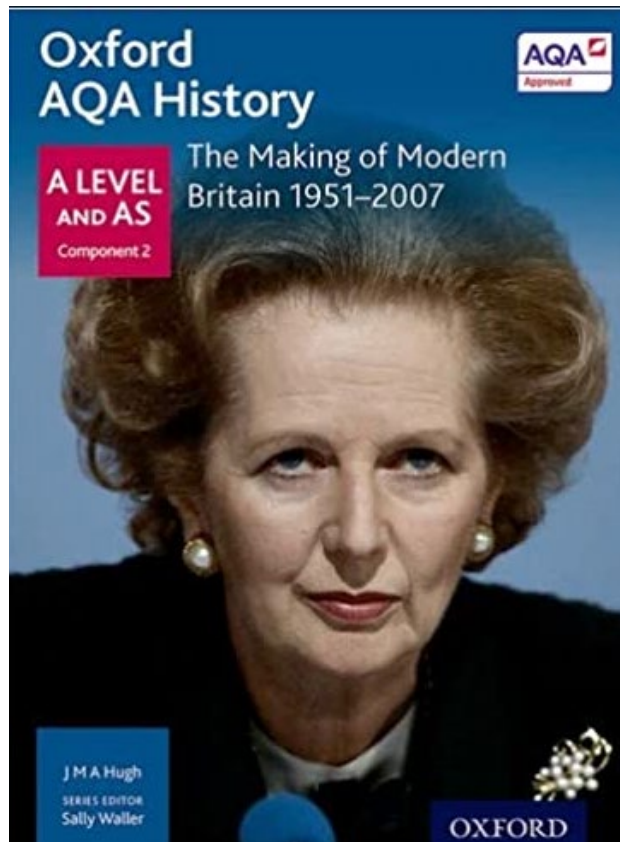


The Making of Modern Britain: The end of post war consensus 1970-1979



Name:

Teacher:

Lesson 1 - Heath's government -Heath as a leader

Complete the source evaluation for source one:

SOURCE 1

In 1972 the prime minister, Edward Heath, reviewed his government's progress at the Conservative Party conference in his leader's speech:

Throughout this Parliament we have been continuously engaged in the battle against inflation. Let no one say that we have not fought, and fought hard. When we have had setbacks, as we have, they have not been for the lack of will in trying to overcome them. At all times we have sought co-operation with those concerned in the country's economic organisation. It was through no fault of ours that sometimes events led to confrontation. We were returned to office with a clear mandate from the electorate – a mandate to reform the law on industrial relations, to reform the system of housing finance, to reform the social services, to reform the tax system and to reduce taxation. All of this mandate has been carried out. Yes – and we were given a mandate to reduce inflation. That we knew had to include bringing down inflationary wage settlements throughout the economy to something much more in line with production. We have been given all too little credit for the success we achieved.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Content | |
| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s

Lesson 1 - Heath's government – Heath as a leader

Edward Heath felt his election victory of 1970 would enable him to run a strong government, committed to modernising Britain. He achieved success in his efforts to secure British membership of the EEC, something that had thwarted his predecessors. At the same time, his career ended in failure with a massive economic and political crisis from 1973 culminating in electoral defeat in 1974 and the loss of the Conservative Party leadership in 1975.



Heath as leader

When Edward Heath became prime minister he had a clear and detailed programme of policies for the modernisation Of Britain. He had already been leader Of the opposition for five years, longer than any Conservative leader since the war apart from Churchill.

He was the first Conservative Party leader to have been elected to the leadership of the Conservative Party and had been educated at state schools. He therefore came from a different social background from the Old Etonians who had previously dominated the Conservatives. He was often perceived to be rather stiff and prickly in dealing with people. Unlike Wilson, he was not seen as devious or interested in plots and intrigue; many of his colleagues regarded him as too honest for his own good and not skilful enough in pleasing political allies. Heath was good at policies but not at politics.

Describe Heaths personality and background:

Heath seemed well prepared for government. He had spent his time in opposition developing detailed policies, especially on industrial relations and economic modernisation. He also knew the issues surrounding EEC entry inside out, having been the chief negotiator in 1961 to 1963.

However, after the economic and industrial problems of the period 1970 to 1974 and the election defeats of 1974, several backbench MPs were determined to force a leadership contest. Margaret Thatcher emerged as the key challenger. Her policies were generally to the right of Heath and Macmillan and she had become sympathetic to monetarist and free-market policies put forward by Enoch Powell and Keith Joseph.

In your opinion did Heath appear to be well prepared for his role as Prime Minister?

