

ABSTRACT

Immigration and the United Kingdom:
An Analysis from the late 1800s to 2015 and Future Prediction

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Immigration has been and still is a major policy issue in the United Kingdom. A prediction into how the United Kingdom will react to future waves of immigration requires a study into how the United Kingdom reacted to past immigrant waves. The main waves of immigration includes, the Commonwealth immigrants, the Jewish immigrants from Russia and the Eastern Europe immigrants. Along with a look at the different effects of the immigrant waves, a look at the man that, arguably, started everything, is crucial. Enoch Powell was one of the most influential minds in regards to immigrants and his beliefs are still espoused today. It is from these background sources that the prediction can be made that the people of the United Kingdom will only continue to react negatively towards immigrants whether or not the economy is stable or whether these immigrants are fleeing from persecution or violence.

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IMMIGRATION AND THE UNITED KINGDOM:
AN ANALYSIS FROM THE LATE 1800S TO 2015 AND FUTURE PREDICTION

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Immigration. The word evokes many different feelings from different people. Some read the word and become enraged because of the perceived threat that they believe immigrants are while others are saddened by the plights that many immigrants are trying to escape. A simple search on the worlds' leading news outlets show an enormous number of articles that address the idea of immigration. There are stories, which espouse the dangers of immigrants and the end of a country's power at their hands while others interview immigrants in hopes of shedding light on why they have felt the need to leave their home country. A group of researchers discovered that in Britain, it is more likely for someone with a name like Nazia Mahmood to get rejected from a job then for someone with a name like Allison Taylor to be rejected.¹ The researchers sent out 3,000 applications with various names, ranging from more traditional Anglo names to names that clearly showed the applicant was most likely an immigrant.² Of those applicants, "they found that an applicant who appeared to be white would send nine applications before receiving a positive response... Minority candidates with the same qualifications and experience had to send 16 applications before receiving a similar response."³

¹ Syal, Rajeev, 2009. "Undercover Job Hunters Reveal Huge Race Bias in Britain's Workplaces." *The Guardian*, October 17, sec. Money. <http://www.theguardian.com/money/2009/oct/18/racism-discrimination-employment-undercover>.

² Syal, Rajeev. 2009.

³ Syal, Rajeev. 2009. The conclusion of this study prompted Jim Knight, the employment minister at the time, to consider barring companies from requiring a name to be submitted with the application in hopes that it will help the immigrants be given a fairer opportunity. He wanted jobs to be given to the most qualified.

kind of discrimination is not surprising. The United Kingdom is a country that has been dealing with immigrants for centuries. It is not a unique problem or situation but still, it has had important effects on the way that the country has evolved. From the formation of different nationalist groups to more restrictive immigration laws and to the increase in violence or discrimination, the United Kingdom has been effected and thus reacting to immigrants for a long time.

Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa have sent people fleeing away from conflict zones and seeking safety in countries like the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and France. This trend is not only applicable within the last decade but also since the first major wave of immigration by the Irish in the 1800s. Along with war zones/conflicts and social problems, another matter that has sent people out of their home country is weak or unstable economies.

Especially in recent months, Western European countries' governments have decided that now was the time to take a firm stance on their immigration policies. Germany has recently announced they will be accepting all refugees from Syria, no matter how they entered the European Union (EU).⁴ Other European Union countries have also decided to be open to refugees and migrants that are fleeing conflict zones. Most notably, the United Kingdom recently announced that they would be accepting 20,000 people fleeing from Syria.⁵ This announcement came with a mixture of pride and anger. Some believe that the United Kingdom has an obligation to help those in need,

⁴ "Migrants Crisis: Germany Seizes Its Chance to Help." 2015. *BBC News*. Accessed September 11. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34148159>.

⁵ "UK to Accept 20,000 Refugees from Syria by 2020." 2015. *BBC News*. Accessed September 11. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-34171148>.

especially people who are suffering almost unimaginable trauma and pain. However, there are those who believe that the United Kingdom has an obligation to care for its citizens before others. (The United Kingdom is riddled with unemployment).

Social media campaigns as in “Humans of New York” on Facebook show the plight that immigrants face when fleeing from areas such as Syria, Iraq, and Sudan.⁶ They highlight that these people are either fleeing from an area of violence or in search of jobs in order to send it back home or get their families out of these conflict areas.

I argue that the evolution of the United Kingdom’s immigration laws has slowly become more restrictive and public sentiment has increased in negativity towards immigrants. In the future, I predict that the public sentiment would only become even more negative towards any immigrants. However, before getting into these predictions and trends, it is important to answer a few background questions. Who was the first person or group to push for comprehensive immigration reform? And how did they set the stage for future parliaments to treat and enforce immigration laws? First, I will describe the history of immigration reform in the UK. Next, I will analyze the way the earliest policies shaped subsequent policies. Finally, I will trace the evolution of immigration policies in the UK. Lastly, I will give my prediction based on an examination of the past immigrant waves.

Why have the United Kingdom’s immigration policies become more restrictive?

The first major act that dealt with immigrants was the Commonwealth Immigration Act in 1968. Sponsored by Enoch Powell, arguably the most important and influential man on immigration in the United Kingdom, this act was the first one to specifically deal with

⁶ Brandon. “Humans of New York,” 2010. <http://www.humansofnewyork.com/about>.

immigrants and their effect on the United Kingdom.⁷ It is used as a platform for all of their future acts that deal with immigration. Another document that is used as the basis for present immigration acts in the Poor Laws that were established in 1832. Though this document does not explicitly deal with immigrants, it does set up the welfare state in the United Kingdom.⁸ The Poor Laws are still referenced in laws and acts that do plainly deal with immigrants even now and though the Poor Laws are not the most recent laws that govern the welfare state, they are used as a basis for what benefits/help should be given to migrants. Again, these laws do not explicitly deal with the issue of immigration; they are a useful tool for the study of immigration laws.

After the Poor Laws, the government did not pass any significant legislation concerning immigration until 1971 with the Immigration Act of 1971.⁹ One important figure that was influential and really brought the issue on immigration to Parliament's attention was Enoch Powell. Enoch Powell was a member of the Conservative Party and is most famous for his "Rivers of Blood speech"; a controversial speech on immigration that he gave in 1968 to General Meeting of the West Midlands Area Conservative Political Centre.¹⁰ Mr. Powell was primarily critical about the wave of immigration coming into the United Kingdom from the Commonwealth and the anti-discrimination legislation that Westminster was pursuing in light of this wave of immigration. He cites many examples of how the British people were feeling pressure to give into the immigrants and to welcome them even if they were unwanted. He argued that this push

⁷ *Immigration Act 1971*, 1971. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

⁸ Commission, Royal. *The New Poor Laws*, 1832.

⁹ *Immigration Act 1971*, 1971.

¹⁰ Powell, J. Enoch. 1968. *Rivers of Blood*. West Midlands Area Conservative Political Centre.

for anti-discrimination legislation was going to ruin the country with the influx of immigrants, especially African immigrants. He believed that because the United Kingdom was going to allow 50,000 immigrants per year in, the country was setting itself up for its own demise. He argued that it was “like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre”.¹¹ Enoch Powell used many different anecdotes in his speech to prove his point that the immigrants were causing issues with the British citizens. He even advocated for the voluntary re-location of immigrants with “generous grants and assistance”.¹² Enoch Powell was concerned that all of the special attention, rights and privileges that were given to immigrants were going to raise them into a “privileged or special class” above the British. The 1930s were a tumultuous time for the United Kingdom and Mr. Powell claimed that journalists were urging the country to become “blind... to the rising peril which confronted it” when pushing Westminster to grant more rights to immigrants.¹³ In his speech, he was adamant that there would be pushing for more anti-discrimination legislation, would only cause there to be discrimination against the British. However, he was not advocating that the people should rise against or act violently against the immigrants, but rather that there should be some protection for British citizens should they decide to lawfully act against the immigrants (i.e. denying them an apartment in their home, moving away from heavily populated areas with immigrants or choosing to ignore immigrants that speak to them). Enoch Powell believed that the citizens were being bullied into accepting the immigrants and

¹¹ Powell, J. Enoch, and John Wood. 1969. *Freedom and Reality*. London: Batsford.

¹² Powell, J. Enoch, and John Wood. 1969

¹³ Powell, J. Enoch, and John Wood. 1969

were not given the right to act negatively towards them. His argument was that passing this level of anti-discrimination legislation would be like “throwing a match on to gunpowder” in regards to the discrimination that would be exhibited against British citizens.

He elaborates on the idea that allowing Commonwealth immigrants into the United Kingdom would elevate racial tensions. His issue is that his constituents are beginning to feel like “strangers in their own country”.¹⁴ People cannot recognize their neighbors as they once could. Immigrants are also the cause of people not being able to gain hospital beds, children able to obtain spots in schools, immigrants took jobs from the British and they no longer had a positive future.¹⁵ Again, Enoch Powell was a fervent believer that the immigrant would one day drive the British citizen out of the United Kingdom. Enoch Powell was a fervent opponent of immigrants gaining citizenship within the United Kingdom. Men and women who immigrated to the United Kingdom in search of spouses should not be granted citizenship.¹⁶ These people were the enemies of all British citizens. Because an “Act of Parliament” would enable these people to gain citizenship when marrying a British citizen, Powell argues that this is unconstitutional of Parliament.¹⁷ This rule causes harm to citizens instead of helping them because it allows many immigrants to rightfully stay and work in the United Kingdom.

¹⁴ Powell, J. Enoch, and John Wood. 1969

¹⁵ Powell, J. Enoch. 1968

¹⁶ Powell, J. Enoch. 1968.

¹⁷ The term unconstitutional does not mean the same thing as it would in the United States. The United Kingdom has an uncoded constitution. There is also no way for a law to be labeled unconstitutional, in the same sense as in the United States. However, it can be inferred that he claimed that this law went against the conventions of the time.

Another problem with immigrants that Enoch Powell discusses in his 1968 speech is the cultural tensions that immigrants cause. He claims that the vast majority of immigrants that move to the United Kingdom are not willing to assimilate with the people. Enoch Powell was obsessed with the idea that immigrants wanted to move to the United Kingdom in order to force the British people to feel their domination in their own country. This is a more psychological argument because the main immigrants during Enoch Powell's terms were during the Commonwealth immigrant's wave. In fact, Powell argued in his speech that these Commonwealth immigrants, mostly from African countries, were specifically looking to distinguish themselves from the people with their culture and religion because of the subjugation that they felt by the Empire.¹⁸ Though some immigrants are willing to integrate with the British, there are not enough that are doing this.

His fervent speech was racist; however it did have its intended effect. After the end of his term in Parliament, the United Kingdom passed the first major act involving immigrants, the Immigration Act of 1971. However, what were his motives? Why did he give such a controversial speech? Most of those that criticize Enoch Powell do so based on left or right wing alliances however there are some that defy their party leanings. It is rarely so simple as an absolute left/right party split. Reviewers either praise him for having the courage to tackle such a controversial topic by speaking so frankly or they condemn him for his racist speech that they argue lead to crimes against minorities and immigrants. Those who praise Powell for his speech, argue that a reason that there were so many outcries over the speech was that Powell was saying what the people were

¹⁸ Powell, J. Enoch. 1968

thinking.¹⁹ He was voicing what the people wanted and needed to hear. Before this speech, there was little to no talk about the issue of immigration and what should be done.

Nicholas Hillman offers one of the only criticisms of Enoch Powell that does not operate along party lines but instead strives to be as unbiased as possible. His argument is that there is no way to have an absolute idea as to what Enoch Powell was thinking or what motivated him to say what he did.²⁰ However, he offers three reasons as to why Enoch Powell may have given his speech based on personal views more than for political ambition. The first reason is that if Powell was hoping to use this speech as a platform to launch his career, he was incredibly unsuccessful.²¹ In fact, it can be argued that this speech was a large motivating factor for why Powell was fired from the Shadow Cabinet and never held another prominent seat in office after the speech. Enoch Powell had made a very large mistake if he was going to use this as political capital. Second, Hillman explains that Powell would not have changed his speech to be less inflammatory had he known that the backlash and outcry was going to be so ruthless.²² Powell is on record for having said that he does not regret anything that was said in the speech and refused to recant anything that was said.²³ Lastly, the third reason that Hillman gives as to why it is more likely that Powell made this speech from genuine concern, is that “Powell was

¹⁹ Studlar, Donley T. 1974. “British Public Opinion, Colour Issues, and Enoch Powell: A Longitudinal Analysis.” *British Journal of Political Science* 4 (3).

²⁰ Hillman, Nicholas. 2008. “A ‘Chorus of Execration’? Enoch Powell’s ‘Rivers of Blood’ Forty Years on.” *Patterns of Prejudice* 42 (1).

