<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Article Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Barr</td>
<td>HOMES ON WHEELS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Moore</td>
<td>IMMIGRANTS' RELUCTANT HOSTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alasdair MacIntyre</td>
<td>A CONFUSION OF SECTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Nightingale</td>
<td>US INDUSTRY INVADES BRITAIN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Almost more important than the intrinsic problems of immigrants are the attitudes of the hosts towards those problems and those immigrants. This Sparkbrook study shows how a community association helps avoid racism.

TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2,561</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>3,068</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Indian</td>
<td>2,234</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>1,370</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>368</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>387</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9,528</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the English 15 per cent were themselves immigrants to Birmingham.

With the exception of the small group of long-established residents, all the English were in Sparkbrook for the same reason as the immigrants. They were not qualified for entry into the private housing market nor covered by the local authority housing provision. The welfare state, for example, the young couples. Two thirds of the English households held in Sparkbrook in the year of study were set up in lodging houses. The couples would have had to be certified suitable for a mortgage or sufficient points for a council house. The "problem" families, at the end of a series of experiences of homelessness, found a lodging house in Sparkbrook the only alternative to local authority hostel accommodation, which separated husband and wife. The unmarried do not qualify for local authority housing, would be unlikely to want a family house on a mortgage and found suitable private digs or rooms less and less available with the advance of slum clearance.

The back of the queue

The important point is that these people would have been in lodging houses even if there were no immigrants in Birmingham. They, like the immigrants, are at the back of the queue for housing, if in it at all. It could be argued that lodging house landlords perform a vital service for the English; without such landlords they would be homeless. Unlike Cathy, though, few would go so far as to say, "coloured landlords are the best." But they do provide a roof over the head when no one else will.

The older inhabitants of the area live either in smaller houses or have "respectable" lodgers, such as teachers and professional workers, in larger houses. These old residents remember a bygone time when all the inhabitants were of high status and the houses well kept. They constantly refer to the old days when "a good class of people" employed servants in the big houses and the working class put on their best suits before walking in this area. They feel threatened by the influx of Irish and coloured immigrants; they fear a drop in the value of their houses, a moral and social decay in the area, a growth of violence. A number of them reported feeling ashamed when telling their friends that they lived in Sparkbrook.

Inasmuch as these older residents interpret the apparent decline and deterioration of their neighborhood as a racist way, they help ensure that the decline continues. This is because their interpretation adds weight to the arguments of those who oppose the rehousing and dispersal of immigrants. These residents reinforce the myths about coloured tenants. Ultimately, but indirectly, they become part of a public opinion which prevents the redevelopment of Sparkbrook on the grounds that immigrants would thus have to be removed by the local authorities.

But not all offer a racist interpretation. We found a number who recognised that the immigrant had nowhere else to go. Others, with perhaps slightly more equivocal attitudes to the immigrants, had decided to stay; to set an example, to arrest the decline and prevent the acceleration of the over-use of property consequent upon the English moving out. Some had a very strong feeling that moving away was to "let the side down."

Outlet for grievances

This non-racist response was greatly facilitated by the existence of the Sparkbrook Association. This in turn, was an organisation set up for the benefit of the whole community, to be used by all sections of the local population. In fact, it often became an institution through which the English voiced their grievances and staged a comeback on the situation. But the organisation was such that the English were shown that a racist response to the situation was illegitimate. The association's staff were mainly middle class and professionally trained people. Such people may have been seen from a more liberal background and background, but what is most important, by virtue of their professional training they always applied social work and bureaucratic categories to the problems presented to them. The racist definitions were truly irrelevant to their work and they thus restructured the interpretations of the English community.

The English (English, often after much blowing off of steam) to define the issues in terms of demands on the local authority to improve conditions and services in the district. In this the association was quite successful, gaining improvements in street lighting and refuse collection, aid for playgrounds and a playground or special seclusions of social workers.

Thus, even within the small remnant of the old population, there was no single pattern of response to the immigrants. This group constituted the most articulate English group in the area, as they were in some sense committed to it. In one way their commitment to the area could be seen as a rationalisation of their relative failure to succeed in the urban status struggle. Success would have taken them out to the private subtopias, well away from immigrants. The newly married Birmingham couples were temporary residents on route to private or council estates. The broken or problem families were in Sparkbrook by force of circumstances; the coloured desiring anonymity were not (almost by definition) significant actors with any interests to defend for themselves.

