

How far do the sources suggest that the days of the raj were numbered?
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The British Raj, also known as British rule over India beginning in 1858 and 1947 became a very controversial topic in households across India around the very early 1900's.

Britain introduced a lot of good things to India for example, democracy. Before British rule, India was governed by the Mughal Emperors, who were effectively dictators. The British introduced a system of multi-party democracy for India's various state councils and regional legislatures, whereby the people's representatives were elected by popular vote. Britain also introduced a modern, Western-style infrastructure to all aspects and levels of Indian affairs, which was far more efficient and sophisticated than the creaky, monolithic systems of the Mughal period. Administration improved at all levels of society. The British legal system was an improvement on what had gone before, as was the military infrastructure and health care system. Britain also provided India with modern technology, such as the railway network, electricity and, later, air transport. In short, Britain brought India into the modern world of the 19th / 20th Centuries, raising it from the Mediaeval trough of feudal domination it had been languishing in beforehand, and creating a new, humane and advanced system of running a nation. These good things cannot be ignored.

Moving on to the negative effects of British rule over India. Before the Raj, India had the second largest economy in the world and consequently that economy did not grow whilst under ruling. India suffered many famines during British rule mostly attributable to mismanagement. In the last famine (during WWII) the British Governor General wrote in frustration about his PM saying " Winston's understanding of India is worse than George's

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understanding of American colonies!". Credit goes to Indira Gandhi for 'green revolution' that feeds 1.2 billion people using the same land without having periodic famines.

Considering the above I am going to study Sources R, S and T and analyse whether British behaviour provoked an end to the Raj and also if the last days of the raj were in the foreseeable future.

Beginning with Source R, this is a Biography extract from an Indian that was published in 1951 this is after the freedom of India from British rule. The source is telling us of the mindset and viewpoint of a young boy in India under the rule of Britain and why he had these views. The source tells us "I was influenced by the example of my parents who never went into any kind of society in which they were not treated as equals. I entertained no ambition of hobnobbing with the English in India." This tells us that at this point of British rule adults were beginning not to accept being inferior to the British in their own country and secondly did not want to associate themselves with British anymore either.

This had a knock on effect on children of parents with these views so quickly the popularity of the British was growing short and so this source is definitely implying that the Indian population were becoming fed up and therefore suggests that as this opinion grew the Raj was becoming more popular and maybe to an end because there is only so much the Indians are going to take. The reason for this is before the 1900's the British had forced the Indian people to believe that they were there for the good of India and to

help the country progress with their technology and industrial skills but this spell that Britain had over India was coming to an end.

Secondly, source S is from an anonymous leaflet in 1907 around the time of when Indians began to get fed up with the Raj. This source is a prime example of what an Indian thought of British rule at the time. “Thieves” is what the British are branded in this source. The writer also says “These thieves import their goods and sell them in our markets, stealing our wealth and stealing from our people” the writer also goes on to complain about tax but this in a nutshell not only supports source R in the fact that British adults and even younger people are beginning to get fed up by the early 1900’s, even though the British may have done positive things for the benefit of the country in the beginning they ultimately just want to profit from India in the long run and these two sources are slowly started to determine the outcome that the Raj is slowly coming to an end and indeed its days were numbered.

Finally source T is from an address made by Bal Gangadhar to the Indian National Congress which was a government group of Indians. The source expresses another opinion, this time constructively and in a educated controlled nature, “at present, we are clerks and willing instruments of our own oppression in the hands of an alien government” this tells us that the Indian believes that it is the fault of the Indians themselves for letting this ruling of a foreign government happen. Also stating “every Englishman knows that they are a mere handful in this country and it is the business of every one of them to befool you into thinking that you are weak and they are strong.” This goes back to my point earlier that before the early 1900’s

Britain had successfully persuaded India that British involvement could only
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augment their countries stature. This source also continues to see the Raj as a bad thing for the country and addresses congress directly about it.

After analysing all three sources they consecutively agree that the days of the raj will slowly come to an end as it seems that the common view of Indians in the early 1900's was that British rule was bad! Therefore this view will continue to spread and it is inevitable that the Raj will continue and that some sort of feud will break out. In addition, after reading the sources deeply I have failed to find anything to disagree with the statement that the Raj's days were numbered this is mainly because it eventually became obvious that the British were only in India for profitable reasons of their own and even though they had helped India in the beginning by building railways and importing goods etc it was only a matter of time before it became clear.

To conclude, I believe that the Raj's days were numbered for a couple of reasons, firstly there was only so much good the British could do before their selfish ways became apparent and it was revealed that they were there for themselves. Secondly because greed made Britain want more power over more things and wanted to tax more and control more markets so due to this greed the Indians inevitably became fed up.