²¹ Hillman, Nicholas. 2008

²² Hillman, Nicholas. 2008

²³ *The Times*. 1988. “Fears That Have Not Changed,” April.

willing to make other last-ditch stands before and after 1968: he resigned from the post of Financial Secretary to the Treasury in 1958; he refused to serve under Sir Alec Douglas-Home in 1963; and he urged voters to support Labour in 1974”.²⁴ Powell was not above making radical changes in whom he supported and what he thought and so Hillman can plausibly make the argument that there is no way that Powell would have made this speech purely for political ambition. Powell does imply that he did not fully think through the speech and the harsh backlash that would come out of it in an interview with the *Daily Mail*.²⁵ Whatever his true motivations were when Enoch Powell gave his rivers of blood speech, it did have its intended consequences of urging the government to try to enact new acts that would restrict immigration.

Enoch Powell had many critics when it came to his views on immigrants and immigration. Another critic was T.E. Utley. Utley argues that Powell was too quick and generalized too much of the Tory party’s commitments in his Rivers of Blood speech. He argues that Enoch Powell skirted around a key issue that caused a lot of the backlash that the Tory party felt from the people. Utley argues that the morality dilemma of Powell’s immigration policy was the key issue. He says,

“it is one thing to recommend a drastic reduction in the number of immigrants [into the United Kingdom, but]... it is quite another thing for a party which is fond of preaching the sanctity of the family and the honoring of pledges to assert that immigrants already established here... should be told that... they are forbidden to bring dependents over”.²⁶

²⁴ Hillman, Nicholas. 2008

²⁵ Scott-James, Anne. 1968. “This Man of Passion and Danger.” *Daily Mail*, July 11.

²⁶ Utley, T.E. 1968. *Enoch Powell: The Man and His Thinking*. London: William Kimber & Co Limited.

Utley despairs at the idea that an immigrant should suffer being separated from their family forever simply because they were looking for a better life in what they believed to be a better country. Utley goes on to criticize Powell's speech by stating that he does not draw his conclusions by logic but instead defies all logic in order to gather the conclusions that he believes fits.²⁷ Even with all that Utley criticizes about Powell's speech, he does not outright dismiss it. He argues that while this speech may not have been logically sound, it did force the Conservative Party to announce and commit to their immigration platform.²⁸ They would either stand by Powell or dismiss him outright. Either way, Powell accomplished what he set out to do – get the government talking about immigration. Utley goes so far as to defend Powell and his speech. He argues that Powell is not a racist, meaning that he does not believe “in the natural inferiority of some races to others and in the justice of legal and social arrangements designed to register that inferiority” but instead calls him a nationalist meaning that to a certain degree, it is necessary for a nation to have some level of homogeneity in order for society to be stable.²⁹ That being said, it is obvious that Utley is not blind to the weaknesses in Powell's arguments and recognizes the thorn that Powell was and became to the Tory party. However it cannot be reiterated enough that though Powell had some very radical views, his ideas were important and came at a critical time in the United Kingdom's timeline.

²⁷ Utley, 1968

²⁸ Utley, 1968

²⁹ Utley, 1968

Enoch Powell is arguably the one that pushed the United Kingdom to react and pass legislation that would finally deal with (or at least attempt to deal with) the immigration issues that the United Kingdom had. Looking at the immigration laws and protocols that follow is the next important task that will give some kind of contextual background into how immigration laws may develop in the future. However, before there can be any discussion involving the direct participation of the different immigration laws, there must be some clarification of some key terms and phrases.

Terminology

Now, there are a couple of terms that need to be described and analyzed before the specific discussion of the laws and their evolution can be discussed. The terms in question are ethnicity, asylum and refugee. The last idea that needs to be explained is the United Kingdom's policy when it comes to international organizations and their rules.

Ethnicity. Ethnicity is a term that is exceptionally important to define (or attempt to define) before getting heavily involved in any discussion that deals with different groups of people. However, as important this term is, it is also remarkably hard to define. Experts disagree over the fundamental definition of ethnicity and there seems to be no clear consensus. Nevertheless, there are two main definitions that most researchers and experts can agree with. The first definition is the common one that is usually taught in lower education. This states that ethnicity comes from descent-based identities.³⁰ These attributes are inherited and cannot therefore be changed. The other definition of ethnicity takes a more constructivist approach. They posit that ethnicity is not only based on the

³⁰ Chandra, Kanchan. 2006. "What Is Ethnic Identity and Does It Matter?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 9.

characteristics that are inherent in a person but also characteristics that a person chooses and are applied to them by the outside world.³¹ Depending on which definition officials subscribe to will determine how the government will react to influxes of immigrants. Nonetheless, it is imperative to understand that ethnicity is not an easy term to define. Each group and even each individual will most likely have a different understanding as to how ethnicity is formed/given. And it is these individuals and groups that create policies that will affect the minority group of immigrants. In the United Kingdom, ethnicity plays an important role because of the influx of immigrants that they are currently dealing with and the waves of immigrants that it has dealt with. However, they are not the only ones that must deal with a dramatic surge of immigrants. The entire continental Europe is dealing with this. And each country's different opinion is what causes each country to deal with the problem differently. Along with the issue of immigration comes the issue of asylum. What is it and what is the United Kingdom's policy about it?

Refugee and Asylum. The terms refugee and asylum are important to define because there is much overlap between the refugees, asylum and immigrants. Though the terms refugee and asylum primarily apply to those that are fleeing political prosecution in their country of origin, it is also applicable in other areas, just as the United Kingdom has done. The term asylum does not have the same issues that are experienced when trying to determine what ethnicity is. However, the issue with explaining what asylum is and how it is used is contingent upon the country that is in question. Some countries can be stricter on what they define asylum as while other countries could have a broader definition.

³¹ Chandra, Kanchan. 2006.

How does the United Kingdom define refugees and asylum?

Looking at the United Kingdom, several relevant legal documents to examine. The United Kingdom approaches those seeking asylum by using four statutes. These are the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1967 Protocol (“the Refugee Convention”), the European Convention on Human Rights and the Immigration and Asylum Act of 1999. The United Kingdom uses the definition that was given in the 1967 Protocol. This states that a refugee is “a person unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion”.³² The United Kingdom has been in contact with those seeking asylum as early as the First World War and beyond. It is estimated that asylum seekers accounted for all or nearly all of the net migration into the United Kingdom in the early 1990s.³³ Though the number of asylum seekers has significantly decreased, they still make up a portion of those seeking to enter the United Kingdom legally. They hover at about eight to eleven percent of the total amount of migrants.³⁴ The total number of asylum seekers into the United Kingdom between 1984 and 2014 peaked in 2002 with 84,132 asylum applications being granted.³⁵ The figure in 2014 shows that the number of asylum applications that were granted fell to only about 24,914 – a significant drop that may be related to either no significant events happening (i.e. civil wars) or from the United

³² “Asylum Policy Instruction: Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status.” 2015. United Kingdom Government: Home Office.

³³ “Migration to the UK: Asylum.” 31 August 2015. *The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford*.

³⁴ “Migration to the UK: Asylum.” 2015.

³⁵ “Migration to the UK: Asylum.” 2015.

Kingdom denying more applications than before. This topic will be delved into in chapter two.

The Refugee Council, a charity in the United Kingdom, releases quarterly reports on the status of asylum seekers and refugees.³⁶ In each report, they show who is applying for refugee status and how the United Kingdom has responded. There are certain guidelines that the United Kingdom must follow when determining whether a person can be granted refugee status. Those seeking refugee status must have traveled to the United Kingdom directly from the country that they fear persecution, must present themselves to the authorities without delay and have good cause for their illegal presence and entry.³⁷ There were significant increases in the number of refugees coming from Ethiopia, Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan.³⁸ The Refugee Council's second quarter report of 2015 shows that the second quarter percentage was larger than the previous quarter's percentage and was also larger than the corresponding quarter's percentage in 2014.³⁹ Using this data and the current situation in the Middle East, it can be extrapolated that the United Kingdom is going to experience a massive surge once the next quarter's report is released. However, given the requirements that the United Kingdom follows based on the Immigration and Asylum Act of 1999 and the Refugee Convention, it is extremely difficult for people to gain lawful refugee status within the United Kingdom. David Cameron's proclamation in

³⁶ "Statistics of Refugees and Asylum." 2015.

³⁷ "Section 31 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and Article 31 of the 1951 Refugee Convention." 2012. United Kingdom Government. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-and-asylum-act-and-the-refugee-convention-process>.

³⁸ "Statistics of Refugees and Asylum." 2015

³⁹ "Statistics of Refugees and Asylum." 2015. *The Refugee Council*. August. <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/stats>.

2015 to allow 20,000 migrants into the United Kingdom, lawfully, while a positive public relations moment, could cause some issues.⁴⁰ There are many factors to take into account when accepting refugees or deciding on how many immigrants to allow into the country. Thus Cameron's statements need to be taken lightly.

The United Kingdom's policies towards those that are seeking asylum and refugee status based on political and/or religious reasons have come under sharp scrutiny in recent years. Ever since ISIS began its campaign in the Middle East, the United Kingdom's already high immigration rate has only increased. This is true for nearly all of the European countries. Since the early 2000s, the immigration out of North Africa and the Middle East has been only increasing because of constant persecution and war. This will only continue to increase as more and more continental European countries refuse migrants and push them onto other countries.

While the terms asylum and refugee are not entirely connected to the problem of immigration, there is some overlap and so the terms are important to keep in mind. This paper primarily deals with the issues that surround immigration and the political and social ramifications that come with immigration. However, as will be shown in the following chapters, the major immigrant waves that have occurred in the United Kingdom do have some of the same characteristics as one would see in regards to refugees. For the Jewish and East Europe immigrant waves, there were mitigating factors that encouraged a massive migration. Also, as will be shown in the following chapters, the citizens of the United Kingdom tend to have the same reactions when it comes to whether the person is labeled an immigrant or a refugee. While in some cases being

⁴⁰ "UK to Accept 20,000 Refugees from Syria by 2020." 2015.

labeled a refugee tends to invoke a more sympathetic tone, this seems to not be the case, generally, for the citizens of the United Kingdom.

CHAPTER TWO

How have the United Kingdom's immigration policies evolved? Why have these policies evolved in that way?

The United Kingdom's policies towards immigrants and refugees have evolved in significant ways. Starting in 2015, the United Kingdom's Conservative government announced that it would begin to accept Syrian refugees.⁴¹ This shocking turn of events is something that was not anticipated. It can be postulated that had this Syrian crisis occurred 100 years before, there might have been a very different reaction. However, it is important to keep in mind that while the British government has opted for accepting some Syrians, this does not necessarily reflect the way that the majority of the public may feel. This is something that will be explored in a later chapter. This change that the government has undergone is the subject of this chapter. The more significant changes began in 1962, however there were immigration laws already in effect. In fact, the United Kingdom had a very liberal regime towards immigration that allowed unrestricted immigration from the colonies and the Commonwealth until 1962.⁴² The United Kingdom has experienced several waves of immigration that have affected how society and the laws have changed. The first wave of immigrants was the Irish immigrants wanting to find new jobs. This wave lasted from approximately 1800 to 1861. Jewish immigrants were the next big group that settled in the United Kingdom. Their migration

⁴¹ "UK to Accept 20,000 Refugees from Syria by 2020." 2015.

⁴² Cornelius, Wayne A. 2004. *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective*. Stanford University Press.

was concentrated from 1876 to 1911 and in the years preceding World War II, approximately 1935-1939. It is arguable that each act that was passed coincided with some major incident or wave of immigration. I argue that the evolution of these immigration acts has been towards a more restrictive direction. However, there is a possibility that future laws may become more restrictive then ever for the sake of becoming more efficient. The influx of immigration from the Middle East and North Africa could cause the United Kingdom to either become stricter or more benevolent, but this is a topic for another chapter.

This chapter will examine immigration laws from 1962 to today. The first act to be instituted after a wave of immigration came during the Commonwealth immigrant wave, which began in 1948. The British Nationality Act of 1948 was the first law that looked at the issue of immigrants specifically. This act reassured the immigrants from the Commonwealth that they had the right of citizenship and the right to settle in the United Kingdom.⁴³ A Commonwealth citizen must register with the British government and was only considered a legal citizen if their father was a British citizen by birth – not naturalization.⁴⁴ It was after this act that things took on a more restrictive tone.

It is with the Commonwealth Immigrant Act of 1962 that this chapter will begin. From there, I will examine the Commonwealth Immigrant Act of 1968, the Immigrant Act of 1971, the Immigration and Asylum Act of 1999 and lastly, the Immigration Act 2014. Within each of these laws, I will look at the new restrictions that were placed on the immigrants with the passing of each law and what events were happening at the time

⁴³ *British Nationality Act, 1948*. 1948. <http://www.uniset.ca/naty/BN1948.htm>.

⁴⁴ *British Nationality Act, 1948*, 1948.

that may have influenced the policies. When looking at the British reaction to immigrants, it is important to see how the laws that primarily dealt with immigration also changed. The government is an extension of the people. The British citizens elect the members of Parliament, which in turn either enact or do not enact certain acts or bills. Therefore, looking at some of the different immigration acts that were passed could give some insight into how the people and their government were dealing and either accepting or rejecting the immigrants during this time.

