

# Handout: Brexit and the Windrush Scandal

## What the Trump Administration Could Learn from British Immigration Policy

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### Key Historical Context

- **1948 British Nationality Act:** Commonwealth citizens granted UK citizenship to help rebuild after WWII.
  - **Windrush Generation:** ~500,000 migrants from the Commonwealth (1948-1970), mainly Caribbean.
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### Shift Toward Restrictive Policies

- **1971 Immigration Act:** Commonwealth citizens no longer equated to British citizenship.
  - **1981 British Nationality Act:** Ended birthright citizenship.
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### Windrush Scandal

- **Background:**
    - Many legal migrants lacked documentation.
    - Despite Immigration Act 1999 protections, they faced deportation and denial of rights.
  - **Consequences:**
    - At least 83 illegal detentions; many denied healthcare.
    - Compensation scheme underdelivered (~5% compensated).
    - Home Secretary Amber Rudd resigned.
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### Brexit and Immigration Policy

- **Brexit Motivations:** End free movement for EU citizens.
- **Post-Brexit Impact:**

- Net migration increased to meet labor demands.
  - ~330k low-skill workers missing (2023).
  - Points-based system: More restrictive for EU citizens, liberal for non-EU.
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### Lessons for U.S. Immigration Policy

- **Economic Impacts:**
    - Labor shortages and GDP drops are likely with large-scale deportations.
  - **Historical Comparison:**
    - *Operation Wetback* (1950s): Harsh deportations led to public outcry.
    - Trump’s deportation plans could face similar backlash.
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**Conclusion:** Restrictive policies risk labor shortages and humanitarian issues, with limited political accountability for controversial actions.

### Sources

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