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s

Lesson 1 - Heath's government – Heath as a leader

Many people who supported Thatcher did so because there was else Powell had left the Conservative Party and Joseph had made a controversial speech in which he raised concerns about certain sections of society having children. Another factor was Heath's inability to win over the doubters he was not very good at schmoozing Thatcher did have widespread support for her specific policies But she exploited the sense that things were going badly wrong both with the party and with the country.

Thatcher defeated Heath in the leadership election in 1975 and following this, Heath's reputation took a battering from supporters of Thatcherism who repudiated much of his legacy

Make a list of reasons Heath lost the Leadership of the Conservative Party in 1975:

-
-
-
-
-

Political and economic policies

In the January before the 1970 election, the Conservatives held a conference at Selsdon Park to approve a policy programme which would form the basis of the Conservative Party's manifesto at the election: tax reform; better law and order; reforms to trade unions; immigration controls; cuts to public spending; and the end to public subsidy of 'lame duck' industries.

Define a lame duck industry?

However Heath still believed in one Nation Toryism' and the post-war consensus. The Selsdon Park programme was not intended to be an all-out rejection of post-war consensus politics. During the Heath premiership there was a number of reforms. The school leaving age was raised to 16, local government was reorganised and the British currency went decimal; however, the administration was dominated by the economy and industrial relations. The new Chancellor, Anthony Barber, initially introduced cuts in public spending. He also introduced tax cuts to try to encourage investment. What was called the 'Barber boom' began, with a rapid rise in inflation. However, inflation was not accompanied by economic growth. Unemployment actually went up, something that was highly unusual at the same time as inflation. This led to the invention of a new word, 'stagflation'.

Define decimalisation and stagflation?

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s

Lesson 1 - Heath's government – Heath as a leader

As unemployment started to edge towards a million the government which had wanted to reduce state intervention in industry felt compelled to take action. The prestigious engineering firm Rolls Royce was nationalised in 1971 and government money was also poured in to prevent Upper Clyde Shipbuilders going bankrupt. This was the famous U-turn.

But by 1973 the investment the government had made into modernising industry seemed to be working. Unemployment had fallen back to 500,000. However, this was to change with the oil price crisis of 1973 and the energy crisis that followed.

What was the famous U-Turn? How did it make Heath look? What was the impact of the U-Turn?

The trigger for the crisis in October 1973 was the Yom Kippur War in the Middle East. The war prompted OPEC to declare an oil embargo. Exports suddenly stopped. The price of oil rocketed to four times the usual levels. Long queues formed outside petrol stations.

This was the context for the National Union of Miners (NUM) to demand a huge new pay rise in November 1973. The stage was set for a dramatic struggle between the NUM and the government.

Explain why the Yom Kippur war created problems for Heath government:

L.O: To know how the miners strike impacted on Wilson's premiership.

Lesson 2 – Heath's government: Industrial relations and the miners strike

From the start of Heath's premiership there were industrial disputes to deal with: a dockers' strike, a large pay settlement for dustmen, a postal workers' strike and 'go-slow' by power workers which led to power cuts. In response to the problems in industrial relations, the government brought in the Industrial Relations Act. This was very similar to Barbara Castle's proposals in her white paper, In Place of Strife. Heath also abolished the National Board for Prices and Incomes.

Name two different groups of workers that went out on strike at the start of Heath's time as prime minister:

1. _____
2. _____

In response to these disputes the government brought in the industrial relations act. The Industrial Relations Act set up an Industrial Relations Court and provided for strike ballots and a 'cooling off period' before official strikes could begin. The policy did not work as expected. Both the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) were opposed to it.

There were major strikes in 1972: by the miners, ambulance drivers, firefighters, civil servants, power workers, hospital staff, and engine drivers 1972 saw the highest number of days lost in strikes since the General Strike of 1926 -23,909,000.

On the lines below explain the key points of the act:

Despite this there was a number of major strikes in 1972. Ambulance drivers, hospital staff, fire fighters, civil servants and power workers all went out on strike. This included a miners strike that started on the 9th January 1972. Due to this 1972 saw the highest number on days lost due to strikes since the general strike.

A CLOSER LOOK

The miners' strike started on 9 January 1972 at a time of harsh winter weather. The use of flying pickets, particularly the Yorkshire miners, led by Arthur Scargill, virtually stopped the movement of coal around the country. By 9 February the government declared a State of Emergency as schools were closed and 1.2 million workers were laid off. It set up the Wilberforce Committee to examine the miners' demands and announced a three-day week to save electricity. The Wilberforce Committee came down on the side of the miners and the NUM leader, Joe Gormley, was able to negotiate a generous wage settlement.

On the lines below explain why the miners strike of 1972 was a problem for the government:

L.O: To know how the miners strike impacted on Wilson's premiership.

