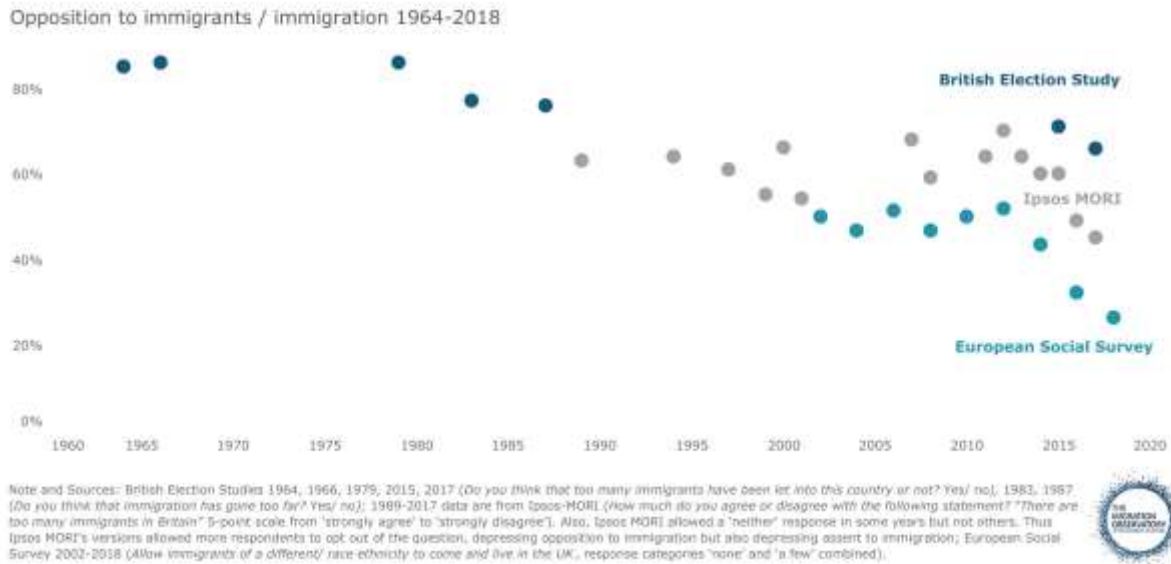


Figure 5: Opposition to immigrants/immigration 1964-2018, British Election Study, Ipsos Mori, European Social Survey. The Migration Observatory 2018.

By Margaret Thatcher's election in spring 1979, although the British public's attention was not wholly absorbed by immigration, opposition to immigration remained very high. As we can see in Figure 3, in August 1978 27 percent of those polled believed race relations, immigration or immigrants were among the 'most important issues facing Britain today.' As we have seen, the primary issues of the election were the cost of living, crime, industrial disputes and unemployment, which polled at over 50 percent. Concern over immigration and race relations, according to Ipsos Mori, would largely remain in the single digits for the duration of the Thatcher period. Indeed, some political scientists claim that it had dropped off the political radar entirely by 1983 (Crewe 1983, quoted in Francis 2017). The fact that immigration was not the paramount concern for most Britons belies the fact that its handling by government reflected Britain's ongoing post-war crisis of identity as the process of decolonisation accelerated. The polls revealed that immigration was perennially as salient as race relations. The Westminster establishment understood, from this polling data, their constituents and from their own beliefs, that in the British mind these two issues were synonymous. Therefore, the policy they enacted had to reflect this synonymity, or the electorate would punish them at the ballot box. Whether it was the truth did not matter – the pollsters did not make the distinction themselves.

Immigration, and its parallels of race, citizenship and nationality, were for the Conservative Party opportunities to showcase their proximity to popular sentiment. The demand for a strong stance on immigration grew over the opposition period, with pressure coming from MPs' constituents and MPs themselves. The historian Green writes that 'concern that the party's immigration flank could be turned, and that the grass roots were restive on the issue, led a core of the Conservative leadership to conclude that a firm public stance on curbing or even halting immigration was required' (2006). From the moment of Thatcher's assumption of the Tory

leadership, fresh policy was required. The chairperson of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Immigration, Douglas Smith, warned Thatcher that significant portions of their supporters believed ‘we are not really serious over tackling the immigration problem and that at the end of the day we shall try and ignore the problem’ (Smith 1978, quoted in Green 2006). The administration-in-waiting experienced anxiety over how to address appropriately, if they should at all, the ‘wholly understandable fear [among Britons] of “strangers in our midst” with a colour of skin, mode of dress and customs quite different to our own.’ This ‘regrettabl[e] [...] fear’, one senior official wrote in January, is ‘easily exploited by the unscrupulous with emotive phrases such as “racial balance”, “alien wedge” and “flood of immigrants”’ (Rowe 1978, quoted in Green 2006).

