

Social policy beveridge

Society



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After World War Two British citizens were faced with great social problems as there was ill health due to malnourishment, physical and mental disabilities any healthcare had to be paid for privately or received through charities and organisations. Houses had been destroyed and where not rebuilt, there were very few jobs available as manufacturing had slowed down due to difficulties in exporting and jobs the war created were lost. The upper classes had better opportunities in obtaining services making the social class divide more prominent. Winston Churchill recognised the how inadequate social protection was and the need for improvement so he commissioned a William Henry Beveridge 1879-1963 to create a report focused on the reconstruction of post war Britain.

Beveridge produced Social Insurance and Allied Services in 1942' this report contained Keynesian policy's stating that the government should intervene and provide a standard of living for all in a form of Social Insurance and universal benefits that would not be means tested. Although this report was not implemented straightaway by Conservatives, when Labour was elected in 1945 the report formed the basis of the new Prime Minister, Clement Attlee government's legislative programme, for social reform. Within the report Beveridge's aim was to tackle the 5 evils of society, Want, Disease, Squalor, ignorance and idleness which he felt were Britain's major social problems. Want (poverty) was the main reason for Beveridge's investigation the 'National Insurance Act 1946' entitled people to sickness benefits, unemployment benefit and retirement benefit meaning people would be able to meet their basic needs. The 'Family Allowances Act 1945' was also introduced and this entitled an allowance to children under the age of

sixteen. Disease (ill health) was a dominant issue as many citizens greatly suffered due to the lack and affordability of professional health services ' The National Health Service Act' was implemented in 1946 and insured that health care was free to all social classes and available in all areas. Squalor (poor housing) many houses had been destroyed and poorly maintained due to the bombings and cost of up keep, within the ' New Towns Act 1946' the Government was given power to designate any area of land that they considered development should take place, in order to improve living and working conditions.

(www. historylearningsite. co. uk 2010) During this period of time ' The Education Act 1944' Targeted Beveridge evil Ignorance (Lack of education) education was limited and expensive this act allowed all children to obtain free education from the age of five, the importance of education was beginning to be understood as a benefit for the economy as a whole. Idleness (unemployment) Beveridge saw full employment as the pivot of the social welfare programme, (class handout) this was a contrast to previous classic economic idea that the government should ' let well alone. The reports publication caused a stir with people wondering what the outcome would be, it also gave those at home and those in the armed forces a sense of what kind of ideal new society and way of life they had fought for. In 1944 the Education Act was brought forward by a Rab Butler the Minister of Education this act was an attempt to create the structure for the post-war British education system, the basic aim was to give every child an equal chance to develop his/ her talents and abilities to the fullest in a free education system.

By giving children a free education between the ages of five to fifteen meant that every child could engage and achieve a higher academic level and contribute by being more employable, selective entry to secondary schools was now determined by a pupil's academic ability and not by parental financial means. www.earlham sociology pages.co.uk 14. 4. 10) By providing free education it opened up secondary schooling to girls and different social classes were given equal opportunities so they could provide a better future for themselves.

As a result of more children being educated schools needed to be built. Under the 'Education Act 1944' three different types of secondary schools were formed on the basis that the intelligence of a person was Academic, Technical or Practical, this tripartite system catered for different academic levels and gave children with different abilities a chance to further their education. The system reflected the nature of the British class and occupational structure at the time, as there were far more semi-skilled and unskilled manual jobs available at that time. The schools were grammar, secondary modern and technical. Entry to these schools was based on the 11+ examination, taking this exam gave lower class children a chance to obtain the highest education within grammar schools, lower income families became unhappy because their children would have previously contributed to the household income. Although these schools had many benefits the system became scrutinized, parents both working and middle classes weren't happy with the system and labour in 1960s argued the system was elitist and divisive. (Class handout) As the 11+ tests determined the rest of

children's academic future and it was not taken into consideration that children develop at different rates.

The 11+ had an effect on primary schools, it was realised middle class children potentially had the upper hand, as they were in higher streams of primary schools or had home schooling, because of this grammar schools remained overwhelmingly middle classed. Few technical schools were established and there was a rise in private schooling as upper and middle class families paid for private schooling if their children did not pass the exam. Although children were being educated when they left school employers found it difficult to know their level of achievement as the General Certificate of Education was not implemented until 1951. The document 1965 circular issued by the labour government formed the start of the conversion from the tripartite system to comprehensive schools.

Comprehensive schools created equal education opportunities by abolishing the 11+ exam as they did not select their intake on the basis of academic achievement, all children were accepted which encouraged social mixing, claims were made that a brighter child would be held back and larger schools would be impersonal and some parents did not want their children integrating so they sent their kids to private schools. Although the comprehensive system took place in many areas, some grammar schools still remained. Education was still patchy as teachers competence varied and there was a lack of communication between teachers and parents, there was no set national system in place to ensure all children were being educated to the same level.