Adjourning the lodging house area, but still within Sparkbrook, were two quite distinct districts. Firstly an area of red-brick terraced houses, 50 per cent of which are scheduled for demolition under slum clearance. Here less than a quarter of the residents were immigrants; the population was mainly long-established English working class. Many of them felt that their area was neglected by the city council and we heard more venom directed against the city fathers than against the immigrants. One of the main complaints voiced by the English, other than those arising from the general uncertainty for their own and the district's future, was against the use to which the council put houses that fell vacant. In the old days of private tenancies, vacant houses were usually made available to local young married couples through
the kinship and rent-collector network. The local authority now uses the many houses it owns for re-housing problem families or families with poor domestic standards, displaced by slum clearance or other developments elsewhere in the city. Thus the old working class felt that not only were they being deprived of homes that were theirs by right and custom but that they were being subjected to the forced presence of undesirable people.

Nevertheless they felt threatened by immigrants. A few immigrants had moved into the immediate area, but the major threat was seen in the immigrants taking over "our" houses elsewhere. Many of the young residents shared homes with their parents or in-laws. Nearly all, being totally dependent on local authority housing provision, felt the length of the council house waiting list. Yet, over the road, they saw immigrants taking over large houses; newcomers finding somewhere to live when they, the people who had "made Birmingham what it is," had to wait so long. Furthermore they saw immigrants apparently missing houses when they themselves would be grateful for and careful of any suitable accommodation. What they did not see was that the accommodation occupied by the immigrants was neither available to nor suitable for single families.

Secondly, at the south of Sparkbrook there was an area of trust housing gradually transferring to owner-occupation. The residents there were, originally, "the better class of artisan" and the type of dwelling reflects this status. Here we found the older people living very much in the village of the past, using their own shops and clubs, many of them isolated by old age and their children's social and geographical mobility. They merely regretted the passing of the gentry and the way of life they upheld in the central Sparkbrook district. The younger people, however, felt threatened. Firstly by the possibility of some of the houses coming on to the market and being purchased by coloured people. Secondly by the use made of some of the houses (controlled by the local authority during the transfer from trust to private ownership) for the rehousing of English "problem" families, whom the residents saw as every bit as damaging to their district as immigrants. It was remarkable just how hostile these residents were to problem families: we heard as many bitter comments on their presence (a very small presence) as we did on the threat of an immigrant influx. In addition the residents were angered by the use of their streets as car parks by the local dance halls and bingo halls, which often prevented younger folk from parking when they came to visit their relatives in the evening. Further they resented the association of their area with a twilight zone. Some of the younger people had come together to form a resident's association with the purpose of defending the area against these threats; they would not link themselves with the Sparkbrook Association.

The immigrant's immediate host society consists, then, of disparate groups with different outlooks and interests. The resentments, problems and frustrations of these English groups were expressed in a variety of ways: in the Sparkbrook Association, the residents' association, in the churches, the conversations in the remaining traditional English pubs and in the complaints (and occasional psycho-social breakdown) brought to the councillors, clergymen and social workers.

Thus any attempt to elicit attitudes to immigrants by the use of the questionnaire and any statistical data so gained must be treated with extreme caution and the results seen as being of limited significance. Nevertheless interesting results emerged from the interviewing of 189 English residents. They were asked the following three open-ended questions:

1. What would you say were the most important changes in Sparkbrook in the last ten years?
2. What changes would you like to see in Sparkbrook?
3. Sparkbrook has been called a "problem area"—do you agree with this—if so, what would you say are the main problems?

Only 17 respondents gave answers simply citing immigrants as problems in themselves, while 49 mentioned various social problems without mentioning immigrants at all. The majority, 108, mentioned social problems and immigrants together. The problems were cited in two groups: physical environmental decline in the area, and a moral social decline. Clearly there are at least two ways in which these problems
Reluctant hosts

and the presence of immigrants can be related in the
minds of the English. They can blame the immigrants for
them, or they can see the immigrants as victims of
general social problems. In our sample, 5 saw
immigrants as responsible for the problems; 57 men-
tioned the problems and then associated the im-
migrants with them.

Some rationale

The extent to which these responses may be seen as rationalisations of a deeper sentiment called "prejudice" is, in the given situation, irrelevant. The point is that only 9 per cent gave responses of naked hostility to immigrants while 83 per cent gave answers with at least a minimal rationale. The prob-
lem of inherent hostility or "prejudice in the mind"
would only be relevant all other things being equal,
which they are not.

Statements about race and colour arose from an
appraisal of an actual situation as seen by the local
English. A large proportion made a connection be-
tween a complex of social problems (which actually
exist) and immigrants (who are really there). How
they related these casually may in some measure
depend on racial stereotyping, or the connection
made may create or reinforce racial stereotypes.
Until the social problems are removed we can only
speculate. In the present situation, psychological
interpretations or explanations seem inappropriate.

The number of unfavourable mentions achieved by
each immigrant group are shown in table 2.

