

Welfare state in great britain

Sociology



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Welfare in Great Britain Welfare as a political and economic ideology has a long historical background, but in the second half of the 20th century the system of welfare state was developed in some countries including Great Britain. Welfare state has two main components: economic and social. After the World War II British economic and social system had to be reformed, and the government began to take appropriate measures to improve the situation. Full employment and NHS reforming were one of the most important measures of the government, and it seemed that the economic and social situation of the country won't be in regress: " By the late 1940s near full employment was being facilitated by the boom in the international economy (with the period from 1950 to 1973 later dubbed the Golden Age) (MSN Encarta)". At first the situation was rather good, but later welfare state politics led to economic and social crisis. The Welfare gave more security to all people as did the NHS, but was the welfare state all to the good or did it create a society members of which were in competition with each other The welfare state made many working places and paid large pensions and money allowances, but this situation resulted in social and economic passivity, lack of initiative and consumerism. Welfare state also led to social and mental conflict of generations: the teens of the fifties wanted their own identities whilst their parents wanted vacuum cleaners, washing machines etc. Consumerism gave birth to competition and rifts in family values and traditional families who shared and pulled together as neighbours. Consumerism became the essential part of British society. The misuse of government contracts for political and corporate gain supported deep consuming and social crisis which affected all sides of life. Welfare state resulted in the situation when people wanted more consumer products and <https://assignbuster.com/welfare-state-in-great-britain/>

had more ability to have them. In addition to that, people's psychology was transformed: young people had more freedom and more abilities, but they didn't know appropriately how to act in such situation. The division between teenagers' attitude and that of their parents became clear. So, a new culture of economic and social behaviour appeared, and it concerned all sides of life. As Blair said in 1995, " Mine is the generation with more freedom than any other, but less certainty about how to exercise it responsibly - the generation that knocks on the door of a new millennium, frightened for our future and unsure of our soul (Bristow, 2001)". People had more money, more goods, and each person was getting their own homes, and this situation was the cause of divisions between parents and teenagers: older people competed in buying goods and services which made their life comfortable but lost of comprehended semantic content while young people protested against welfare state and consumerism and wanted to express their own identity that was reflected in popular culture: Blair underlined that " We built a new popular culture, transformed by colour TV, Coronation Street and The Beatles. We enjoy a thousand material advantages over any previous generation; and yet we suffer a depth of insecurity and spiritual doubt they never knew (Bristow, 2001)". So, the old British traditional life was ending, and it is obvious now that welfare state is rather inconsistent economic and social system which should be improved and reformed.

Sources

Bristow J. Blair's other babies. May 9, 2001. (<http://www.spiked-online.com/Printable/00000002D0A5.htm>)

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