Why and how did the immigration policies change in 1962?

In 1962, the United Kingdom adopted a new and more restrictive immigration policy. Harold Macmillan was the Prime Minister when Parliament passed the Commonwealth Immigrant Act of 1962. Parliament was able to pass this first law that some call “draconian” in the way that it treated those who were attempting to enter or those who already lived in the United Kingdom.⁴⁵ This law required all immigrants to pass through a type of border control that was not common before.⁴⁶ Also, there was a more intense enforcement of immigration control when it came to entering and leaving the country. Commonwealth citizens were not allowed to enter and leave the island as easily as before because they were technically considered British citizens. It removed an immigrant’s right to mostly free migration into and out of the United Kingdom and required that every new migrant provide proof of employment when entering the island. Without proof, immigrants were rejected and not allowed to enter the United Kingdom. The voucher that was required to gain entrance was a government approved work

⁴⁵ “United Kingdom: A Reluctant Country of Immigration.” 2015. *Migrationpolicy.org*. Accessed December 4. <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/united-kingdom-reluctant-country-immigration>.

⁴⁶ “United Kingdom: A Reluctant Country of Immigration.”

voucher. It became even harder for the migrants to gain these vouchers because the Conservative party, the party in power during this time, was slowly pushing legislation within Parliament towards reducing the number of immigrants that they were letting into the country by reducing the number of vouchers that the government approved.⁴⁷

Why restrict the number of immigrants allowed into the country? The government decreased the quota for the number of immigrants that could gain this work voucher. It can be argued that because there were a sizeable number of Commonwealth immigrants already in the country that not restricting the flow at that time would cause some future problems. Thus, a push towards reducing the number of immigrants allowed into the country was lobbied for. It is with this act of parliament that we see some of what Enoch Powell would advocate for in his Rivers of Blood speech in 1968. As stated in a previous chapter, Powell was advocating against legislation that he believed favored immigrants and argued for reducing the number of immigrants allowed into the island. He drew upon the many feelings of his friends, family members and the general public. Because so many Commonwealth citizens were coming into the island during this time and staying in Britain, it can be argued that British citizens were beginning to experience a culture shock. An increase in the number of immigrants in any country can plausibly cause a government to take more restrictive measures towards immigrants. After this act, would come the Commonwealth Immigrant Act of 1968, which would actually make it even harder to enter the United Kingdom.

⁴⁷ “United Kingdom: A Reluctant Country of Immigration.”

The Commonwealth Immigrant Act of 1968: Why restrict the immigration process further?

A new and more restrictive immigrant act was passed in 1968. The Commonwealth Immigrant Act of 1968 was passed under a Labour held Parliament with Harold Wilson acting as Prime Minister. It is important to note that Prime Minister Wilson would be one of the key proponents for this act. It seems that at least for this act, race really was the primary motivator. Though it is argued that it was actually the strain that these immigrants would put on the country's economy that prompted the Westminster government to act, there is a strong case that the Ministers and home secretaries that favored this act were motivated by racial reasons. This act only further intensified the already stringent immigrant laws that were in place. However, this act was also the turning point in British immigration policy. This was the same year that Enoch Powell made his infamous, "Rivers of Blood" speech that declared immigrants to be a threat to the country. It is important to realize just why such an act was passed at this time. Prime Minister Wilson was under immense pressure from his party as well as the people because of the problems occurring in Africa, particularly Kenya.

Kenya was a British colony until December of 1963, when it was granted its independence.⁴⁸ After its independence, Kenya went through this period of intense racial tension. The British had previously imported some people into Kenya from India, for work, but now that the British protection was essentially gone, they were left to fend for themselves. To make matters worse, Kenya's president, Jomo Kenyatta, was advocating for an "Africanization" of Kenya. Any non-Kenyans in Kenya were given about two years to renounce their British citizenship and gain Kenyan citizenship but the majority

⁴⁸ Rothchild, Donald S. 1970. *Citizenship and National Integration: The Non-African Crisis in Kenya*. Studies in Race and Nations, v. 1, study no. 3. Denver: University of Denver.

of the people did not submit their applications on time. Instead, what happened was that the Commonwealth citizens were beginning to realize that they had a right to go into Britain instead of having to return to their old colony because of the rights guaranteed to them in the 1948 British Nationalities Act.⁴⁹ When news began to spread that more than 200,000 Indians were looking to enter Britain from Kenya, it sparked outrage in London. Decolonization of Africa and this rise of African nationalism stoked fears and heightened racial tension. Legally, these Indians in Kenya had every right to move to the United Kingdom, but the fact that 200,000 were looking to move there in one massive wave scared the British people. Since Kenyan independence, about 1,000 people were moving into Britain every month.⁵⁰ In fact, this scared them so much that the Labour party decided that it was imperative to pass new legislation to stop this tide. During this time, people like Enoch Powell and Duncan Sandys, a colonial secretary in the British government, were trying to mobilize the Tories, the Conservative Party, into acting upon the hysterical cries of the public to stop this massive influx of immigrants.⁵¹ It was at this point that the Labour party's James Callaghan, the Home Secretary at the time, to not be out done by the Tories, knew it was time to act.

Within a couple of months, Home Secretary Callaghan was ready to make his argument about why there was a dire need for a new immigration law to curb the number of immigrants that could enter even more. One of the main issues that Callaghan and Wilson had to contend with was the European Convention on Human Rights, which was

⁴⁹ Rothchild, Donald S. 1970.

⁵⁰ Rothchild, Donald S. 1970.

⁵¹ Lattimer, Mark. 1999. "When Labour Played the Racist Card." January 22. <http://www.newstatesman.com/when-labour-played-racist-card>.

enacted in 1953. Protocol Four of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) dictates that “no one shall be deprived of the right to enter the territory of the state of which he is a national” which means that there was no legal way for Britain to stop legal British citizens from Kenya to seek entrance into Britain.⁵² To do so would be a crime against this convention that the United Kingdom had signed. George Thomas, a Minister of the Commonwealth State, was the only real opposition to the legislation that Callaghan was proposing. Thomas’ main concern with the act was not that it wanted to slow down the immigration, but that it focused only on colored immigrants and had nothing to say about white immigrants.⁵³ This, what he believed to be, blatant racism was what caused his outrage, but with little power and no one with power to support his arguments, Thomas could do nothing to stop the passage of the act. However, because of the ECHR, there was a need to clarify exactly what the act was intended to do and how to deal with and not violate the fourth protocol of the ECHR.

Britain did not want to be seen as a country that would expel or reject its own nationals, but something had to be done. Burke Trend, a civil servant in the Home Office, released a memo that seemed to explain exactly why this legislation did not violate the ECHR. It was clear that these Indians in Kenya were not racially British and therefore were not British nationals.⁵⁴ Therefore, Britain was not breaking any international law by barring them from entering the country. Eventually, it was decided that though this piece of legislation dealt with only the Asian community, the Home Office insisted that it

⁵² Council of Europe. 1950. “Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.” Council of Europe.

⁵³ Lattimer, Mark. 1999.

⁵⁴ Lattimer, Mark. 1999.

needed to be clarified that the legislation would affect not only the Asian community but also all of the new Commonwealth colonies.⁵⁵ It could not be so specific to only effect the Indians in Kenya but all of the colonies at the time.

Callaghan and Wilson were trying to find a way to deal with the situation in Kenya. Callaghan and Wilson would go into Parliament and Parliament would pass this bill within three days.⁵⁶ The one concession that they would make is that the United Kingdom would allow up to 1,500 immigrants from the Asian community in not only Kenya but also Uganda into the United Kingdom per year.⁵⁷ This was a dramatic decrease in the number of immigrants that were coming into the United Kingdom monthly before the passage. The act's proponents had one main argument that they used to try to sway others into believing that this was not a racist act. They used statistics to argue that allowing the 200,000+ people from Kenya (and consequently, Uganda) into Britain would put untold amounts of stress on the social service sector and cause the United Kingdom to spend an exponential amount of money to support it. Along with this, by allowing more than about 1,000 people per month into the United Kingdom, the government would be aggravating already tenuous racial tensions.⁵⁸ Their argument was partially proven when Enoch Powell gave his notorious Rivers of Blood speech in 1968. As stated before, because Powell drew from not only his own personal beliefs but also relayed stories from his constituency, Callaghan and Wilson's arguments seem to hold some level of truth.

⁵⁵ Lattimer, Mark. 1999.

⁵⁶ Lattimer, Mark. 1999.

⁵⁷ Lattimer, Mark. 1999.

⁵⁸ Lattimer, Mark. 1999.

This act put many people that did have a legitimate claim to British citizenship and its benefits into a dangerous situation. However, Callaghan, Wilson and all other supporters for this act made sure to emphasize that this act was to save the country from collapsing from the weight of the number of immigrants that may enter the country. After this piece of legislation, Parliament would pass next act that would change the immigration policies in the United Kingdom in 1971.

Why was the Immigration Act of 1971 adopted and how did it change the status quo?

The Immigration Act of 1971 was the law that would repeal the immigration acts of 1962 and 1968. This act would act as the base from which all-future immigration laws would stem from. This act also ensured that the Home Secretary would be able to have substantial rule-making powers of entrance and exit.⁵⁹ One of the focuses of the 1971 Act was to “assimilate by one permanent piece of legislation the legal position of aliens and Commonwealth citizens for the purposes of immigration and deportation, while preserving the rights of those already in the United Kingdom”.⁶⁰ After the 1968 act, immigration dealing with Britain became a largely internal matter rather than an international one. This act created two distinct categories for immigrants. The distinction is between persons who are patrial and those who are not.⁶¹ Those who are considered a patrial are those who have a right to live in the United Kingdom through a British born

⁵⁹ *Immigration Act 1971*, 1971. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

⁶⁰ “Statutes.” 1972. *The Modern Law Review* 35 (5): 508–24. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2230.1972.tb02363.x.

⁶¹ “Statutes.” 1972

parent or grandparent.⁶² Not every British citizen has this right, but many were unaffected by this new category.

In dealing with those who are non-patrials, the Act changed provisions that were set up by the 1962 and 1968 acts. The aspect that was changed was the extension of the work permits system to every non-patrial. Before this, there were some people that were excluded from this before. This is an important distinction because of how poorly Commonwealth citizens were treated under the 1962 and 1968 acts. They were regularly harassed and often could not leave the United Kingdom to return to their original home for fear that they would not be able to enter the United Kingdom again, even though they had a legal residence there.

Also, the abolition of the fixed quotas that were imposed on all immigrants was included in the act.⁶³ The goal of this was to allow the Commonwealth immigrants to enter into the United Kingdom, for limited time periods, to acquire and improve industrial skills and expertise and then to return to the Commonwealth colonies.⁶⁴ The assumption was then that these people would return to their home countries with these nearly acquired or improved skills. Though the 1971 act was a reaction to the 1962 and 1968 acts, it did little to reconcile and smooth relations between Britain and the Commonwealth citizens. One thing that this act did that was not been done before was that it add some limits to the Home Secretary's powers. The power that the Home Secretary wielded when enforcing the immigration rules "shall not adversely affect the

⁶² "Statutes." 1972

⁶³ "Statutes." 1972

⁶⁴ "Statutes." 1972

present freedom to come and go enjoyed by Commonwealth citizens already settled within the United Kingdom and their wives and children.”⁶⁵

However, this act did not only affect Commonwealth citizens. It also affected Irish citizens. Before, Irish citizens and Commonwealth citizens were automatically made British citizens when they were born.⁶⁶ Under the 1971 act, they were now required to live in the United Kingdom for at least five years before they were granted citizenship for the United Kingdom.⁶⁷ This made gaining citizenship even harder because it was still up to the office of the Secretary of State to decide whether the person can enter the United Kingdom and how long he or she can stay in the United Kingdom. Though there are no fixed quotas with this new act, the Secretary still had discretion. Before this, they were given some kind of citizenship within just one year of staying in the United Kingdom. Even when it became harder to enter the United Kingdom, Commonwealth and Irish citizens were still granted citizenship even if it did not have any real power and was mostly symbolic.

The 1971 Act not only dealt with entry the United Kingdom, but also deportation. Under the 1962 and 1968 acts, there was no consistency for how the rules were applied but with this act, every rule was consolidated under one document and were to be applied with no variation. With this passage, the government now has the right not just to deport the person that the deportation order has been made against, but they have the right to deport the entire family of that person as well. They used the term, guilt by association,

⁶⁵ “Statutes.” 1972

⁶⁶ Note: This does not mean that they had easy access into the United Kingdom itself. They had the title but most of the time, they were subject to quotas and restrictions for going into the United Kingdom.

⁶⁷ *Immigration Act 1971*, 1971. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

when deciding to do this.⁶⁸ However, should the family of the deportee decide to leave “under a supervised departure” the expenses will be paid for by the United Kingdom and the family minus the main deportee will not have any effect should the family attempt to re-enter the United Kingdom.⁶⁹ This was the way that immigrants were handled until the passage of the Immigration and Asylum Act of 1999.

