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Liberalism is a political ideology centred on the view that there should be liberty, equality and freedoms in society. The governments of 1822-30 can be seen as only taking liberal measures in regards to trade and finance; however, it can be viewed that in areas such as social and religious aspects, the government incorporated liberal policy as well. It can be seen that the only liberal measures taken by the government were in regard to trade and finance because of the Navigation Acts; in 1823, the Navigation Acts were relaxed by parliament—originally stating that only British ships could carry British imports, this caused inflexibility for the exporting countries and made it difficult to import on a large scale—after the Acts were relaxed they allowed non-British ships to import to Britain, creating a freer import market for the colonies. However, while this relaxation of the Acts was a step toward more liberal action, it can be seen as not taking enough of a step to be deemed 'liberal'.

It encouraged a freer market for colonial trading, but it did not completely abolish the original laws which still left the market, to an extent, inflexible. Another way the government could be seen as taking liberal action in aid of trade and finance was through the Corn Laws; originally, in 1804, landowners passed a Corn Law to protect their profits—they done this by introducing a duty on imported corn. This was restricting for the people of Britain; they did not have much choice in where to buy their corn produce and so had to pay what the sellers were asking for because of the scarcity of choice. However, in 1828, a sliding scale on duty was emplaced—this meant that when British corn produce became more expensive the duty on foreign import was reduced. This can be seen as liberal because it protects the citizenry from

unfair prices and also gives an equal opportunity for exporters to compete in the British market. But, the original law was not completely overturned, and part of it still remained in place despite the amendment—this hindered the liberalism of the policy because it meant that the government were not committing to a wholly liberal stance.

Liberal ideology was not only imposed on trade and finance policy, it can be seen to have been instilled social aspects of governing. Capital punishment was largely used for a grand range of different offenses, and juries were left sceptical of this form of punishment for some of the petty crimes; Peel reformed many of these laws, his work resulted in 180 capital offenses being abolished, as well as removing laws that were rarely enforced. It can be seen that Peel was creating a smaller, more centralised criminal code that gave a more liberal stance on punishment—ruling out capital punishment for lots of crimes meant an embracement in rehabilitation rather than execution; this is liberal because it gives the possibility of a person becoming free after their rehabilitation in jail has been completed. However, it could be argued that Peel was simply clearing up laws that were cluttering Britain's already scattered constitution and simply created a more accessible and clear criminal code to be enforced.

Another social aspect the government addressed liberally was the Combination Acts—these prohibited trade unions and collective bargaining by British workers. In 1824 these acts were repealed, this allowed the presence of trade unions which greatly increased the rights and equality of workers in Britain. However, the campaigning of Francis Place was a large reason for the passing of these Acts and it can therefore be seen that the

Tory government did not implement these Acts because of their own liberal policy. Also, after the repealing of the Acts, many strikes followed and because of this the Combination Act of 1825 was passed—this gave the right of a labour union to exist, but greatly restricted its influence and activity. Therefore it can be seen that the Tory government are not committed to their liberal policy as only a year after acting in a liberal manor they renege on it and emplace more traditionally Tory policy in its place.

It can be viewed that the Tory's action of social aspects were not very significant, and in comparison to their economic policy, certainly not as liberal. They did not show commitment to liberal policy, but displayed their faith in a conservative type of governance. Finally, it can be seen that the government introduced liberal policy in aspects relating to religion. The Corporation Act 1661 meant that all positions in public office could only be held by those professing the establish church; it meant that Catholics and nonconformists were not allowed to stand for public office, although in practice it was mainly the Catholics who were persecuted under use of this Act. However, in 1927 amendments and repealing of these Acts began—this marked a largely liberal stance, allowing the freedom of religion to impact Parliament in allowing followers of other religions to be represented. However, there was a lot of resistance to this change and wasn't accepted by many, making it a difficult process for nonconformists to operate within public office.

Also, the Catholic emancipation signified a large shift in Tory governing. In 1822, after a reshuffling of Liverpool's cabinet, two Catholics were members of the executive. The Roman Catholic Relief Act 1829 was the culmination of

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the Catholic emancipation—it was the law that completely repealed the remaining Penal Laws and gave members of the Catholic Church the right to a seat in Parliament. However, despite this revolution, increasing the representation of Catholics in Parliament, they were still unable to attend university or be a minister—this meant that there was still work to be done to be wholly liberal. However, it can be seen that the steps taken by the government were revolutionary in introducing liberal policy and could be argued to be significantly more liberal in its practice than that of economic or social policy.

Overall, therefore, it can be seen that view the only liberal measures the Tory government took was in trade and finance is wrong. Yes, they did take liberal action in their economic policy, but they also took liberal action in social policy—however this was not as effective as their economic policy. But, their religious policy marked an enormous shift in Tory governing—leaving the status quo and tradition of the House of Commons (as they would have using conservative policy) and allowed Catholics into Parliament. This was the largest and most significant step in establishing a liberal Tory government.