"Immigrant" is an ambiguous word in Sparkbrook;
if we take it to mean coloured immigrant the table
summarises as shown in table 3.

In answering some of these questions some of our
respondents made uninvited favourable comments
on certain groups of immigrants, shown in table 4.
The numbers are very small but it is interesting to
note that white immigrants are not specifically men-
tioned at all in table 4.

The significant fact which emerged from a study
of the Sparkbrook situation is that private and
institutionalised attitudes is that the English popu-
lation experienced a complex of conflicts and hos-
tilities. There were not entirely based on race; there
were real status differences between residents in the
two areas, within the status groups there were the
usual local foods. Some of these seem to have had
their origin in the war when some families were
accused of evading military service or abandoning
the area while others had to face the bombing. The
English also felt hostile to the first-wave newcomers,
young men, who to the local working class were "rough"
as distinct from themselves who were "respectable."

All sections of the English population so expressed marked hostility to problem families housed in the area whom they felt lowered the tone of the area, constituted a potential bad influence
and deprived the real English of housing which they
were entitled. Other hostilities were directed
towards the city council and local government de-
partments. But nevertheless some of the English felt
threatened by immigrants, while others were amb-
ivalent and a few quite favourably disposed towards
them; but we should not ignore these. Many were
directed against both coloured and white immigrants.

Given this general complexity of the situation, a
number of future developments are possible. The
future will be affected by popular attitudes to immi-
grants in general which will, in turn, be influenced
by the operation of immigration policy and race
relations legislation. Far more importantly the
immediate feelings of the reluctant hosts, such as the
English of Sparkbrook, depend on the actual situa-
tion in which they find themselves acting as hosts.

This depends, crucially, on the social policy deci-
sions made for our twilight zones, decisions which
will either result in the intensification or dissipation
of feelings of resentment and anger among the
English towards their coloured neighbours. In any
one locality the Englishmen's attitudes and actions
can be transformed and channelled by an active
community association which is able to show that
there are more constructive responses than racism,
in any form. We felt that many of the English would
be interested in some potential members of the race
unions who save for the presence of the Sparkbrook
Association. Without the association others might have been vic-
tims of English isolation, of racism. A community
organisation that gave a platform for their grievances
and which "got things done," their frustrations were
attenuated, their acceptance improved. In the end,
however, good community associations are not a
substitute for sound social policy.

TABLE 2

<table>
<thead>
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<th>UNFAVOURABLE MENTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>immigrants</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coloured</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistanis</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Jamaicans&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish 'Binks'</td>
<td>33</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 3

<table>
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<tr>
<th>&quot;IMMIGRANT&quot; MEANING COLOURED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>coloured immigrants</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other (Irish) immigrants</td>
<td>687</td>
</tr>
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TABLE 4

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<th>FAVOURABLE COMMENTS</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>coloured</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Indian/Jamaican</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
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</table>

America invades British Industry

The increasing American stake in British industry is arousing political alarm. But a look at some of the invaders supports researchers evidence that the invasion is bringing substantial benefits, especially in terms of efficiency.

Benedict Nightingale

No wonder American subsidiaries in Britain are feel-
ing persecuted these days: critics and potential
enemies hem them in from all sides. It isn't just the
load of complaints from leftwingers in the Comments.
They've long been used to those. No, it's the Prime
Minister in Strasbourg making "anti-American
noses," as 'Time' magazine put it: it's the chairman
of the Daily Mail has dubbed the "chequebook conquistadors."

But is the American invasion, even assuming it
amounts to that, so terrible a thing? British industry,
feared of the bigger picture. They can blame the
American pressure from abroad. Economists, at least those without specific leftwing com-
mitment, are less inclined to be pessimistic. Roots may succumb at Chrysler, America may now own the
majority of the British auto industry—but, as Profes-
sor Maurice Peston puts it, "Americans are past
masters of the business of motor cars; we can't com-
pare with them." Ford, for instance, made $389
million worth of sales in 1965, compared with $223m
in 1959, shortly before takeover; 302,672 vehicles
were exported, compared with 236,167. Peston, Pro-
fessor of Economics at Queen Mary College, thinks
American management far superior to British, and
believes we can only gain from its participation in our
industry. Its holdings in Britain will have to increase
hugely, he says, before we need to worry seriously.

But facts before justification. At least 1,600 non-
financial companies in this country are owned by or
controlled from companies in the United States. The
value of their assets is over £1,900 million—about
three times the gross annual output of the United
States. Every 17 British workers is employed by an American
controlled firm. The year 1967 is expected to bring
another large share of American capital investment into the country: a figure which com-
pares with $637 million dollars in 1964. Squeeze or not,
we are still the Americans' favourite spending ground.