How did the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 change the process?

In an effort to make the immigration process easier and more efficient, a new immigration policy was passed in 1999. The name of this the White Paper that explained this act is “Fairer, Faster and Firmer- a Modern Approach to Immigration and Asylum”.⁷⁰ There was a large backlog of immigration and asylum petitions that were sitting around for years that needed to be dealt with. On many levels, the 1971 act should have made it easier to apply for immigration visas but it did not sufficiently set up the protocols.⁷¹ As a result, this left many of the people who were trying to enter the country legally to suffer and wait while the abusive claimants and racketeers profited.⁷² The British government argued that there was a need to create a more efficient process to enter the country legally so that people would not have to pay someone to smuggle them into the country.⁷³ This

⁶⁸ *Immigration and Asylum Act 1999*, 1999. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

⁶⁹ “Statutes.” 1972.

⁷⁰ *Immigration and Asylum Act 1999*, 1999. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

⁷¹ Stevens, Dallal. 2001. “The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999: A Missed Opportunity?” *The Modern Law Review* 64 (3): 413–38.

⁷² “Fairer, Faster And Firmer - a Modern Approach to Immigration and Asylum - Publications - GOV.UK.” 2015. Accessed December 4. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fairer-faster-and-firmer-a-modern-approach-to-immigration-and-asylum>.

act also allowed immigrants to appeal to the courts. However, by allowing this, the courts became bogged down because almost all immigrants appealed and so the process just became as slow and tedious as it was before.⁷⁴ Another problem was that the cost to the taxpayer was also substantial already and only increasing.⁷⁵ The White Paper that was issued before the act was officially passed was aimed at streamlining the process as well as making it easier for appeals to be processed.⁷⁶ However, it became clear that the sheer number of individuals were too much for the system to adequately operate.

The United Kingdom was not only concerned with dealing with immigration but also with asylum seekers when it passed this act. They were focused on the fact that the United Kingdom was one of the first countries to sign on to the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees and wanted to ensure that they were upholding what they had signed while also maintaining the integrity of the state.⁷⁷ While the United Kingdom did not loosen the controls set in place for entry into the country, they did attempt to streamline the process. Even though it was not a massive improvement, it was still an improvement.

What effects did the Immigration Act 2014 have on immigration?

The Immigration Act 2014 altered a few aspects about the immigration process and how the government would treat the immigrants once they entered the country.

Between the passage of the 1999 Act and the 2014 Act, one event that is particularly

⁷³ “Fairer, Faster And Firmer - a Modern Approach to Immigration and Asylum - Publications - GOV.UK.” 2015.

⁷⁴ Stevens, Dallal. 2001.

⁷⁵ “Fairer, Faster And Firmer - a Modern Approach to Immigration and Asylum - Publications - GOV.UK.”

⁷⁶ A white paper is a government or other authoritative report giving information or proposals on an issue. “Fairer, Faster And Firmer - a Modern Approach to Immigration and Asylum - Publications - GOV.UK.”

⁷⁷ “Fairer, Faster And Firmer - a Modern Approach to Immigration and Asylum - Publications - GOV.UK.”

poignant for the British people is the 2005 London bombings. This attack had lasting effects on the people and the government. On July 7, 2005, a series of four suicide bombers detonated their bombs within the London public transport system during morning rush hour.⁷⁸ During these attacks, fifty-two people were killed and over seven hundred people were injured. Islamist extremists carried out this attack.⁷⁹ This attack had some serious effects on the British people and I argue is one of the reasons for the government pushing for more restrictive immigration policies as well as a resurgence of negative attitudes towards immigrants.

First, the 2014 act altered how the National Health Service (NHS) dealt with immigrants. Originally, free treatment at any NHS hospital was offered to anyone who had ordinary residence with in the United Kingdom.⁸⁰ This simply means that as long as the immigrant was in the country lawfully, then they could receive free health care treatment. With the passage of the 2014 act, there is now a minimum requirement of five years before the immigrants can receive NHS healthcare.⁸¹ They will have to pay a fee to use the services and this includes students, workers and family members to the resident.⁸² Some people postulate that it is because of the extremely high volume of immigrants entering the United Kingdom. By forcing there to be a waiting period, it would hopefully decrease the number of people who would enter the United Kingdom simply to use the

⁷⁸ Silke, Andrew. 2005. Terrorist threats to the UK homeland: 7/7 and beyond. *Journal of Counterterrorism & Homeland Security International* 11 (4): 26-31.

⁷⁹ Silke, Andrew. 2005.

⁸⁰ *Immigration Act 2014*, 2014. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

⁸¹ Hoshi, Bijan. 2014. "Immigration Act 2014: Removals and Nationality Provisions." *Free Movement*. September 18.

⁸² *Immigration Act 2014*, 2014. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

NHS. It could also be based on a worry that the NHS will crash under the demand that may be placed on it by this influx without some restrictions being placed. Also, immigrants tend to congregate together and so some cities may face a higher pressure than other cities and, therefore, place uneven pressure on the NHS as well. One key concern with this law that has not been addressed because of how recent it is about how to apply this law to people who entered the United Kingdom prior to the passage of this law but have been in the United Kingdom less than five years. Should they be subjected to this rule even retroactively? Another key issue deals with those immigrants who have complex immigration histories. This means they have entered and left the United Kingdom multiple times. How will this requirement now be enforced upon them? The main worry is that this new provision will be unfairly enforced upon immigrants who meet the criteria.

The next part that was changed was that the act now requires immigrants that want a visa to pay an extra fee.⁸³ This mainly affects students, migrant workers and migrant workers' families.⁸⁴ It is unclear what this extra fee is for, but it can be hypothesized that it has something to do with the NHS. Before the passage of the 2014 act, a private landowner was not enforced to check the immigration status of his tenants. However, with the passage of this act, the landowners are now required by law to check their status and if it is not legal, to report them to the authorities.⁸⁵ They also instituted penalties for landowners who failed to report their tenant's illegal immigration status.⁸⁶

⁸³ *Immigration Act 2014*, 2014. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

⁸⁴ *Immigration Act 2014*, 2014. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

⁸⁵ *Immigration Act 2014*, 2014. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

⁸⁶ *Immigration Act 2014*, 2014. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

2016 and beyond?

So far in 2016, no immigration laws have been passed. However, there has been an outcry at the number of refugees that are currently spilling into continental Europe from the Middle East and North Africa. The plight of these refugees has been documented by the media and has pushed people to either want to help the refugees or to keep them out of their country. When Prime Minister David Cameron announced that the United Kingdom was to accept about 20,000 Syrian refugees over the course of five years, it was met with some trepidation.⁸⁷ While this does seem to be a positive note, there are those who believe that what David Cameron's government is proposing is severely underpinned by deep cynicism. In light of recent events in Paris, France, many people do not believe that this policy will now be enacted. In fact, there are those who are now fervently opposing the acceptance of any refugees from the Middle East, particularly from Syria.

So is this the time when the United Kingdom finally decides that it is time to return to the ways before the 2014, 1999 and 1971 acts were passed? Would this be a turn towards policies like the 1921 and 1968 acts? A real concern is that rising dislike of or trepidation towards refugees and immigrants among British citizens will force the government's hand. Should the United Kingdom turn to more restrictive policies and a rise in fear towards immigrants continue, there could be a mass exodus of individuals out of the United Kingdom. This could in turn actually do what Enoch Powell was worried about and cause the British economy to become crippled. However, this is something that remains to be seen and further explored in the next chapter.

⁸⁷ "UK to Accept 20,000 Refugees from Syria by 2020." *2015*

CHAPTER THREE

How has public sentiment evolved or not evolved towards immigrants from 1800 to 2015?

Introduction:

Given the current tensions that flow freely in the global political arena towards immigrants, it is no longer shocking to hear politicians rant and rave and give speeches that incite and touch on racial prejudices when they occurred. One thing that is clear from the preceding chapters is that there is no way to deny that there is cause to be aware of, and as some would argue, to be concerned about the effects that immigrants have on a country. Immigration not only has political and economic effects on a country but also societal effects. However, the effect that immigrants have on a country is not the only thing that should be examined. In fact, it should be how the British responded to these new immigrants.

In 2015, when the United States' presidential campaign was beginning to gain steam, the front-runner for the American Republican Party, Donald Trump, gave a series of incendiary speeches that proclaimed the evils of immigrants and those considered the other. This group includes immigrants from Hispanic countries, primarily Mexico, and Muslims. An article written in 2016 draws a rather convincing argument between Trump and British politician Powell.⁸⁸ Let us review why this is particularly worrisome. In the

⁸⁸ Manzoor, Sarfraz. 2016. "Donald Trump and the 'Rivers of Blood.'" *The New York Times*, January 22. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/23/opinion/campaign-stops/donald-trump-and-the-rivers-of-blood.html>.

previous chapters, it was made clear that Powell had very strong and very negative views towards immigrants. In his infamous “Rivers of Blood” speech, Powell argued for a crude plan to repatriate nonwhite people and completely ban nonwhite immigrants from entering the country.⁸⁹ Trump’s speeches have echoed in a similar fashion although his focus is mainly on Hispanics and Muslims while Powell was mostly concerned with the Commonwealth immigrants. Powell’s ideas have been re-introduced into the major political arena in a different country. However, the sentiment remains. There are still many people who are supporting their ideas. The more positive aspect of the situation is that citizens have reacted in an unexpected way. Based on his racist remarks, many British people have signed and submitted a petition to ban Trump from entering the country. Given Powell’s history and the current situation, it was a surprising move that hints that maybe there is a move away from negative policies and reactions to immigrants.

However, the fact that this sentiment is still being espoused decades later (even if less so now than in the past) is a cause for worry. How much has the world changed since Powell gave his notorious speech? Is there a real cause for worry that places like the United States, United Kingdom and Continental Europe – places that are known for being open and tolerant of differences – are going to slip back to the 1940s and 1950s because of the current situation? Will the world become an even more dangerous place to live as an immigrant or refugee? To even begin to think about answering these kinds of questions, it is important to look at the historical reactions to immigrants.

⁸⁹ Powell, J. Enoch. 1968.

This chapter will be three fold. First, it will start with how public sentiment has evolved towards immigrants. Second, it will look at how immigrants reacted to the British and Scottish people's actions. This will be done with a case study covering the wave of Jewish immigrants and follow with a case study covering the wave of eastern European immigrants. The Jewish immigrants will appear in London and in Glasgow. These case studies will try to not only look at how British citizens reacted but also how immigrants reacted by using some sources from those who first experienced this situation. Lastly, there will be some comparison between the Jewish and eastern European cases to try to figure out what it was that caused the different/same reactions. I argue that as time has passed, public sentiment has become increasingly negative and at times, even violent.

The notion of a British person reacting negatively towards an immigrant is not a unique feature to the United Kingdom. However, the United Kingdom's relationship to its immigrants is different from the reaction to its continental European counterparts. It is even different from those across the pond in America. There are clear comparisons and contrasting features between the three areas. However, given the current concern with refugees fleeing from Syria, the rest of the Middle East and Northern Africa, each region's reactions are starting to become increasingly similar.

Case Study: Jewish Immigrants, 1876-1911

When looking at how Britain has interacted and reacted to immigrants, one of the arguably best places to start is with the Jewish immigrant wave that they experienced.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Although there is cause to start with a look at the Commonwealth immigrant wave, this case has been looked at in the previous chapters.

This case study will primarily focus on the different ways that the British people have reacted to these immigrants and detail some first hand accounts collected from the Jewish immigrants.

First, there needs to be some discussion about what caused this wave of immigration. Starting in 1870, a series of events followed that would ultimately lead to a mass migration. In 1870, Jews were expelled from Russia and its surrounding border regions when Russia absorbed new territories that held large Jewish populations.⁹¹ Along with this, there began a systematic persecution of Jews in Romania.⁹² Then, in 1900 came a mass exodus from Romania and in 1903 was the Kishenev Outrage.⁹³ This was an anti-Jewish protest that took place in Kishinev, Russia.⁹⁴ In response to Russia's pogroms, Jews migrated by the millions. While many wanted to head to the United States, most only got as far as Great Britain. At that time, there was no law to prevent people from entering the United Kingdom and there was no formal way to regulate or record how many people were entering the country. Therefore, accounts of the number of immigrants entered and stayed in the United Kingdom are vague at best. Even when a census was completed, the number of immigrants tended to be an underestimation due to a variety of reasons: namely ignorance, inaccessibility and evasion.⁹⁵ Another reason that it was nearly impossible to determine just how many people were entering England was

⁹¹ Jones, Catherine. 1977. *Immigration and Social Policy in Great Britain*. London: Tavistock Publications Limited.

⁹² Jones, Catherine. 1977.

