

*Controversial race report draws
ire and criticism across British
society*

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- » No 10 criticised after major review claims there is a new story to be told about the country's history
- » Slavery 'not only about profit and suffering', says Commission on Race and Ethnicity
- » David Lammy, who authored 2017 government report on racism, says: 'We are better than this'
- » Other recommendations include crackdown on big tech to prevent social media algorithms from spreading hate, and body to tackle health inequalities
- » Wider acceptance that UK has made progress - but anger at denial of institutional racism

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Demonstrators protest against the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill in St Peter's Square, Manchester PETER BYRN

Controversial race report draws ire and criticism across British society

London, April 1 (RHC)-- Last summer's anti-racism protests in London and other major cities shocked the British establishment to the core, prompting the commissioning of a report into racism and inequality in the UK. But observers say that as widely expected, the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities review on racism in the UK has proven to be a whitewash, with the government-appointed body concluding that the UK is "no longer" a country where the "system is deliberately rigged against ethnic minorities."

The Commission was appointed by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, following last summer's Black Lives Matter protests in London and other major British cities. In its 258-page report the Commission concludes that while the UK is not yet a "post-racial country" -- nevertheless its "success" in "removing race-based disparity" in education and the employment sector "should be regarded as a model for other white-majority countries."

The Commission is chaired by controversial education consultant and ex-charity boss, Tony Sewell, who has consistently denied that institutional racism constitutes a major problem in the UK. In his foreword to the report Sewell said that while "impediments and disparities do exist [in British society]," these are "varied and ironically very few of them are directly to do with racism."

Beyond the Tory Party and its supporters, the Commission's report has been met by negative reactions by key stakeholders in the racism and inequalities debate. The Labor Party's shadow women and equalities secretary, Marsha de Cordova described the report as a "divisive polemic" which downplays institutional racism.

Leading Labor MP, David Lammy, who has led a review on racial bias in the criminal justice system, tweeted that the UK's Black community was being "gaslighted" and that there is "little desire" to address the challenge of "structural racism" in Britain.

The report has also drawn strong criticism from the world of academia with Kehinde Andrews, a professor of Black studies at Birmingham University, telling BBC News the Commission's findings are "not a genuine attempt to understand racism in Britain."

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