Like much discourse on immigration in Western Europe in general, past and present, immigration was posed as a ‘problem’ to be solved. Leaping forward to 1982, a declassified record of a conversation between Thatcher and Chancellor Kohl of West Germany sketches out an acute pan-European anxiety. Kohl outlined how he intended to seek ‘an agreement with the Turkish government, as part of which development aid to Turkey could be increased’. The large numbers of Turkish workers in certain districts of Berlin meant that ‘in some of the elementary schools there were many more Turkish than German children.’ This, the report states, ‘created enormous problems.’ Kohl could not say it publicly yet, but ‘it would be necessary to reduce the number of Turks in Germany by 50%’ Citing the number of mosques in Frankfurt, he highlighted the case of a school that had risen in uproar when a 16-year-old Turkish girl had an arranged marriage ‘to someone in Turkey.’ Interestingly, Kohl told Thatcher that Britain’s history as an imperial power better enabled it to handle such contemporary problems as immigration. He is described as saying that ‘over 300 years the United Kingdom had accumulated much knowledge of how to deal with foreigners. In colonial days young Britains [sic] had gone out into the world.’ (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 1982) Germany had not had the same experience of empire, Kohl argues, and was therefore less able to deal with its demographic consequences.

Just as Enoch Powell had called for a clean break with the Empire and all its consequences, of which immigration was in his view the most costly, Kohl saw past colonial adventure as a crucial aspect of immigration control. A fellow conservative, Kohl’s sentiment tapped into a similar strand of European xenophobia very much present in Britain – the ‘strangers in our midst’. The meeting’s discussion of immigration concluded with an acknowledgement of France’s failure to ‘solve the problem of Algerians living in France.’ Germany had integrated some 11 million Germans from East European countries, Kohl said, ‘but they were European and therefore presented no problem.’ Offering her agreement, Thatcher mentioned the ‘2 million immigrants in Britain’ and that ‘there were some areas of the country where the police found it very difficult to operate.’ (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 1982) This conversation is revealing of the value system that immigration into Western Europe was subject to in the early 1980s. The views of key policymakers on immigration across Europe were similar: they shared elements of xenophobia.

It appears that immigration is acceptable – ‘no problem’ – so long as the immigrants share European characteristics. Assimilation, even in times of abundance, is a ‘human problem’, as Kohl puts it. For Kohl, Powell

and Thatcher, non-European immigrants are of a different sort entirely to Europeans. Historians disagree on whether Thatcher and her disciples espoused racism. The historian Matthew Francis argues that the Nationality Act 1981 'reinforced the perception that Thatcher was a "repressor of immigrants" and hostile to ethnic minority communities.' (2017) Martin Barker suggests that Thatcher created a 'new racism', which construed racial diversity as a threat to culture and identity (1981, quoted in Francis 2017). Green toes a middling line, saying that Thatcher was not racist but 'there were policy choices made by Thatcher, her party and her governments that knowingly echoed some of the assumptions and arguments deployed by racists.' Their 'choice' was to problematise the immigrants themselves rather than those who were prejudiced against them (2006).

## **Conclusion**

A pessimist might argue that the unwelcome complexity of British citizenship law by the time of Thatcher's election in 1979 mirrored Britain's own uncertain condition. The governments of the 1970s found themselves in the awkward role of deciding whether the inhabitants of far-flung corners of the globe, having been subjugated centuries in the past, should have the automatic right to live in the UK. Britain was a nation viewed as the 'sick man of Europe', seen with pity by their supposed closest ally, the United States, as a 'played out' country that 'lost an empire and has not yet found a role.' (Brinkley 1990) My examination of Hansard speeches and of declassified policy documents, show that shadow of empire weighed heavy on successive governments' approach to policymaking. For parliamentarians of the 1970s and 1980s, empire and its successor were burdens that the polls said British people were unwilling to bear. My documents and data demonstrate that public opinion truly was king in migration policy formation. This is a testament to the strength of Britain's democracy.