⁹³ Klier, John, and Shlomo Lambroza, eds. 1992. *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

⁹⁴ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

⁹⁵ Joppke, Christian. 1996. "Multiculturalism and Immigration: A Comparison of the United States, Germany, and Great Britain." *Theory and Society* 25 (4): 449–500.

because England was (and still is) important as a transmigration point.⁹⁶ People who ended up in England were not only staying in England but also using it to get to other countries. Therefore, this problem could cause the number to inflate just a bit. The second problem with keeping accurate records is that there is no real way to determine whether these immigrants were all Jewish or not. At the time, the United Kingdom did not require incoming people to declare what their religions were when they were entering. Therefore, it is sensible to think that there were many people that entered the United Kingdom that were not Jewish and were not fleeing from Eastern Europe to escape prosecution. It cannot even be certain that those campaigns were the absolute reason for the migration nevertheless; it is seen as a strong correlation.⁹⁷

Britain would become the largest harbor for Jewish immigrants only second to the United States of America.⁹⁸ Over 2 million Jews fled with 1.9 million settling in the United States and over 140,000 settling in the United Kingdom.⁹⁹ One of the main questions that stemmed from this wave is why did these immigrants specifically go to the United Kingdom? It can be easily seen that the reason that Jews fled their home was because they were pushed away by political, economic and social persecution but the real question is why did they choose Britain as their new homeland? One of the main reasons that Jews fleeing their homes decided to head to the United Kingdom was the already

⁹⁶ Joppke, Christian. 1996

⁹⁷ Freedman, Maurice, and James Parkes. 1955. *A Minority in Britain; Social Studies of the Anglo-Jewish community*. London: Vallentine, Mithcell.

⁹⁸ Freedman, Maurice, and James Parkes. 1955.

⁹⁹ Joppke, Christian. 1996

established and flourishing Jewish community.¹⁰⁰ Jews had already settled in the United Kingdom and their economic and social prosperity attracted others that were being prosecuted. This not only offered general encouragement for Jewish immigrants to flee to Britain but also gave them a sense of hope that they would not only enter the United Kingdom but be given some kind of active assistance once they were there.¹⁰¹ Along with this, Britain's definition of asylum, which has already been defined, was already entrenched in the political realm and was a part of the Liberal Party's dogma.¹⁰² It was not until the Labour Party's discourse to the middle class man and the Alien's Act of 1905 that there is a clear indication that the United Kingdom's benevolent attitude towards immigrants was on the decline.¹⁰³

Another reason that the Jewish immigrants settled in the United Kingdom was simply that this was what they could afford. For a majority of those fleeing Eastern Europe, ship routes determined where they would go. Even more so than the Irish immigrants, their dispersion patterns rested on what the competitive ferryboat companies were offering. Between the years of 1902 to 1904, there was what was called an "Atlantic Rate War".¹⁰⁴ Essentially, companies made it incredibly cheap to travel to the United Kingdom while making it more expensive to go to places like Germany. Companies seized on the immigrants' opinion that the United Kingdom was so attractive and made it

¹⁰⁰ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

¹⁰¹ Freedman, Maurice, and James Parkes. 1955.

¹⁰² Jones, Catherine. 1977

¹⁰³ The act was the first one to introduce immigration controls and registration and gave the Home Secretary responsibility for immigration and nationality issues.

¹⁰⁴ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

so popular that there were lines and lines of people waiting to board a ship to get to the United Kingdom. This rate war influenced many Jews to make their way to the United Kingdom by making it cheaper to get farther away from those who were prosecuting them and closer to a large group of Jews. So immigrants were not only drawn to the United Kingdom because of the large groups of Jews that were already established there but also because of the ferryboat companies that wanted to make as much money as possible.

Jews that were already living in the United Kingdom tended to live in the same city, London. Even in the 1800s and early 1900s, London was a cosmopolitan city with more immigrants then any other part of the country.¹⁰⁵ This is a trend that continues to this day. London was usually where the immigrants arrived when they first made it to the United Kingdom and it was also where they tended to stay. Most of these immigrants could not afford to make the trip to the United States even though that was the “golden land” and thus, placed roots in the United Kingdom.¹⁰⁶ People were looking towards the United States as a place to escape and to start a new and better life. However, many of the Jewish immigrants could only make it to the United Kingdom. Not only did immigrants congregate in London, they also tended to be concentrated in the East End. It is not hard to understand how one area became more Jewish then any other area. It is in human nature to want to be around people that are similar to you, dress and eat the same things as you do, speak similar languages and have experienced the same kind of hate and vitriol that you have. There was a safety in numbers mentality that also drove Jews to

¹⁰⁵ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

¹⁰⁶ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

congregate together. The Jewish people have had a long history of prosecution from many different groups and so one of their most important goals is simply survival. This is what drove them out of their homes and to a completely different country on, for many of them, the complete opposite side of the continent and for others, completely across the Atlantic Ocean.

However, it was not only companionship and religious support that caused the Jewish immigrants to congregate with in close proximity with each other. It was also actual, physical material gain. During this time, traveling was a luxury that was not afforded to most people. Therefore, being forced to travel across a continent after being persecuted for years (or even decades) tended to cause immigrants to have little or no money once they landed.¹⁰⁷ It is only common sense that they would be pulled to fellow Jews in hopes of finding not only emotional and mental support but also financial support.¹⁰⁸ Jews that were already established in London tended to own their own businesses and also tended to employ only Jewish employees. Immigrants hoped that by moving to a heavily Jewish populated area that there would be a higher chance of employment.¹⁰⁹

Economy – Unity or Perpetuating Discrimination? At the same time, during this wave of immigration, Britain's economy can be described as "English, industrialized and already partly unionized".¹¹⁰ So how would these new Jewish immigrants enter into the

¹⁰⁷ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

¹⁰⁸ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

¹⁰⁹ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

workforce? What ended up happening was that these immigrants entered into a particular niche in the workforce. Because many of them did not speak English or spoke it very poorly, they would not be able to work in the factories. Instead, they would work at jobs known as: immigrant trades. Simply stated, this meant that they worked in workshops that did not rely on factories to produce their goods. Workshops would subdivide the process of making an item until it was extremely specialized. These workshops primarily relied on the women and immigrants who could not communicate clearly. They also operated on the fact that many immigrants were willing to work long hours with little pay because that is how desperate they were for money.¹¹¹ There was little sympathy from employers. They needed the job done and there were people who were willing to do it for little pay.¹¹² It is during this time that the Jewish immigrants began to work in many tailoring shops because it did not require that they speak directly with any customers and instead only had to be told where to sew and cut.

When the Jewish immigrants joined with the already existing Jewish community in London, they formed this new group identity. They were brought together based on religion and culture. It did not matter whether they were British, Russian, Polish or any other nationality. They were Jewish first and foremost. From this perspective, it is not hard to understand why they tended to congregate and only employ from within their community.

However, while group unity is something that is great to boost morale, the obvious separation between the Jewish and the British people only helped to emphasize

¹¹⁰ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

¹¹¹ Klier, John, and Shlomo Lambroza, eds. 1992.

¹¹² Jones, Catherine. 1977.

just how unusual these Jewish immigrants were to the British people. This meant that tensions between the two groups were even higher than, for example, between the English and the Irish because the Jewish immigrants were technically foreigners while the Irish were not. Compounding on this were the physical, cultural and linguistic characteristics that obviously displayed their differences. While Jews already settled in Britain were willing and able to help their new immigrant counterparts, this was a bit of a double-edged sword. By helping them, they were also segregating them. Not encouraging these new immigrants to spread and instead remaining concentrated, I would argue, could only cause the British citizens to continue to consider them as the other and to worry. One of the best ways for people to possibly accept foreigners/immigrants is for them to actually meet and interact with them.¹¹³ By self-segregating, it is possible that they were helping continue the cycle of rejecting anything new.

Scottish versus British Reaction to Jewish Wave of Immigrants. The Scottish reaction to the Jewish immigrants was different in many ways than how they reacted to the Irish and Commonwealth immigrants. Firstly, they were not just immigrants but also foreign and refugees. When the persecution began, it was widely publicized. There were people who believed that this influx of immigrants was a threat to the country and to their way of life. This wave of immigrants was one of the most debated topics at the time. Politicians hid behind veiled rhetoric and ambivalent terms.

Because the topic of immigration was such an important issue, it could have been possible for a political party to campaign on such a platform. The British Empire was

¹¹³ Finney, Nissa, and Ludi Simpson. 2009. *"Sleepwalking to Segregation"?: Challenging Myths about Race and Migration*. Policy Press at the University of Bristol. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qgrt7>.

starting to age and lose its power, which led to people being unsure just how Britain would survive politically and economically. Add in the threat of indiscriminate immigration and the fear of losing jobs to immigrants who would work more for less money, it is not hard to believe that there were those who espoused hate and vitriol towards the Jewish immigrants.

As stated before, another reason for people to feel threatened was the self-segregation. Most Jewish immigrants congregated within the East End of London and those who did not, settled within Glasgow, Scotland. Thus there was an almost completely clear line where the British and/or Scottish people and the Jewish community were separated. It made their presence even more startling. Both groups began to view their way of life as being threatened because of these new arrivals. They viewed these immigrants in a similar way as the Irish, as “less civilized, the degrading, the unclean and the immoral”.¹¹⁴ Another issue was the ever-present threat that these immigrants and the scores of immigrants that wanted to enter the United Kingdom would steal jobs from United Kingdom citizens and cause the working class to become non-English. The reactions between the Scottish and the British towards the immigrants were parallel in their negativity.

Anglo-Jewish Community Reaction. The native Jewish (Anglo-Jewish) community was in a precarious position.¹¹⁵ They felt the need to help those who shared the same name as they did. They viewed them as more primitive and thus were in need of

¹¹⁴ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

¹¹⁵ In this section, when referring to an ‘Anglo-Jew’, it is meant to represent Jews that lived in the United Kingdom before this wave of immigrants. They were already established and had been for generations. This is distinct from the Jews that arrived from Russia.

a guiding hand. However, as British citizens, they were also concerned about the effects that this influx of destitute immigrants would have on society and the economy. They did not want to lose jobs or incur the wrath and hate of the British but did not want to turn away their brothers and sisters. One good thing that was available for the new Jewish immigrants was the abundance of Jewish charitable organizations that were available. Some were geared to helping Jewish arrivals quickly move onto another destination like the United States while others were mostly focused on deterring the immigrants from landing in the United Kingdom. They wanted to convince them to stop over in Germany or France instead of stopping in the United Kingdom. So they worked to extol the virtues and how open and caring these countries were to Jewish refugees. The Jewish Board of Guardians was established in 1859 for the relief of the Jewish immigrants.¹¹⁶ However, their help was contingent on the immigrants residing in the United Kingdom for at least six months before applying for relief. The Guardians were not only trying to help the refugees that stayed in England but were also actively pushing them to either return to their homeland or to continue on to another country.¹¹⁷

Even with all of these different programs, there were still some that viewed the Anglo-Jewish community as being ambivalent towards the Jewish immigrants as a whole. While some Anglo-Jewish did employ the immigrants and help them when they could, a large portion of them were more worried about how the Anglo-British would react. Even though they did fear a backlash, they still helped the new Jewish immigrants. One of the more prominent Jewish charities during this wave was the Emigration Committee of the Jewish Board of Guardians. This charity worked in part with the Bevis Marks synagogue

¹¹⁶ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

¹¹⁷ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

in order to get more Jews to either return to their country or to move on to America. This was done in order to ease the financial and societal strain that was brought on by the new immigrants. Although this was the main goal of the Board of Guardians and its affiliated committees as well as for other Jewish charitable organizations, if an immigrant was unable to either return to their home country or to move on to America because of health reasons, they were allowed to stay with the Anglo-Jewish community in London.

The main issue between the Anglo-Jews and the Jewish immigrants was not the charitable aid that was being given but the fear of a permanent mass settlement. A permanent mass settlement has the potential for crippling or at least damaging the welfare system that is set up. An increase in the population could hurt the already tenuous NHS system. They sensed that unrestricted Jewish migration into the United Kingdom would lead to disastrous effects not only for them in an economic sense but also socially. Many of the older Anglo-Jewish families actually advocated for not only discouraging Jewish immigrants from staying in the United Kingdom but advocated for curtailing any and all migration. They also encouraged all charities to not offer any kind of material support, like the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter, and only offer help for re-emigration.¹¹⁸ However, this was a small percentage of the Anglo-Jewish community. The more conventional opinion was simply that they should try to encourage settlement either in their home country or in another country, like America. However, they were willing to accept that some would stay in London.

Glasgow. This section will include some accounts of Jews living in the United Kingdom after traveling from their home countries. Though they tended to settle in

¹¹⁸ Jones, Catherine. 1977.

