

New Higher
History
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Question
Booklet.
TGS
J Davidson.



Chapter 5 : How well did Labour deal with social problems after the Second World War?

This chapter will assess the effectiveness of the reforms the Labour Government of 1945 - 1951 brought in. Their social reforms continued on from the previous reforms of the Liberal government and of the 1920s. Labour's reforms established a welfare state in Britain by 1951. People in Britain could now get help from the government from the 'cradle to the grave'.

During world war two, the British government got

involved in, not only the running of industry, but in people's lives, for example rationing. British people pulled together to fight off the Nazi threat and people understood that all this hardship was for a reason.

However, the people also wanted post-war Britain to be fairer and better than the 1930s Britain they had just endured with unemployment, poor housing, disease and poverty.

At the post war general election of 1945, the Labour party read the mood of the people better than the Conservatives and won a surprise victory. Their manifesto promised a fairer Britain and built upon the reforms of the Liberals, the 1930's coalition government as well as the wartime coalition government of 1940-45.

Now read the blue box on p.66 of your textbook.

What welfare help existed before 1945?

Using the textbook, *Britain & Scotland and Germany*, Chapter 5, answer the following:

- 1) Briefly describe the help people received from the government before the war.
- 2) Describe the limitations of the government-funded benefits before 1939.
- 3) In what ways did the coalition government of WW2 help keep the country running during the war?
- 4) How did the government fund all these schemes?

Why was the Beveridge Report important?

- 1) What were the 'five giants' of William Beveridge's Report of 1942?
- 2) His report focused on 'Want' or lack of income. What was his solution to this 'giant'?
- 3) What did Beveridge insist was needed to ensure his plan would succeed?
- 4) Explain what the 'Means Test' was and why it was so hated by the poor.
- 5) Make detailed notes on what was done to start implementing Beveridge's plan *before* Labour came to power in 1945. (Remember, you will be writing an essay on how effective Labour reforms were, so it is important that you are aware of what was done *before* they came to power.)
- 6) Make sure you read the last paragraph on p.69. Take a mental note of this paragraph for the upcoming essay.

Extension:

- Using your notes and any other resources you can access, make a drawing of the 'building of the welfare state'. Look upon it as a house and, (at present you can only do up to 1945) consider: Who laid the foundation? What did they bring in? What was brought in during the 1920s, 30s and 40s to construct some 'walls'? Keep the drawing handy so that you can complete 'the roof' once you've read about what the Labour government did to defeat the Five Giants.

What did the Labour Government do?

Helping the poor.

1) Simply explain what the 1946 National Insurance Act did to tackle poverty and what were its limitations and failings. (You may want to stash away the James Griffiths quote for later).

2) Why can the 1948 National Assistance Act truly be seen as the Labour Government looking after the welfare of the people?

3) What aspect of the National Assistance Act would poor people not like?

4) Take notes on the 1945 Family Allowance Act. Consider what a sensible move it was to give the money to the mother.

5) What was different about the 1946 Industrial Injuries Act compared to previous schemes?

6) Sum up how well the Labour government had done in helping the poor.

Helping the sick.

1) Make notes on the three main aims of the National Health Service of 1948.

2) What was the situation before 1948 regarding people's health?

3) What did the scheme provide?

4) Can you work out why GPs initially rejected the idea of a NHS?

5) What became the worrying problem for the new NHS and why did it become such a huge problem?

6) What was the solution to the problem?

7) The textbook provides you with two contrasting historian's views on the effectiveness of the NHS followed by a short summing up. This is exactly the kind of developed analysis that gets an A grade in essays. You may wish to take notes here.

Education for all.

1) Sum up the education situation in Britain before 1939.

2) What did the Education Act of 1944 (Scotland 1945) do?

3) Why can't the Labour government of 1945 take all the credit for this Act

4) Explain R.A. Butler's idea on how education in Britain should be.

5) Looking at the last part of p.73, do you think working class children did well out of the Education Act? Now look at the top of p.74 and 'top up' your answer.

6) Make your own notes on the '11 plus' exam and use them to make a judgement on how well the Labour government dealt with 'Ignorance'.

What was done to help housing?

1) Why was Britain's housing in such a bad state in 1945?

2) Write a paragraph about Labour's plan for housing, their problems, how they overcame some of them and how well did they do. Mention also the upside and the downside of the new council housing estates.

3) What social changes after the war worked against Labour's housing achievement and caused housing shortages?

4) The New Towns Act of 1946 was another Labour strategy to tackle the housing problem. What were they trying to achieve with the New Towns?

Jobs for all?

1) Look at the Labour Party Manifesto at the bottom of p.76. How was Labour going

What did the Labour Government do? (contd.)

to achieve its aim of 'full employment?

2) Explain what 'nationalisation' means.

3) By nationalising industry, what was Labour's aim?

4) Unemployment levels actually fell well below what the Labour government expected - why? Should they have taken the credit for this fall in unemployment?

How successful was the Labour Government of 1945-1951?

1) Explain why some think the Labour government should have built a strong industrial economy *before* introducing ambitious welfare reforms. Use pp77-78.

2) Do you agree with the point made on p. 78, that Labour's welfare reforms would not help Britain's economy? Explain your answer.

3) Make notes on the textbook's summing up of the successfulness of the Labour Reforms of 1945 - 1951.

Extension Work

- Go back to the previous extension task and complete the 'building of the welfare state' drawing.

- Do activity 2 on p. 80 of the textbook making use of the old Higher textbook and any other resource to hand.