

# **SPECIAL REPORT**

From : Women Together (UK)

**“A Collective Voice established to address Issues and  
Concerns for Afrikan and Afrikan Caribbean Communities”**

## **Did Asian Economic Fears Cause Riots?**



As women we would like to respectfully respond to recent disturbances in Birmingham and in particular the portrayal of the events by the British media. As residents of Birmingham who work and live in the areas affected by the rioting, we feel that we can best describe the events, placing them in their rightful context.

Media reports suggest that DJ Warren G from Hot 92 fm made a rape allegation on his radio show (15th -16th October, 2005). They suggest that he alone was responsible for issuing the call to the African-Caribbean community to demonstrate outside the 'Beauty Queens Cosmetics' (where the alleged rape took place) shop in Perry Barr (during the week of the 17th - 21st of October, 2005) and is therefore responsible for the riots that ensued.

However the rape allegations had been circulated within the African-Caribbean community at least three weeks before any radio broadcast. Also during the weekend of 15 th-16th several

leading community radio stations informed the community of the alleged rapes of both the '14 year old Jamaican girl' and another woman at separate branches of Beauty Queens Cosmetics in Birmingham. As the rape allegations spread throughout the community during the 15th - 21st October, there were increased tensions between the African-Caribbean and Asian community. This resulted in sporadic acts of violence and racial abuse (as yet unreported). However the demonstration was very peaceful! No Asian persons or businesses were attacked and the black community continued to purchase from their shops.

At the end of the week long demonstrations in Perry Barr, DJ Warren G called for a rally (10/22/2005) with white, Asian and African-Caribbean community members. Towards the end of the rally the West Midlands Police instructed the community leaders to move the rallying supporters to 'George Street Church' in Lozells. Senior members of the African-Caribbean and Asian community, police officials and local councilors attended the meeting. The aim was to get to the bottom of the issue (rape allegation) and work out a way forward for both communities.

As relayed to our organisation, on the way to the meeting at George Street church a group of African-Caribbean women and their children walking along Lozells road were verbally abused by Asian men. They were called 'nigger bitches' and 'slave bitches', etc; the Asian men did not disguise the fact that they were carrying guns. Upon entering the church it has been reported that people could hear several Asian youths outside say "we are not going to take this no more from you Blackies" (what they were referring to remains unknown). As the church was packed many supporters were left outside.

At the same time approximately '300' Asian males, who had been seen congregating in the Witton area during the rally, ascended on people outside of the church on either side of George street. With the rallying call of 'Allah-U-Akbar' they began to intimidate the

crowd, brandishing knives, bricks, sticks and setting off fireworks, giving the impression that they were shooting at the demonstrators.

How were they allowed to walk in full view of riot police along Lozells road and attack peaceful demonstrators attending a church meeting? Why were they allowed such close proximity to the people outside the church? Why did they march let alone with weapons? And why protest when the community met peacefully to discuss the rape allegations, an issue that was taken very seriously. Whether or not there was conclusive evidence of the rape allegations why did they attack the church? Was it due to economic concerns? Did they fear that they were losing a substantial part of their customer base? Was the mob sent by their community business members to protect their economic interests? Even though it was the West Midlands Police who had closed their businesses down.

Did the Asian community feel that their economic interests were more valuable than the legitimate concerns of the African-Caribbean community? Police sources say that the police had prevented several coach loads of Asians from entering the area. They further inform us that that they had traveled from Bradford, Leicester and Manchester, and were specifically brought in to fight against the African Caribbean community. It can be assumed that the attacks at the very least were pre-planned on an unsuspecting community!

**It was the actions of Asian Muslims outside of the church that was the start and cause of the riots that followed on 22 nd-23rd of October 2005!**

Whilst it may seem from CCTV footage that Asian's were innocent victims, why wasn't the same consideration given to African-Caribbean victims of Asian gangs? Any journalist willing to undertake 'in-depth and unbiased investigation' would know the

full extent of damage and casualties in both communities. The riots left scores of innocent African-Caribbean people hospitalized and two young men dead. As reported to our organisation black people were attacked from as early as Saturday morning (10/22/2005), in areas such as Washwood Heath. Lozells was not the only area that Pakistani Muslims sought to assault African-Caribbean's. The injuries include:

- An elderly person dragged from their car into the home of Pakistani's and beaten only to be rescued by white community members residing in Lozells.
- African Caribbean women dragged out of their cars in six ways. One lady was ran over and several had their faces slashed.
- Two black children attacked on a bus and stabbed in the head, chest and arms. One still remains in hospital.
- Community organisation 'African Caribbean Self-Help Organization' targeted with guns, sticks and bricks.
- Hamstead Road Baptist Church attacked (22/10/2005) and African Caribbean elders and set upon during their service and stabbed!
- A Rastafarian man has piece of his scalp chopped off, he is still on a life support machine.
- Families' homes broken into by Asian gangs/rioters hiding from the police.
- An elderly lady has her throat cut.
- A man has his hand chopped off.
- Pregnant woman dragged out of car and beaten.