London, particularly in the East End, some did travel to Glasgow, Scotland. Between the years 1881 to 1914, about 120,000 to 150,000 migrants settled permanently in cities like London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester.¹¹⁹ While the majority tended to stay in England, particularly London, a large portion traveled to Scotland and settled in the Scottish cities: Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Most of the Jewish immigrants settled in Glasgow with census data showing about 9,000 Jews in 1911. Between 1890 and 1945, fifteen Jewish immigrants in Glasgow were interviewed by Dr. Ben Braber at the University of Glasgow. The purpose of this study was to distinguish how the immigrants were assimilating or not in the UK.

Language – Barrier or Salvation? The first characteristic that the interviewers looked at was English language proficiency. Of the fifteen interviewees, all either spoke broken or little English upon arriving and had either very little literacy or were completely illiterate. However, this had little effect on employment opportunities. In Glasgow, there was already a decent sized Jewish community established so when these new immigrants began to arrive in the late 1800s and early 1900s, they did not have too much trouble finding employment within the Jewish community.

An example of this is given in the study. One of the respondents, Mr. Zuckerman, mother started a grocery store when she first immigrated to Glasgow because she saw there was a need for it within the Jewish community. She did not speak, read or write English and only spoke Yiddish. However, because of the self-segregation that was

¹¹⁹ Braber, B. 1992. "Integration of Jewish Immigrants in Glasgow, 1880-1939." Ph.D., Scotland: University of Glasgow (United Kingdom). <http://search.proquest.com/docview/301519591?pq-origsite=summon&accountid=7014&selectids=10000011,10000021>.

prominent in Glasgow, it was fairly easy for her to establish her store.¹²⁰ Jews went to Jewish stores while Anglos went to Anglo stores.

One subsection within the Jewish community that was most isolated from the Scottish community was the Jewish women. This was because most Jewish women were illiterate even in their native language. Therefore, it was nearly impossible for them to learn English in any formal setting. Along with this, many of the poor Jewish immigrants tended to be illiterate as well. This is a bit of a contradiction because the assumption has been that most Jewish immigrants were educated and so when they entered a new country, they were going to steal all of the professional occupations. The study conducted in Glasgow actually showed that some of the interviewees could not even sign their name, like Mr. Cowan.¹²¹

When this study was conducted, the interviewer also asked schoolteachers in Glasgow about how children who were new to Glasgow experienced schooling. The teachers were almost unanimous in their opinion that because most children joined the schools without knowing any English and that Yiddish was still the dominant language in the home, many of the children experienced a large amount of difficulty in picking up English. However, because children were much quicker to pick up English than adults, they were more likely to learn and than teach their parents.

¹²⁰ Braber, B. 1992.

¹²¹ Taylor, Avram. 2013. “‘In Glasgow but Not Quite of It’? Eastern European Jewish Immigrants in a Provincial Jewish Community from c.1890 to c.1945.” *Continuity & Change* 28 (3): 451–77. doi:10.1017/S0268416013000350.

Culture Disparity The difference in cultural practices and whether this caused more conflicts is a little harder to pin down than the linguistic issues. One of the problems was the tradition that the new Jewish immigrants brought with them. These traditions and superstitions tended to alienate them even more, not only from the Scottish but also from other Jews. Jews brought not only their Jewish customs but also customs from their home countries. One interviewee, Mrs. Friedlander, explained that one tradition that was particularly jarring for her was that once a girl gained her menstrual cycle, she was to be slapped in the face.¹²² Her parents never spoke as to why this had to happen but only that it was a tradition in their home village, located near Kiev.

One thing was clear was that not all Jewish immigrants were able to accept their new surroundings. Some interviewees expressed that they did not like Glasgow because there were not enough people that were religious enough.¹²³ Mrs. Abrahams had family members that returned to their home country because they were too worried about the anti-Semitic ideas that could have popped up and because they did not feel that the Jewish religious values were being supported or followed as well as they believed they should have been. The cultural differences not only between the Scottish and the Jews but also within the Jewish community were the cause of many problems and feelings of non-acceptance.

“In Scotland but not of it.” This level of self-segregation and desire for a place that would fully support the Jewish faith and not just allow it only propelled the idea that

¹²² Taylor, Avram. 2013.

¹²³ Taylor, Avram. 2013.

there was a distinct society within a distinct society. Scotland has always thought themselves as separated from the English, Welsh and Irish. But within Scotland, the Jewish (and the Scottish) also viewed their group as a distinct society. They operated almost exclusively within the group and rarely interacted with Scottish inhabitants outside of what was necessary.

This had much to do with language barriers as it did with self-segregation. Jews tended to clump together. This included housing and businesses. However, when Jewish men went to work in the factories, some did try to fit in with the Scottish men. They went drinking and tried to come across as the Scottish man and not the Jewish man. However, Jewish men had a strong desire to stay within the Jewish faith and socialize with other Jews rather than with the Scottish. One group that men tended to join was, The Worker's Circle.¹²⁴ The Circle provided mutual aid and also organized political meetings. This was important because many of the meetings tended to be in Yiddish and so the Jews felt like they could become part of their new society.

Another important group that the Jewish immigrants were involved in was the synagogue. More often than not, this was the primary form of socialization within the Jewish community.¹²⁵ It provided a sense of unity and acceptance that many immigrants never felt. However, this was a bit of a double-edged sword. Many of the immigrants would only attend synagogue and not join other groups. This stopped the integration process from happening. It often caused the Jews to never fully assimilate or feel at home in Glasgow. They were "in Scotland but not of it".¹²⁶ Unlike their country of origin, they

¹²⁴ Taylor, Avram. 2013.

¹²⁵ Braber, B. 1992.

would never feel the same level of comfort. It would be as if two separate societies were living in one area: those who were Jewish and those who were not. That being said, not every Jew experienced Glasgow the same way. There were a variety of different responses. Some despised their new home but feared returning to their country because of persecution. Others embraced their new location and found that they were welcomed with open arms. It is in this study that the term, “variegated acculturation” is created in and defined.¹²⁷ It indicates that:

“...The diversity of immigrant responses, which were shaped by the circumstances that they encountered on their arrival in Britain. They defined themselves in relation to the community they lived in, and their self-image was created as a response to their perception of the social divisions within this community. This experience was not in any way unified, although the Jewish community was essentially able to act as a collectivity due to a shared ethnic and religious identity. This is consistent with the sociological insight that ‘community provides not so much a model, but more an expedient medium for the expression of very diverse interests and aspirations’.”¹²⁸

Jewish immigrants had a hard time entering the United Kingdom. They were unwanted by the masses while the Anglo-Jewish community was either ambivalent to them or wanted them gone as well. They attempted to join with the group but were often stopped by the anti-Semitic feelings that were either real or imagined. Instead, they either stayed in the United Kingdom or simply moved on. Those that stayed would have many different experiences. One thing that remained constant was that the Jewish identity was strong. It did not waver even when Jews mingled with the British. Their religious ties trumped almost anything else. Therefore, it is not only their immigrant status but also

¹²⁶ Taylor, Avram. 2013.

¹²⁷ Taylor, Avram. 2013.

¹²⁸ Taylor, Avram. 2013. pg 471

their Jewish identity that would lead them to live alongside the British, and never truly assimilate.

Eastern Europe Immigrant Wave, 2004-Present

The next wave of immigrants that will be discussed is the wave of immigration that the United Kingdom experienced from Eastern European countries. This is a more recent wave of immigration and as such there is less data available on the immigrants. Along with that, many of the immigrants that are entering the United Kingdom do so illegally. Therefore, it is more difficult to get any information on them. Also, by sheer numbers, it is incredible how many immigrants entered the United Kingdom. According to an estimate, over the course of six years, from 2004-2010, 1.5 million immigrants arrived in the United Kingdom from Eastern Europe alone.¹²⁹ For this section of the paper, the term ‘Eastern European immigrants’ will encompass all of the immigrants that traveled from the countries such as Poland, western Russia and the Ukraine. If a specific country is discussed, it will be named in the section.

First, as with the previous case, the causes of the immigration wave must be examined. It can be argued that the large number of Eastern European countries that joined the European Union in 2004 spurred on this wave of immigration. In 2004, ten countries joined the EU and along with that, gained EU citizenship.¹³⁰ This means that they gained the right to move freely within and between any European Union countries

¹²⁹ Fitzgerald, Ian, and Rafal Smoczynski. 2015. “Anti-Polish Migrant Moral Panic in the UK: Rethinking Employment Insecurities and Moral Regulation *.” *Sociologicky Casopis* 51 (3): 339–61. “Free Movement - EU Nationals.” n.d. *European Commission*.

¹³⁰ “Free Movement - EU Nationals.” *European Commission*, n.d. <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=457&langId=en>.

through the Schengen Agreement. Although the United Kingdom has opted out of this agreement, it is still the recipient of many immigrants from Eastern European countries.¹³¹ The reason that this is the case is that the United Kingdom's stronger economy is attracting people. They look at the United Kingdom and they see an opportunity to better their lives and to find work. One particularly large group of immigrants that moved to the United Kingdom was from Poland. In 2004, they had the largest number immigrate to the United Kingdom with a majority of them being young and unskilled.¹³² Most of the immigrants that entered the United Kingdom were looking for a job and did not flee their country from persecution, like the Jews. However, this makes them seem more threatening to the British because they cannot be categorized as refugees or asylum seekers. They are there to get jobs and better their lives. The global financial crisis of 2008 only caused the number to increase as well with more people becoming desperate to find some kind of work.¹³³ In the next section, there will be an exploration as to how the British reacted to these Eastern European immigrants.

British Reaction – Polish Immigrants. First, there will be some analysis of how the British responded to the Polish immigrants, specifically. This is important because a large portion of the immigrants in this wave came from Poland. The British working class is

¹³¹ "Free Movement - EU Nationals."

¹³² Burrell, Dr Kathy. *Polish Migration to the UK in the "New" European Union: After 2004*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2012.

¹³³ In 2008, the level of unemployment in Poland was 12.8% while in the United Kingdom it was at 8% "Countries Compared by Economy > Unemployment rate. International Statistics at NationMaster.com, CIA World Factbooks [2010](#), [2011](#), [2012](#), [2013](#). Aggregates compiled by NationMaster., " <http://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/stats/Economy/Unemployment-rate> (assessed 1992-2012)

often insecure about their work opportunities.¹³⁴ There is always some fear that there will suddenly be no more jobs. However, when the 2008 global financial crisis occurred, the already tenuous relationship between the British and the immigrants became worse. It can be argued that the Polish immigrants were used as scapegoats. During David Cameron's term as Prime Minister, he often depicted Polish migrant workers as being abusers of the welfare state.¹³⁵ Of course, this state could be true but for the majority, it is not. However, some speculate that this was just rhetoric in order to enflame the masses and get support in order to introduce new legislation that would curtail the welfare benefits that immigrants were granted and to reduce the number of immigrants entering the United Kingdom. Media coverage only exacerbated the issue.

After the 2008 financial crisis, there was a sharp increase in anti-Polish sentiment. The British public became openly hostile to immigrants. This can be expected. Researcher, Rafaela Dancygier, noted that when economic resources are under pressure, there is an increase in the frequency of conflict between the host country and the immigrants.¹³⁶ There are parallels between the micro level violence and the macro level conflicts against the immigrants but regardless of different variables, such as demographics, racially motivated violence increases as local economic conditions decline.¹³⁷

There were reports of cars and houses being vandalized. People who were

¹³⁴ Fitzgerald, Ian, and Rafal Smoczynski. 2015.

¹³⁵ Fitzgerald, Ian, and Rafal Smoczynski. 2015.

¹³⁶ Dancygier, Rafaela M. 2010. *Immigration and Conflict in Europe*. New York, US: Cambridge University Press. <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/alltitles/docDetail.action?docID=10421517>.

¹³⁷ Dancygier, Rafaela M. 2010.

interviewed expressed disbelief that the Britain that they had been part of and loved was turning against them. One man stated, “Six years ago the English were more open towards us, there wasn’t this campaign that we are taking their jobs and benefits.”¹³⁸ Open hostility and discrimination became the norm. Poles and British worked together, somewhat peacefully, up until this point. It is at this moment where the Poles began to be blamed for everything bad that was happening. If a company closed or laid off employees for any reason, it was automatically blamed on the Polish immigrants. They were openly attacked and often treated with hostility when in public.¹³⁹ However, it must be pointed out that this was really only prevalent within the lower to lower-middle classes. The middle and upper classes tended to treat the Polish immigrants with indifference.¹⁴⁰ This is not hard to grasp because almost every Polish immigrant within the United Kingdom was unskilled. Because they tended to take low skill/unskilled jobs, this only further socially marginalized them.¹⁴¹ Therefore, the people with professional jobs were not really threatened by the immigrants.

British Reaction – Eastern Europe immigrants generally. In general, the British tend to have a negative attitude towards immigrants. Looking at this situation through the economic level, the hostility that was geared to the immigrants could be defended. As stated before, many of the Eastern European immigrants that tried to find jobs in the United Kingdom, tended to work low skill jobs. Even if an immigrant was educated and

¹³⁸ Ciupijus, Zinovijus. 2012.