Many of the factors that contributed to the development of Britain's migration and citizenship policy in the 1970s are similar to today: MPs' fixation on numbers, xenophobia, and the trend setting of populist firebrands. The same internal wrangling between ministers and mandarins carries on today. Much has changed, too. The basis of Britain's refugee policy is no longer conducted under a Cold War paradigm, where the acceptance of each refugee from beyond the Iron Curtain was another little political victory. My period of study coincides with Britain's entry into the EEC. The consequences of this for migration into Britain within 15 or 20 years would subsume any memory of what came before, when the New Commonwealth immigrant was the 'other' to be kept out. The migration policy debates of the 1970s and 1980s were about handling the human consequences of decolonisation, of Britain's imperial heritage. Today, in much the same style of rhetoric as in 1968, the debate centres on the consequences of the decision made in that time to join the European Community. Whether British policymakers struggle to manage Commonwealth or EU immigration that British policymakers struggle to manage now, it is clear that public opinion remains the ultimate arbiter.

## References Cited

### Primary Sources

*British Nationality Act 1981*. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/61/enacted> [last accessed 24 June 2020]

Burns, G. (1978). 'Interview with Margaret Thatcher', *Granada World in Action*. Available at: <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/103485> [last accessed 21 June 2020]

*Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962*. Available at: <https://2xsoic30m4ba2ervd35c9n4l-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CIA1962.pdf> [last accessed 18 June 2020]

Conservative Party (1976). *The Right Approach*. Available at: <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/109439> [last accessed 24 June 2020]

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (1976). *Minute of meeting with MT at British High Commission New Delhi*. Available at: <https://c59574e9047e61130f13-3f71d0fe2b653c4f00f32175760e96e7.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/5C199175E9BA4B9EA7602EB4C9026D73.pdf> [last accessed 24 June 2020]

Gow, I. (1979). *Note to MT (meeting with Enoch Powell), 2 October 1979*. Available at: <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/118757> [last accessed 28 October 2020]

Gow, I. (1980). *Minutes of meeting with Mr Marlow & nine members to discuss immigration*. Available at: <https://c59574e9047e61130f13-3f71d0fe2b653c4f00f32175760e96e7.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/CED1F44287F2466A8D7906B9BC061231.pdf> [last accessed 17 June 2020]

Hansard at Huddersfield Project (2020). University of Huddersfield. Available at: <https://hansard.hud.ac.uk/site/site.php> [last accessed 2 November 2020]

HC Deb (17 June 1971). vol. 819 col. 770. Available at: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1971-06-17/debates/cad77bde-cfe2-40bf-a727-120bc56f4217/Repeals?highlight=patrial#contribution-528c9474-4d55-43b8-b047-b7ab322961db> [last accessed 23 June 2020]

HC Deb (21 October 1976). Vol. 917 col. 1641-3. Available at: <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1976/oct/21/immigration-hawley-report> [last accessed 2 July 2020]

HC Deb (28 June 1982). vol. 26 col. 661. Available at: [https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1982/jun/28/immigration-regulations#S6CV0026P0\\_19820628\\_HOC\\_349](https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1982/jun/28/immigration-regulations#S6CV0026P0_19820628_HOC_349) [last accessed 5 July 2020]

HC Deb (5 July 1976). vol. 914 col. 1039. Available at: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1976-07-05/debates/ab22cf93-6027-4d14-8385-72833e7b05da/Immigration?highlight=immigration#contribution-becc6d02-8ca6-493f-b1d8-4b34c7d3cf24> [last accessed 1 July 2020]

HC Deb (8 March 1971). vol. 813 col. 42-173. Available at: <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1971/mar/08/immigration-bill> [last accessed 3 July 2020]

*Immigration Act 1971*. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1971/77/enacted> [last accessed 22 June 2020]

Joseph, K. (1976). *Letter to MT, 22 July 1976*. Available at: <https://c59574e9047e61130f13-3f71d0fe2b653c4f00f32175760e96e7.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/7B94CFEAAAC57429EA292AA7581CC16DD.pdf> [last accessed 27 June 2020]

No. 10 Downing Street (1979). *Summary of the general post sent to No. 10*. Available at: <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/118866> [last accessed 19 June 2020]

