

Analysis of suez crisis in 1956-1957

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Do you agree with the view that the Suez Crisis of 1956-57 did no damage to the fortunes of the Conservative party? The Suez Crisis which was aided by the French and Israelis wasn't just a disaster for the Conservative party but Britain as a whole as it created lots of problems and tension internationally especially with the USA. To a certain extent the Conservative party did take some damage although the sources point out some other arguments which suggest it wasn't just them who suffered. Source 5 & 6 both support the view that the Conservatives took no damage during the crisis.

Lee states, ' There was no internal split in the Conservative party'. Kilmuir agrees with this, and goes on to talk about, ' Our most lost party workers, although dismayed by our handling of the situation were consumed with the hatred of the Labour party. ' Which means even though they were going through a tough situation the Conservatives kept a strong front and were all in it together against Labour; even the media gave publicity in which spread the disgust to the public about the Labour party.

Overall it shows Labour actually had it worse off; they weren't popular with the public at the time, this later shows at the 1959 general election as Macmillan takes a victory for the Conservatives. On the other hand, Kilmuir was a member of the Conservatives at the time and he might have wanted to give the public the idea that the situation wasn't as bad as it seemed as his party just caused a major international tensions with our allies.

Although he does admit that, ' Even the most hostile critics of the Conservative party' had their doubtful moments in the party giving the idea that the party had nothing to hide and that its members knew there would be some slight internal tensions. Opposing the statement, in Source 4, Rowe <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-suez-crisis-in-1956-1957/>

tells us that after the Suez Crisis, ‘...there as a sharp economic crisis’ and that, ‘ Politically, Eden was finished. ’. This was true about the economy as there was a international run on sterling, which threatened Britain with economic collapse with no hope of the USA willing to bale Britain out.

There were further large withdrawals of deposits by international investors which lead to a major fall in Britain’s currency reserves. This of course damaged the Conservatives greatly as Britain was still trying to recover economically from WWII and this crisis set Britain back about 4 years economically according to an account from Gaitskell; being from the Labour party he may of exaggerated some of these numbers as he produced no evidence of his findings. It also did finish Eden apparently; as he was removed from the party but in Source 5 it says it was because of ‘ illhealth’ not because of the Crisis itself.

People expected R. A. Butler to take over but as he wasn’t much help during the crisis when he took over from Eden. It was actually Macmillan who took control of the Conservatives. Showing the Conservatives they had to change their party structure because they had been damaged by leading Britain into this crisis. Overall, to a certain extent I disagree with the statement because I think that Eden was damaged significantly by the Suez Crisis as he lead Britain into some economic problems which left him politically finished.

However, to a larger extent I agree with the statement that it did no damage to the fortunes of the Conservative party even though it had some short term damage at the beginning for example, Eden was removed and they had to shuffle the party leadership, Macmillan then saved the party and won the later 1959 General election with the increasing of public consumption

resulting in a period of affluence whilst Labour was left in the gutter constantly in internal party feuds leaving the Conservatives victorious and prosperous.