- Several incidents of women taken out of their cars only to be beaten and cut with knives. **And more...**
- On Monday 22nd October, a young African man who went to view property at Raleigh Close. He asked several men for directions but unfortunately they shot him. We await a statement from the victim to find out the ethnicity of the perpetrators.

The aftermath of these events as reported by the British media have led Britain and the world to believe that 'Black people' attacked the Asian community over a 'rape allegation', even though no victim came forward! The fact that the African-Caribbean community had been physically and verbally attacked at the church remains ignored and uninvestigated. Whilst the media focus has been on the central allegation involving a young Jamaican girl, they have failed to highlight that one woman has come forward. This has led directly to the arrest of five employees of Beauty Queens Cosmetics, who were released on bail pending further investigation.

To further add to the injustice of the situation a 23-year-old Black man now stands 'media trial' for events that he did not instigate or fuel with any form of commentary. Warren G sought justice for a 'possible rape victim' who was fearful of coming forward. He also sought to seek justice over the concerns of several women who claim to have been victimized at Beauty Queen shops. He is now being paraded as a 'trouble maker', 'a man with blood on his hands'. Even though it was 11 Asian men who killed - Isaiah Young Sam. Three of the 11 men held over the murder were caught on their way to Dubai trying to flee the country. The suspicious death of the second African-Caribbean man we are told was due to his 'falling over his own gun!'

Surely the British taxpayers money could be better used to investigate the motivations and prejudices of the young men who

killed Isaiah and the mob of 300 that came unprovoked onto the streets of Birmingham seeking blood, rather than witch hunting innocent people, with genuine concerns. The British public has been misled about the events that took place and have misrepresented the African-Caribbean community.

### **Roots of racial tensions**

The public has been led to believe that DJ Warren G was responsible for creating an atmosphere of anger and hatred towards the 'Asian community'. Several media reports have suggested that the 'tensions', alleged 'hate' and 'anger' is due to jealousy by African-Caribbean's over the economic status of the Asians. The attack they say is fueled by the poverty in the African-Caribbean community in Birmingham. To back up their reports they interview Asian business owners, who reiterate the claims that the riots took place because of jealousy over Asian businesses.

As members of the community we can testify that for the past several years there has been racial tension between both communities. However in-depth and unbiased journalistic investigation would reveal different reasons, than those put forward by the British media and Asian community. For example, earlier in 2005, the Pakistani and Sikh community on a television programme: 'Who You Calling Nigger' presented by Darcus Howe, openly expressed their disdain for the Jewish and in particular the African-Caribbean community in the UK.

They also heaped ridicule on African-Caribbean's for lack of business ownership using Birmingham (Handsworth and Lozells) as an example. The views expressed in this nationally broadcasted assault on African-Caribbean's can only be described as; derogatory, inflammatory and racist. Yet the views are symptomatic of deeper issues and tensions between the communities. The British media did not challenge these views

publicly for example, no television show was aired to discuss the issues raised on the programme or to offset concerns that such racist comments would later provide fuel for further discontent between the communities. In response to the programme the African-Caribbean community did not launch a media attack towards the Asian community neither did we march or riot!

Another example of tensions between the communities prior to 15th - 21st October, was the publication of a letter by Islamic group (Islamic Jihad 786). They distributed hate mail (Public Call for Jihad Against The Black Infidel) throughout the Midlands (in 1996) attacking black and white women and calling for the murder of Black men under the banner of Islam.

The letter was denounced by Federation of Muslim Organizations in Leicestershire. However no such condemnation was received from Birmingham Muslims or councilors, even though several Muslims had verified the existence of the group. It is these incidents that are the breeding grounds for the disturbances we recently saw, not jealousy for a community whose economic growth we have supported and helped to build since our arrival in the UK.