No. 10 Downing Street (1982). *No. 10 record of conversation between MT and Chancellor Kohl*. Available at: <https://ee9da88eff6f462f2d6b-873dc3788ab15d5cbb1e3fe45dbec9b4.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/821028%20MT-Kohl%20memcon%2019-1036%20f135.pdf> [last accessed 18 July 2020]

Parliamentary Private Secretary's Office (1983). *Minutes of meeting with Home Secretary and others on Immigration Rules: The Government's Record on Immigration*. Available at: <https://c59574e9047e61130f13-3f71d0fe2b653c4f00f32175760e96e7.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/830114%20Gow%20mnt%20IMMIG%20RULES%20THCR%202-6-2-75%20part2%20f26.pdf> [last accessed 25 June 2020]

Thatcher, T. (1980) *MT letter to Michael Cocks MP*. Available at: <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/138604> [last accessed 17 June 2020]

Whitelaw, W. (1978). *The Control of Immigration*. Available at: <https://c59574e9047e61130f13-3f71d0fe2b653c4f00f32175760e96e7.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/651325EB2C9E46F1B204F695BBEA3166.pdf> [last accessed 20 June 2020]

Whitelaw, W. (1978). *The Control of Immigration - supplementary paper*. Available at: <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/110257> [last accessed 19 June 2020]

### **Secondary Sources**

Brinkley, D. (1990). Dean Acheson and the 'Special Relationship': The West Point Speech of December 1962. *The Historical Journal*, 33(3), pp. 599-608.

Blinder, S., Richards, L. (2020) 'UK Public Opinion toward Immigration: Overall Attitudes and Level of Concern' Accessible at: <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/uk-public-opinion-toward-immigration-overall-attitudes-and-level-of-concern/> [last accessed 28 October 2020]

- Castles, S., de Haas, H., Miller, M., (2009). *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. Fifth edition. Palgrave Macmillan: United Kingdom.
- Churchill College, Cambridge (2020). *The Thatcher Papers*. Accessible at: <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/thatcher-papers/#> [last accessed 1 July 2020]
- Commonwealth of Nations (2020) *The Commonwealth*. Accessible at: <https://thecommonwealth.org/> [last accessed 7 July 2020]
- Dixon, D. (1983) 'Thatcher's People: The British Nationality Act 1981', *Journal of Law and Society*, 10(2), p. 161-180.
- Evans, R. J. (1997). *In Defence of History*. London: Granta Books.
- Ford, R., Jennings, W. and Somerville, W. (2015) 'Public Opinion, Responsiveness and Constraint: Britain's Three Immigration Policy Regimes', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 41(9), pp. 1391–1411.
- Francis, M. (2017) 'Mrs Thatcher's peacock blue sari: ethnic minorities, electoral politics and the Conservative Party, c. 1974–86', *Contemporary British History*, 31(2), pp. 274–293.
- Green, E. H. H. (2006) *Thatcher*. London: Hodder Arnold.
- Hansen, R. (1999) 'The Kenyan Asians, British Politics, and the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, 1968', *The Historical Journal*, 42(3), pp. 809–834.
- Porta, D., & Keating, M. (2008). How many approaches in the social sciences? An epistemological introduction. In D. Della Porta & M. Keating (eds.), *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 19-39.
- Spencer, S. (2003) 'Introduction' in Spencer, S. (ed.) *The Politics of Migration: Managing Opportunity, Conflict and Change*. London: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 1-24.
- Stoler, A. L. (2002) 'Colonial archives and the arts of governance', *Archival Science*, 2(1–2), pp. 87–109.
- The Thatcher Foundation. (2020) *About the Foundation*. Available at: <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/about> [last accessed 2 July 2020]
- Vinen, R. (2019) 'A War of Position? The Thatcher Government's Preparation for the 1984 Miners' Strike\*', *The English Historical Review*, 134(566), pp. 121–150.
- Whipple, A. (2009) 'Revisiting the "Rivers of Blood" Controversy: Letters to Enoch Powell', *Journal of British Studies*, 48(3), pp. 717–735.
- Wodak, R. (2001) 'The discourse-historical approach' in Meyer, M. and Wodak, R. (eds.) *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: SAGE Publications, pp. 63-94.