' Education Reform Act 1988' allowed all schools to be taken out of the direct financial control of local authorities, financial responsibility was handed to the governors of the schools. (Howard Glennerster British Social Policy since 1945 p57) The National Curriculum was developed so children received education to the same standard, maths English and science were tested at three key age stages 5-7, 7-11, 11-14 so progress could be monitored and recorded, individual needs could now be identified. GCE exams were replaced by GCSE'S and schools performance were monitored by Ofsted inspectors who ensured a high standard of teaching. Schools were now being ranked, parents had knowledge and options available creating a free market, which enabled them to choose schools best suited for their children as exam results were now being published, on some occasions it was found that the better schools could get over subscribed. In 1946 whilst Labour was in power Aneurin Bevan the Minister of health began the nationalisation of all hospitals and health care for expansion of the welfare state, in order to provide a high quality consistent free healthcare service. Society viewed the NHS as the most important public good provided by the Government but although there were great advantages, the NHS still faced challenges as it was only funded by National insurance and general taxation. The NHS started to be unable to cope with the rising demand for free medical care, which caused inefficiency and a drop in the quality of care which was being provided.

Doctors were recommending medical treatment freely without much consideration for cost; there was a growing need for medical research with life expectancy of the population increasing, government spending on

healthcare greatly increased, which in turn meant higher taxation on the people. Due to excessive government spending inflation occurred as Labour's relaxed Keynesian approach advocated government intervention, by the failing of the free market in order to achieve full employment to stimulate a depressed economy. When the conservative Thatcher government in 1979 came into power the first priority was the economy, the objective was to reduce the inflation rate and decrease direct taxation and to place accountability back into the community, by encouraging British citizens to take responsibility for their own welfare, this task was financed by using financial controls to change focus. A key control being though interest rates. (wikipedia.org/wiki/Margaret_Thatcher 18. 11. 10) A law was passed in 1980 'National Health Services community care Act' this act led the reorganisation of the NHS, an internal market was created by Margaret Thatcher who gave the NHS a budget and brought business and management ideas by implementing privatisation policies, hospitals began contracting out non-medical services such as laundry, catering and cleaning to private companies.

Prescription prices were increased, dental treatment and free services provided by opticians were cut. A funding system purchaser-provider split was created in 1990 this introduced the concept of self-governing hospitals meaning hospitals/providers were no longer paid directly and each hospital was managed by its own board of directors, NHS Hospital Trusts.

Government funding was allocated to these Trusts who then selectively purchased care from hospitals. Providers were no longer guaranteed a flow of patients instead providers would need to attract contracts with regional

bodies responsible for purchasing care. Two types of purchasers were developed District health authorities and GP fund holding, Doctors were given budgets to buy health care from NHS Trusts or the private sector, this scheme was mostly taken on board in middle class areas. Care packets were brought, meaning they could customise care to the patients needs and were motivated by the ability to reinvest any profit gained from efficient purchasing to spend as they liked. This gave hospitals and GP's the control and ability to become specialised in specific areas of care.

Patients of GP fund holders were able to obtain treatment more quickly as hospitals were seen to select fund holders patients from waiting lists more often. This selective process was against labours ideology of the welfare NHS system and was scrutinised as they felt all people should have the equal consistent level of care. By creating an internal market productivity was expected to increase through introducing competition among private companies which in turn meant benefits for the patients, more choices better services and importantly cost affective. Although Thatcher made efficient changes her monetarist ideas were met with resistance as the British were not receptive to her idea of a self-reliant society and were against the reduction in government spending on healthcare. Housing is profoundly ideological issue and is such a basic need, there are three types of housing tenure: Private rented, social housing and owner occupancy. Private rented is when a landlord is renting for profit; Social housing is when the government and council rent to the public for prices lower than private renting. Owner occupancy is when the property is owned, people usually own houses through a mortgage.

Lack of housing was a major problem faced by Atlee's Labour government after the war as demands for homes were great, one of the solutions Labour implemented to the housing shortage was to build pre-fabricated homes, 'pre-fabs' By 1948 125, 000 had been assembled and distributed to areas in need although these 'pre-fabs' were meant to be temporary many were lived in for decades. [www. historylearningsite. co. uk](http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk) (2010) Bevan also directed his energy at the building of quality council homes, Labour felt they had a duty to provide good quality social housing for those who had a low income and wanted to live where they work, at this time Labour severely restricted the availability of licences which allowed the building and sale of private homes. After Margret Thatcher become Prime Minister in 1979 the Conservatives rejected the idea of local councils being landlords they wanted to abolish the idea of council housing as they had a principle that the population should be self sufficient, the answer was the 'Right' to Buy the legislation implementing the Right to Buy was passed in the Housing Act 1980. This scheme gave families who previously were unable to afford a mortgage a chance to own their own homes, have independence and the responsibilities that come along with it e.

. maintenance This was an incentive for the unemployed to work so they could have investments for their families; this idea was welcomed by the population. Property was offered at a reduced price, or could take out a 125 year lease on their flat, Housing and building control Act introduced shared ownership and local authorities could give grants to tenants. Some houses where difficult to sell, so in 1986-1988 homes where discounted at 60% and 70% on flats. Local authorities became obliged to make 100% mortgages

available. Councils were now selling to housing associations and private landlords but the proceeds of these sales were not to be spent on the rebuilding of social housing. By 1990 on average 52% of market value, over half the council stock was literally given away it became the biggest single privatisation of the Thatcher era.

(Cliff Alcock Daly Griggs Introducing Social Policy p290) Despite public interest Labour government argued that the good quality properties had now been sold, and could not be given to another family in need. The remaining stock of council housing was in undesirable areas with little or no employment opportunities, which led to further isolating and stigmatising tenants. Social policy Bibliography Books Howard Glennerster 2000 -British Social Policy since 1945 Cliff Alcock Daly Griggs- 2008 Introducing Social Policy Pete Alcock, Margaret May 2008 - The student's companion to social policy Web pages

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