¹³⁹ Fitzgerald, Ian, and Rafal Smoczynski. 2015.

¹⁴⁰ Fitzgerald, Ian, and Rafal Smoczynski. 2015.

¹⁴¹ Ciupijus, Zinovijus. 2012.

had a higher level of skill, most of the time he would be forced to accept a lower paying job because he needed the money desperately. One immigrant remarked, “I cannot imagine an Englishman taking the kind of jobs we do. They [British employers] get educated migrants like myself and pay them the national minimum wage. They would never find an Englishman with a similar qualification willing to do such kind of work for this pay.”¹⁴² So, even though there were jobs that were available for the British, they were often dismissed as not being good enough. An immigrant will rarely pass up any working opportunity.

However, simply finding a job did not guarantee that these immigrants were treated in the best way. Many of the migrants were exploited and abused at these jobs.¹⁴³ Because they were desperate for work, many would work with no legal protection, long hours and little pay. Some employers tended to be able to get away with the abuse because the immigrants did not know of the employment rights/protections that were granted to them. Also, if their status within the country was illegal, they did not want to attract attention to themselves and possibly be deported. However, even if legal immigrants did know of their protections, they were not immune to their abuse. Some employers did try to circumvent the rules. Most of the times, these Eastern European immigrants had to take the worst jobs offered and were often paid subpar wages. This could mean that they had to travel for hours just to get to their job and stay until late at night and be forced to repeat this day after day.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Ciupijus, Zinovijus. 2012.

¹⁴³ Ciupijus, Zinovijus. 2012.

¹⁴⁴ Burrell, Dr Kathy. 2012.

Push-Pull Factors. When a person decides to leave their home country and move to a new one, they do not just leave without a reason. There are factors that are called push-pull factors. A push factor can be explained as being something that motivates a person to leave their country. This could be not being able to find a job or being treated badly by the government.¹⁴⁵ A pull factor is the thing that makes the immigrants want to go to that specific country. This could be more jobs available, higher standard of living or stable government.¹⁴⁶ It is a combination of these factors that will motivate a person to migrate to a new country.

Immigrants from Eastern European countries were mostly motivated to move because of economic push-pull factors although these economic factors did affect social factors.¹⁴⁷ The British pound is a strong currency in the world. Therefore, it makes the United Kingdom very attractive to people from countries like Poland. Because it is stronger than the Polish Zloty, the wages in the United Kingdom look very attractive. A weak economy can lead to a lower standard of living. People could look at the standard of living in the United Kingdom and be entranced with the possibility of moving to that country and being able to live as they do. While the immigrants that entered the United Kingdom from Eastern European countries were not fleeing from oppression or persecution, they were fleeing from lack of opportunity. The combination of desire to raise their standard of living and the strength of the British pound compared to their countries' currencies was enough to drive these people into moving across the continent.

¹⁴⁵ Parkins, Natasha C. 2010.

¹⁴⁶ Parkins, Natasha C. 2010.

¹⁴⁷ Travis, Alan, 2015.

Conclusion

Based on a look at the British reaction towards immigrants from two different groups of immigrants, it is possible to see that the British people have consistently reacted negatively, for the most part, towards immigrants. Though immigrants are tolerated, they are never truly accepted. There was a push for assimilation and the desire for immigrants to not sequester themselves away from living mixed into the group. There are some positive things to be said about assimilation. Along with that, there is something to be said about living in a multicultural society. Accepting and living in a society that contains multiple cultures and traditions does have some effect on building tolerance. However, it is fair for the British people to want immigrants to assimilate at least to some degree. Jewish immigration into the United Kingdom from the 1800s to the 1900s was a clear indication that while there was some hostility towards the immigrants, a lot of the problems also stemmed from within the group. This included the already settled Jewish community not wanting to allow the immigrants to stay in the United Kingdom and either encouraging them to move on to America or to return to their home country. So the British are not totally to blame for the immigrants' treatment. Many immigrants simply never felt comfortable being in the United Kingdom. However, there is something to be said about the way that the British reacted. As stated before, the immigrants were never treated with happiness or acceptance. The immigrants were merely tolerated. Then when things got rough, like the 2008 global financial crisis, they were almost exclusively targeted. Immigrants make the easiest scapegoats. The British seem to have this constant underlying fear within their society. They fear the other. They fear the loss of jobs. This causes them to react harshly when things turn out badly.

Taking a look in the future, it is worrisome about how the British will ultimately react to the current Syrian refugee crisis. Though Prime Minister Cameron has stated that he will gladly accept immigrants from the crisis, it is still not clear how the public will react. Some praise the Prime Minister for his actions while others condemn him for putting immigrants before British. This speculation is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Predicting the Future for the United Kingdom and Future Immigrants

Throughout this paper, it has been reiterated that Britain has experienced many different waves of immigration. This is neither a new phenomenon nor a unique one, however it is important. The United Kingdom has experienced multiple waves that arguably, have shaped British culture and their view on foreigners. From the time that the United Kingdom was the most powerful and largest empire to now, the United Kingdom has not been immune to the constant challenges that are presented by immigrants. However, it took years before the British government would pass any tangible and meaningful legislation. I would argue that Enoch Powell, a former member of the Conservative Party in the UK, was the first person that voiced many of the fears and trepidations that people had about immigrants. I also argue that this trepidation towards immigrants will continue in the future based on the historical trend of British reaction towards immigrants.

Arguably, what determined how the British people reacted to these new residents was whether the wave of people coming in were immigrants or refugees. This distinction is essentially what determined whether the British were accepting or hostile towards the foreigners. A factor that influenced the British opinions towards these immigrants was the economic stability/instability in Britain. When Britain was economically stable, they tended to not be quite as hostile however even if the economy was stable, the idea of

thousands of foreigners entering and staying in the United Kingdom was almost too hard to accept. However, this is not to say that immigrants or refugees were not accepted. Her Majesty's government allowed them in. While they faced many obstacles, such as language barriers, they were allowed to enter the United Kingdom even if they faced growing restrictions.

In this final chapter, I will be making my predication about how the United Kingdom's immigration policies will develop. Based on my research, I argue that with the recently re-elected Conservative government and the rampant phobia towards immigrants, especially people from the Middle East, and the fear of refugees, Britain will continue down the path towards increasingly negative reactions to the both immigrants and refugees. Should the United Kingdom continue on this slope, there is the possibility of a mass exodus of immigrants out of the United Kingdom. This possible exodus has the possibility of hurting the economy.

Immigrant v Refugee: It Does Not Matter for British Public Opinion

The way that the British people have dealt with others entering the country varies according to the group. Britain has had a difficult time dealing with foreigners entering and staying in their country since before the Commonwealth immigrants. While the British fear of 'the other' is not a unique one to Britain, it is a serious issue. Because there are politicians and activists that warn of the dangers of these new residents, it is clear that there are some negative emotions towards the immigrants or refugees. The British people

have this fear that new immigrants or refugees in the country will steal jobs, destroy the welfare system and cause the British identity to disappear. As stated before, media and politicians only exaggerate these worries.

The word immigrant has the connotation that this person or these people are not entering the country for a short stay or holiday but rather for an indeterminate amount of time. This makes people wary and a bit more hostile. The new questions are: how long are they staying? Will they be allowed to get jobs? Will they get welfare benefits? People become more concerned that these immigrants will begin to steal from them. Because the United Kingdom is such a strong welfare state, one of the main problems is whether immigrants will receive welfare benefits. The other prime point of contention is jobs. Though Britain's economy is gaining traction once again, there is always the fear of that there will be less jobs for the British citizens because immigrants will start to steal them. This was one of the main concerns when it came to Eastern European immigrants.

On the other hand, when a person or group of people are called refugees, they elicit a more sympathetic response from the people. This is something that is a bit contested when applied to the current issue in Syria. This part will be examined in a later part. On the other hand, media and celebrity endorsements/activism tend to have a positive impact on how the general public will look at and react to a refugee crisis that leads to a massive movement of people. This distinction and the idea that the people react differently depending on the group seems plausible and even applies to most countries. However, this is not the case for the United Kingdom's citizens. Regardless of whether the groups are immigrants or refugees, the British people have had a negative reaction.

Being refugees could mean that the reaction/sentiment is not quite so negative but it is still negative.

Throughout this thesis, I have presented examples of how the British people and government have reacted to different groups of people whether they are immigrants or refugees. Commonwealth immigrants were one of the first major waves to hit Britain. They faced a lot of backlash particularly from some government officials. While they first entered the United Kingdom virtually unrestricted, tensions soon became strained because of the number of Commonwealth citizens within the United Kingdom. This caused an enormous and harsh backlash. They were the first subjects of some of Britain's earliest immigration laws and acts. Many families were separated when the acts were first implemented because of the quotas that were initiated. There was no longer this virtually unrestricted flow of immigrants to the United Kingdom. Instead, they were required to apply, wait a certain amount of time and hopefully get approved. Jobs were harder to come by at this point. I would argue that because of these restrictions that were implemented, it sparked an almost racist tone from the people. That is not to say that before these acts were passed that the Commonwealth citizens were not discriminated against, but it is after their passage made it become more blatant. One of the main sparks to the passage of these new immigration acts came from Enoch Powell and his infamous "Rivers of Blood" speech. However, Powell's effect and possibly lingering effect will be examined later in this chapter.

The next group that was examined was the Jewish immigrants. The Jewish immigrants are a complicated group. The wave of Jewish migration that was examined

earlier was the group that fled when pogroms began to happen in the Russian Empire.¹⁴⁸ While this is categorized as an immigrant wave, I would argue that it actually had tinges of a refugee crisis. A pogrom is a Russian word that means, “to wreak havoc, to demolish violently.”¹⁴⁹ It was the term used to explain what was happening in the Russian Empire. There were anti-Jewish riots, violence, and rhetoric. Thousands of Jewish men, women and children were killed during these riots.¹⁵⁰ The Russian Empire imposed heavy restrictions on the Jews and this included not being able to move to other parts of the Empire unless they converted to Orthodox Christianity. The level of violence that was consistently displayed was enough to cause many Jewish people to flee from the Empire. However, what makes them unique is that when they fled to the United Kingdom, the large Jewish population that already resided in the United Kingdom greeted them. Two large groups resided in Glasgow, Scotland and in London, England. The English and Scottish people had varying reactions to the Jews. Because many of these Jews did not speak English or spoke it very poorly, they tended to not venture outside of the English or Scottish Jewish community. This group faced more backlash from the British because it appeared that this group was not leaving either. Even though on the face of it, it looked like a group that was fleeing a violent area, there was almost no sympathy from the English and Scottish people. Also, these immigrants were not entirely welcomed by their Anglo-Jewish counterparts. Because the Anglo-Jews feared the British and Scottish reactions, they were working to either help these immigrants continue on to the United

¹⁴⁸ Klier, John, and Shlomo Lambroza, eds. 1992.

¹⁴⁹ Klier, John, and Shlomo Lambroza, eds. 1992.

¹⁵⁰ Klier, John, and Shlomo Lambroza, eds. 1992.

States of America or to return to their homeland. It was as if there was no sympathy from anyone.

The last group that was examined was the Eastern European wave. This group was primarily comprised of people from Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. The main cause for this wave was the weak economies within those countries. This group was primarily made up of young and middle aged adults who could not find jobs. They left their home countries to travel to the United Kingdom in hopes of finding jobs and gaining a better livelihood. However, this proved to not be an easy task. Because this group was comprised of low-skilled laborers, they ended up taking all of the jobs that the middle and lower classes in the United Kingdom would usually get. This includes maid services, hotel employees and janitorial positions. Along with this came the global financial crisis of 2008. Jobs became even scarcer and the people became even more worried about the number of immigrants entering the United Kingdom. From this, violence erupted. Immigrants were being attacked and threatened and their homes vandalized. Arguably, this has been the least welcomed group so far. A tenuous and volatile economic situation exacerbated already tense relations between immigrants and the British. From this, it can be argued that it lead to a stronger support for more anti-immigrant groups and policies.

A Return to Rivers of Blood and UKIP

A major influx of immigrants into any country has the potential to spark a growth in nationalism. However, first we must look at the man that I argue started it all. There is cause to argue that the United Kingdom may be returning to Enoch Powell's sentiment as

expressed in Rivers of Blood.¹⁵¹ While it has been decades since Powell's infamous speech, many of his same worries are starting to rise as a norm in British rhetoric. Recent events, such as the Paris and Belgium terrorist attacks, have also caused many people to become even more wary of allowing foreigners into the country. However, these attacks are not the only causes. The world economy is not as strong as it was before the global financial crisis. Britain's economy still has not reached the level of production as it once had even though it has made a great recovery. With jobs still being scarce, especially low-skilled jobs, there are still tensions within the country. Now, with a rise in nationalism as well as the many different international incidences, there is a true fear of losing the British identity. More and more, there are people who have parents that migrated from a different country to the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom is no longer as Anglo as it once was. So this sentiment that allowing people to enter the United Kingdom will cause the British to lose their British identity is slowly prevailing. I would argue that this loss of identity and fear of others is a contributing factor to the rise of nationalism.

