

Race Group Report

Activity is now underway concerning the second edition of Britain's Black Population, and the first draft is due at the end of January. We would still welcome help with the housing chapter, if anyone is interested in this.

Though not formally a Race Group activity, no fewer than six of us turned up at the Royal Statistical Society's discussion meeting on sources of data on ethnic minorities, as did several other RS members. Some of our views were aired, and these appear elsewhere in this newsletter. We are holding our own meeting on ethnic monitoring and the 1986 census question on ethnic origin on January 28. The issue will, of course, be discussed again in the second edition of BBP.

After the exclusion of the so-called 'ethnic question' from the 1981 census, the possibility of including the same or a similar form of the question is being considered for the 1986 census. This time we are witnessing the examination of the issue by the Race Relations and Immigration Sub-Committee of the Home Affairs Committee of the House of Commons. The Royal Statistical Society were invited to give evidence, and their submission is reproduced in the January 1983 issue of RSS News and Notes. Also in that issue, as well as in this newsletter, is Alan Vetta's submission, pointing out that the RSS submission does not reflect the views of the Society's membership in general.

In fact, the Chairman (sic) of the RSS working party set up to produce the submitted report invited a member of the RS Race Group to join the working party. This was not an invitation to the Race Group as such, but to the member as a statistician and Fellow of the Society. The invitation was declined on the basis of time. A subsequent invitation to a second RSRG member was also declined.

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PS: The arguments against the 1981 census question are still valid. BSSRS still has copies of 'The Question of Race: The case against including any question on race or ethnic origin in the 1981 census'. Available from BSSRS, 9 Poland St, London W1V 3DG, price 10p plus an SAE.

As part of the take over led by the Race Group, the simplest debate - at least as far as RSRG members are concerned - would be "Statistics and the ethnic question", in which

- Alan Vetta's submission
- Heather Booth notes
- Dave Drew's paper