

Labour government suffer assignment



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They inherited a large trade deficit and this became most apparent in 1966 once Labor had increased their majority. The problem was that to help ease the issue, Wilson would have to devalue the pound so that the UK's exports would be cheaper and therefore more competitive in price. However this was something that Wilson vowed he would not do. He believed that devaluing the pound would damage Britain's prestige in the world. This stubbornness from Wilson resulted in the devaluing of the Pound being delayed until November 1967.

This mounted a lot of pressure on money markets and lost Wilson a lot of popularity. By finally giving in and devaluing the pound, Labor's coherent reputation and authority was damaged. The whole issue surrounding the devaluation of the pound weakened the Labor party further by causing divides within. This weakening contributed to the election defeat in 1970. The party seemed somewhat unsure within itself and the state of the British economy didn't help either.

Another factor in Labor's defeat in the election was due to the attitude towards Wilson from the voters. In 1969, the voting age was lowered to 18. This meant that a whole new area of young voters was opened up. Initially, it was believed by pollsters that they would vote for Labor, however this was not to be the case. Wilson was viewed by many of the younger voters as being a stubborn, old man due to his going back on his word of not devaluing the pound and the way in which he had delayed it. Also, their other main option was Ted Heath.

He was a young man with a humble background having come from a grammar school and this appealed to the lower middle class and many young people who thought not to trust the people older than 30. Wilson was seen as being old and slippery and stuck in old ways and so when the monger, seemingly more honest option of Ted Heath arose, Wilson was put at a disadvantage and this is another reason why the Labor party suffered the election defeat in 1970. Throughout the sass's, the Labor government passed many social policies, some of which were controversial and many of these were down to Roy Jenkins.

Although nowadays, the legislation of abortion and homosexuality (1967) and the relaxation of Nas different. Some people believed that gay rights were wrong and that people shouldn't be allowed to have abortions and essentially kill their child. In all, people away many of Jenkins social reforms causing a breakdown in discipline and respect in artists society and as a result labeled them, the creation of a " permissive society'. Labor also held a weakness in foreign relations and immigration.

Due to the British Nationality Act (1948), there had been a large influx of citizens from the common Anneal into Britain. This had caused many non-whites to enter Britain and this began having a visible demographic effect on some parts of Britain. This meant that there Nas a lot of tension between whites and non-whites brewing in certain places and to enter this, Labor introduced the Race Relations Acts (1965 and 1968) which prohibited racism in the workplace, education and in everyday life. This was quite a radical change due to the diversities and prejudices of the British public.

Labor then became vulnerable to being accused of being “ soft” on immigration issues, given that the majority of non-white immigrants increasingly formed part of it’s core vote. Often the immigrants were of lower, working class). A Conservative minister, Enoch Powell gave strong speeches about how the tensions between the non-whites and Whites were dangerous and could lead to violence and there was a lot of public support for these speeches from the whites, who felt intimidated by the sudden influx of so many ethnic groups.

Labor responded in a panicked way with the Commonwealth Immigration Act (1968) which made it harder to settle in the I-J. This was seen as being weak from the Labor party, criticized as being illiberal and reactionary. Labor depended upon the trade unions for support financially as well as in terms of votes. Through the late sixties however, the trade unions began large strikes, demanding workers better pay. These strikes badly effected the UK’s economy, bringing trade at times to a stand still and losing people a lot of money.

It is estimated that 7 million working days were lost in 1967 alone. Many feared the power that trade unions were wielding and as a result, in 1969 the white paper entitled “ In place of strife” was introduced. This gave the government more power over the trade unions, ensuring that between strikes, cooling off periods had to be taken. However, the trade unions reacted with anger and as a result, Labor had to back down and scrap the ballot due to the risk of losing the votes and finance from the unions.

This outlined the biggest weakness in the Labor party, how heavy an influence the trade unions had over them. Labor suffered the unexpected in the sass's election because they had damaged their reputation throughout the ass's by being weak in terms of authority, far too often backing down, they introduced radical changes that the public didn't necessarily agree with, Wilson was viewed as being stubborn, old and slippery and economically, the Labor government had not managed to overcome problems in the I-J.