When thinking about nationalism in the United Kingdom, the first group that comes to mind is the SNP or Scottish Nationalist Party. The SNP advocates for a free and independent Scotland from the British.¹⁵² However, there is a more encompassing nationalist party that has recently become more popular. While they are accused of racist rhetoric, they seem to be supported, at least in part. Similar to the Scottish, they want the

¹⁵¹ Powell, J. Enoch. 1968

¹⁵² "The UKIP Manifesto 2015." 2015.

government to work for the advancement of the British people and to pull away from the rest of continental Europe.

The United Kingdom Independence Party, UKIP, is a far right party that boasts nationalism and is anti-Europe. Established in 1993, UKIP claims that it is a mixture of policies from Margaret Thatcher and Enoch Powell, two prominent Conservatives.¹⁵³ While UKIP explicitly rejects ethnic nationalism by encouraging support from all ethnicities and religions in the United Kingdom, it is fiercely against any new immigrants or refugees entering the United Kingdom. Staying a part of the European Union and allowing refugees and immigrants to enter into the country will only cause Britain to lose its Britishness. Because of this, UKIP's former leader, Nigel Farage has strongly advocated for Britain to leave the European Union as quickly as possible.¹⁵⁴ While nationalism is not a new idea in the British political realm, the rise of the SNP and UKIP in popularity is startling. They are pretty much single issue parties, much like the Greens. While the United Kingdom Independence Party has gained popularity in the United Kingdom, they are still a rather small party. They have only gained a handful of MPs in Parliament. However, when polled, many people tend to agree or at least sympathize with their rhetoric.

However, why is it important? With the way that the United Kingdom's electoral system is set up, it is extremely hard for single-issue parties to gain any seats if geographically dispersed. Nevertheless, it is still possible. Arguably, there is cause to

¹⁵³ "The UKIP Manifesto 2015." 2015.

¹⁵⁴ Mabbett, Deborah. 2014.

believe that the parties like UKIP could see a rise in popularity and a rise in the number of seats that are granted. While I do not believe that they will gain same or even comparable amount of power as the Conservative or Labour parties, there is a chance that they could become a third or fourth level party. This is even more possible with the shocking defeat and massive decline in support that the Liberal Democrats experienced in 2015. Organizations and other entities need to pay attention to parties like the UKIP. They may become serious policy influencers in the future.

The 'Brexit' and Syria

The main topic of concern in the United Kingdom's political arena is whether or not to continue to play a role in the European Union. Prime Minister David Cameron is a vocal advocate for staying a member of a reformed European Union. Cameron was able to resist calls for a referendum in 2013 to decide whether to leave or stay in the European Union. However, since winning reelection in 2015, Cameron has promised the people an, 'in out' referendum in the summer of 2016.¹⁵⁵ Cameron is using this as a way to prove that the people want to whole-heartedly either be in or out of the European Union. While Cameron's Conservatives may have campaigned as a whole on the idea of staying within the United Kingdom, there are still individuals within the party that believe it is best for Britain to exit. Cameron has allowed individual members of the party to speak their

¹⁵⁵ Wheeler, Brian, and Alex Hunt BBC News. 2016. “

personal opinions on the matter. Most notably, the Mayor of London has spoken out against staying in the European Union.¹⁵⁶

There are two main concerns with staying in the European Union. The first one is the Euro. The countries within the European Union have had to deal with a falling Euro and increased economic instability. When Greece fell into economic turmoil, this only further exacerbated the situation. Advocates for leaving the European Union argue that having to deal with and supporting the Euro and those countries that use the Euro has only hurt Britain's economy and caused job growth to become stagnant and unemployment to grow. As stated before, jobs and job growth are a primary concern within the United Kingdom. If staying in the European Union will hurt their economy and there are numerous people entering the United Kingdom to find jobs, how is this advantageous for the United Kingdom? The simple answer is, it is not, therefore we should leave. However, this is not the only reason they advocate for leaving the European Union.

The Syrian refugee crisis that is currently happening is another reason. Thousands of Syrians and other Middle Eastern people are fleeing that area and flooding into Europe hoping to escape the violence. This problem is placed on top of the already numerous immigrants that enter the country on a daily basis. While the European Union has made some actions to help the situation, many countries, such as Hungary, are dealing with thousands of refugees flooding their country. With no home to return to at this time, it appears that the refugees are not going anywhere. So it can be argued that these

¹⁵⁶ "EU Referendum: Time to Vote for Real Change, Says Boris Johnson." 2016.

temporary refugees could become more permanent immigrants. The European Union has made some moves in order to deal with the crisis, like sending humanitarian as well as military aid to Syria and sending humanitarian aid to neighboring countries like Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq.¹⁵⁷ Despite what has been done by the European Union, there is increasing pressure for individual countries to do more to help. However, with the current situation in the Middle East and the fight against ISIS, it is not abundantly clear that these people will be able to return home soon.

While a refugee is different from an immigrant and it was already established that there is some validity that the British sentiment towards refugees are slightly better than towards immigrants, I still maintain that this is a relevant case. The people that enter the United Kingdom, whether legally or illegally, are still viewed as a threat to the British in terms of job availability and security.

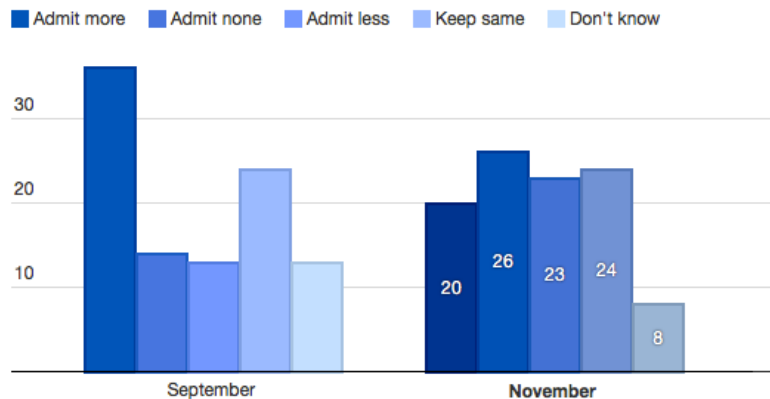
This puts many countries in a tough situation. Particularly in the United Kingdom, there seems to be a rise in Islamophobia. This Islamophobia has been on a steady rise within the last year. Along with this and a sharp rise in nationalism, the desire to do anything to help the Syrian refugees dwindles. When trying to pinpoint what makes it so hard for the British people to accept refugees, many people point to what happened in Paris and the continued violent rhetoric coming from Syria. They do not wish for there to be bombings or shootings in their country. Coupled with this fear of potential violence from refugees, is the fear that they will never leave. There is also the possibility that the Middle Eastern visitors will not want to leave when it becomes safe to return. This could

¹⁵⁷ "EU Support in Response to Syrian Crisis." 2016.

lead to more issues and problems when it comes to the possibility of accepting the Syrians.

British attitudes towards Syrian refugees

% of Britons who think the UK should take more or fewer Syrians



158

My Prediction

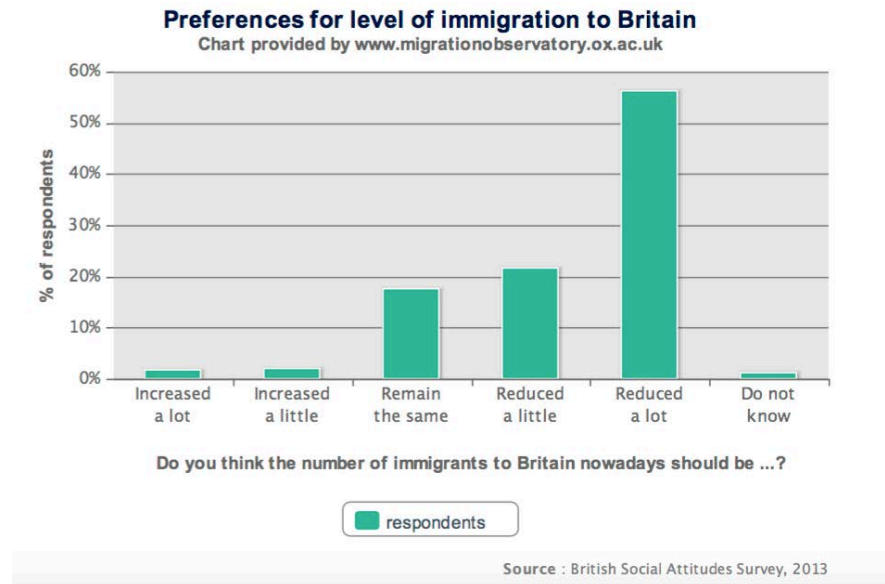
Given the way that the United Kingdom's policies towards immigrants have evolved and what I argue is an increasingly negative view towards any immigrants, I argue that the United Kingdom's public sentiment towards immigrants will only continue to worsen, which can lead to an increase in violence and violent rhetoric, which will cause parties like UKIP to rise in popularity. However, because of the United Kingdom's voting system, parties like UKIP will not win large elections. The current Conservative party is facing two challenges. It must maintain public support in order to maintain control of the government. Nevertheless, the government must maintain a positive public international image when it comes to immigrants and refugees. Because of the current

¹⁵⁸ "Britons Twice as Hostile as French to Syrian Refugees Following Paris Attacks." 2015.

issues that plague Europe and because of the fact that the United Kingdom will still be affected and affect Europe, the United Kingdom has to keep a positive public image. With celebrities and different international organizations calling for countries to be compassionate and to not let the actions of extremists deter good will, the United Kingdom will have to walk a fine line. Over the next five to ten years, I predict a sharp increase in negative public sentiment towards any immigrants.

Public sentiment towards immigrants has been on a negative slope since the time of the Commonwealth immigrants. Because of the unreliable number of jobs available and the ease at which it is possible for immigrants to travel, there is an increased worry. Currently, it takes about three to four weeks for immigrants to be issued work permits. The relative ease that these permits are being granted does not bode well with some of the citizens. It can be clearly seen in the case of the Jewish immigrants as well as the immigrants from Eastern European countries. A survey taken in 2013 shows that at least 55% of respondents believe that immigration rates needed to be reduced a lot while 77% chose “reduce a lot” or “reduce a little”.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ “UK Public Opinion toward Immigration: Overall Attitudes and Level of Concern.” 2015.



Public sentiment is important. To some it may be this arbitrary thing that can be ignored or changed but it has the power to topple governments. When the people are unhappy, anywhere, they can cause many problems for the government. It is a powerful tool. While the government sometimes has to do things that will anger the people, it must not be so much that it destroys their trust in the government. Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was a leader with conviction and at one point, extremely popular. However, it can be argued that she got too comfortable with enacting whatever she wanted and believed to be right and ignoring the people's complaints. Her party eventually ousted her when it became clear that she was heavily favored to lose at her next re-election.¹⁶⁰

The government cannot disregard public sentiment. It must take into account that even if they allow or accept more immigrants and/or refugees, that they risk the people becoming violent and more hostile. Prime Minister Cameron did an admirable thing by

¹⁶⁰ Fry, Geoffrey K. 2008.

pledging to accept 20,000 Syrians over the course of five years. While this is actually a rather small number compared to the total number of Syrians currently fleeing, 20,000 sounds like an enormous number to the public. All they can think is that there will be 20,000 more people to fight for jobs and that will be relying on the welfare system in some way.

I will concede on two points. I concede that this is a generalization of the British people as a whole and that there are some people that have no problems with accepting immigrants or refugees or anyone. However, when a large and very vocal sector of the population is advocating for virtually closing the United Kingdom's borders, it is not something that can be ignored. Even if it is not politically correct, their beliefs and arguments cannot be ignored. The people are the heart of the country and they are the ones that will ultimately decide in which direction the United Kingdom will go. Therefore, it is time to pay attention to their attitudes and beliefs.

The second part I will concede is that while I do believe that there should be acceptance on the part of the British people towards, it is important that immigrants also make some effort to not disturb the people. When an immigrant enters a new country, it is understood that there will be some inherent tension and differences. However, it is the duty of both sides to be accepting. I accept that immigrants could assimilate enough so to not completely overwhelm the British people, however I argue that there should be a push towards multiculturalism. No one should be forced to give up their culture completely and instead should be willing to live around people from different cultures and traditions.

Now is not the time to ignore or downplay what they are thinking. The negative trend could very well lead to the United Kingdom pulling away from the rest of Europe. I maintain my argument that the United Kingdom will continue on a path towards more negative views about immigrants and refugees even if the government passes laws or pledges to allow them into the country. As stated before, should the United Kingdom continue on this trajectory, there is the possibility that there could be a mass exodus. This is something to be worried about because it could hurt Britain's economy. Because this is something that most governments would try to avoid, the British government must balance between welcoming immigrants and refugees and making sure that its citizens are content.

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