

ENOCH POWELL — 'Belfast May Seem An Enviably Place'



The Right Honorable Enoch Powell, PC, MBE, has been a major catalyst in racist ferment for a long time now. Powell, who celebrated his sixty-fourth birthday on June 16, has had an illustrious career. He received his M.A. degree from Trinity College, Cambridge. Between 1937-39, he taught Greek at the University of Sydney, New South Wales. He joined the Warwickshire Regiment as a Lance Corporal in 1939, and by 1944 was a Brigadier on the General Staff. He was Party Secretary in the Ministry of Housing and Local Government between 1955-57 and subsequently Financial Secretary to the Treasury (1957-58). He capped his career with a tenure as Minister of Health between July 1960 and October 1963 (when he is supposed to have scoured the Caribbean for nurses to augment the shortage in Britain). He has published quite a few books on literature, and three books of poems.

Enoch Powell's anti-immigrant feelings received benediction at the hands of Duncan Sandys, who had expressed fears about the migration of Kenyan Asians to Britain. Significantly, Mr. Powell had made no speech about the evils of colored immigration before the autumn of 1967. "For over ten years, from about 1954 to 1966," he then claimed, "Commonwealth immigration was the principal and at times the only, political issue in my constituency." In 1964 he had aver-

red that "I have set and always will set my face like flint against making any difference between one citizen of this country and another on grounds of his origin." He started to deliver speeches about immigration at the moment when this issue was most useful to his political career, and has refused to lend his name to schemes designed to promote integration organized by the Community Relations Council in his own constituency. This has led commentators to the conclusion that Powell's use of the racial issue is motivated by political opportunism.

Fresh in public memory is the summer of 1970, when gangs of "Skinheads," groups of grimy, chain-gripping, drug-high English dropouts who sported crew cuts, went around on "Paki-bashing" missions. Powell had actively supported their torays. A few years ago, Powell had predicted that the Thames would be flooded with the blood of the immigrants. In late June, speaking on the so-called confidential Hawley Report (which expressed fears of a large-scale illegal immigration from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), Powell repeated this warning, and said that a time would soon come when English cities with large chunks of immigrant population would be injected with guns and bombs, and a

situation would be created where even "Belfast may seem an enviable place." Hawley is a Whitehall official who visited the Indian sub-continent last year, and his report speaks of a "web of deceit" and the presence of a well-organized racket to smuggle immigrants into Britain. Mr. Alex Lyons, the 'pro-Asian' minister in Britain's Home Office, who was sacked recently by Prime Minister Callaghan, described the Hawley report and Powell's speeches as "hysterical myths" and "utter nonsense."

It is remarkable that Powell, who sits in the House of Commons as member of the Unionist Party of Northern Ireland, concerns himself more with the color problem than with the Catholic-Protestant civil war in his constituency. On July 8, Powell called for a massive repatriation of immigrants in the Commons. Tory MP David Lane promptly described this demand as "the language of Hitler and of Stalin". Powell wasn't done, however. On July 9, he told the Chamber of Commerce at Bromley, in Kent: "What was beyond imagination was that we would set about replacing millions of the population of this country with population obtained from Asia, Africa and the West Indies—that all politicians and parties would laud and magnify this achievement by describing the result with pride as a multiracial society". Mr. Winston Churchill, Conservative Member for Stretford, did not wholly agree with Powell when he said "We must sympathize with people who go to bed thinking they are living in Lancashire and wake up the next day to find themselves in New Delhi or Kingston, Jamaica". And so the cry of 1967, "Et Tu, Enoch?" has changed today to "Enough, Enoch!"

POWELL BEING INTERVIEWED BY IMMIGRANT ON B.B.C. IN 1968

