On April 14, 1981, William Whitelaw appointed Lord Scarman to inquire into the serious disorder in Brixton, South London on 10-12 April 1981— and to report with the power to make recommendations. When Scarman reported, everyone — government, police and media — welcomed his report almost uncritically, at least in public. The male, white, seventy-year-old Lord and judge provided, they said, something for everybody. British fair play and commonsense shone through in every carefully written page. In reality, the issues involved in, and the pressures surrounding the publication of Scarman’s report were much more complex, involving a number of different, often contradictory, groups and strands within the British state. From the point of view of the police, for example, any proposals for reform, however liberal, as was the case with Scarman, were regarded as a threat to their power base and autonomy. This power base had been built throughout the 1970s and was constantly being legitimated by their more powerful and often eloquent spokespersons. Any challenge to them was therefore likely to meet with stiff resistance and outright hostility. It is not the intention here to discuss the complexities surrounding the setting up of an inquiry such as Scarman’s, nor the power struggles within the state between different interest groups to harness such inquiries for their own ends. Rather we wish to pinpoint the role of the police (despite the contradictions in the force) in undermining Scarman’s proposals for limited change in their policing methods and structure of accountability. In doing this they picked up on some of the processes which had been in motion before he reported. They also utilised and emphasised one crucial factor, their belief that black people were disproportionately involved in street robbery. As we saw above, the force had been pushing this line since the early 1970s. Scarman, himself, in the construction of his report, left the door open for the force. It was an opportunity that the police, and in particular the Metropolitan Police (the Met), were not to pass up.
The Scarman report was commissioned by the UK Government following the 1981 Brixton riots. Lord Scarman was appointed by then Home Secretary William Whitelaw on 14 April 1981 (two days after the rioting ended) to hold the enquiry into the riots. The Scarman report was published on 25 November 1981. The terms of reference for the enquiry were “to inquire urgently into the serious disorder in Brixton on 10–12 April 1981 and to report, with the power to make recommendations”. Say: Is the police training hard to do? Say: No wonder you look so fit Say: Let’s see what’s under your shirt then Touch: Shoulder Touch: Bicep Say: What about below the waist? Touch: Chest Touch: Underwear Touch: Arm Say: I’d love to touch you, officer Say: Everything is so hard and big! Attack plan on Chaffee House. Accepting Rogers’ terms will mean that you have to come up with a plan to kill Chaffee. This assault plan is a bit more difficult and it is not as obvious which building the target is in. However, plenty of information is at arm’s reach and you can get it from former employees of Chaffe. Also here, there is only one possible scenario. This plan should result in your success: 1 - Two snipers.