Lesson 2 – Heath's government: Industrial relations and the miners strike

Key figures were important in these strikes . Arthur Scargill was an important figure in the miners strike.

Who was Scargill? Why was he significant:

KEY PROFILE

Arthur Scargill (b. 1938) played a big part in the successful strikes of 1972 and 1974 as the leader of the Yorkshire miners. In 1981, he succeeded the moderate Joe Gormley as president of the NUM and led the NUM in the unsuccessful strike of 1984 to 1985 (see Chapter 15). In 1993, Scargill founded a new party to promote 'real socialism' but made little impact.

Heath returned to a policy of trying to manage wage demands and passed the industry act of 1972. Heath also returned to the policy of trying to manage wage demands with the passing of the Industry Act of 1972 which aimed to involve the government, the TUC and the CBI in agreeing wages, prices, investment and benefits. This policy was heavily criticised by some on the Right of the Conservative Party such as Enoch Powell.

On the lines below explain what the industry act of 1972 aimed to do: Why was the industry act of 1972 criticised:

Despite this there was further industrial dispute with fire fighters and power workers. With the oil crisis on November 1973 the miners demanded a pay increase. This went beyond the governments limits, as they wanted to hold down inflation. The miners introduced an overtime ban to strengthen their demands. Heath hoped that a compromise could be reached and a strike avoided but he also announced that a three day week would be introduced at the beginning of 1974. He also moved Willie Whitelaw from the Northern Ireland office to be minister of employment as he was considered to be a skilled negotiator. This failed and the miners refused the pay offer. The government refused to treat the miners as a special case . Because of this in January 1974 the National Union of Miners called a national strike.

Why did tensions worsen through 1973 to 1974? How would the Labour government look?

L.O: To know how the miners strike impacted on Wilson's premiership.

Lesson 2 – Heath's government: Industrial relations and the miners strike

Read source two and fill in the source evaluation:

SOURCE 2

In 1975 Arthur Scargill was interviewed by the journal *New Left Review*. In this interview he reflected on the miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974:

The biggest mistake we could make is that of suggesting that a wage battle is not a political battle. You see we took the view that we were in a class war. We were out to defeat Heath and Heath's policies because we were fighting a government. Anyone who thinks otherwise was living in cloud cuckoo land. We had to declare war on them and the only way you could declare war was to attack vulnerable points. They were the points of energy; the power stations, the coke depots, the coal depots, the points of supply. And this is what we did. Well, the miners' union was not opposed to the distribution of coal. We were only opposed to the distribution of coal to industry because we wished to paralyse the nation's economy. It's as simple as that.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Content | |
| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know how the miners strike impacted on Wilson's premiership.

Lesson 2 – Heath's government: Industrial relations and the miners strike

Heath moved the country to a three day week. The three-day week was imposed by the Heath government to conserve electricity in response to a wave of industrial action by engineers, dockers and firefighters and the looming threat of a national coal strike in the middle of an energy crisis.

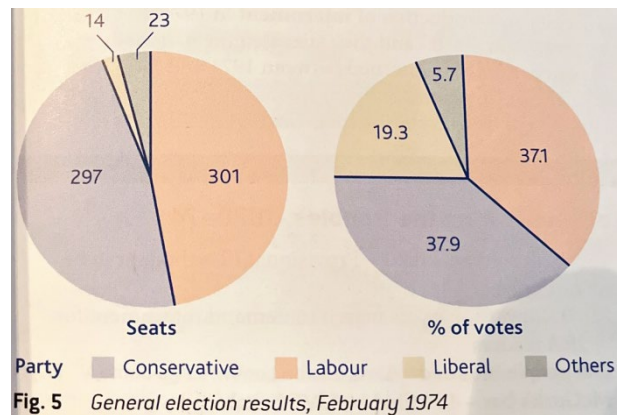
A CLOSER LOOK

During the three-day week, fuel was rationed and a speed limit of 50 miles per hour was imposed on all roads. Deep cuts were made to the heating and lighting of public buildings and TV closed down at 10:30pm. Many industries were forced to lay off workers and there was a huge surge in the number of people signing up for temporary unemployment payments. Other workers found they did long shifts on the days when they were in work to make up their hours. The impact of this is difficult to measure but neither productivity nor wages declined by very much. The shortage of coal, together with rising oil prices led to a balance of payments crisis.

On the lines below explain the three day week and its impact on the country:

Heath called a general election for 28 February 1974, intending the central issue of the election to be 'who governs Britain?' For most of the campaign, the s favoured the Conservatives but the final result showed a small opinion poll swing against them. Labour won five more seats than the Tories. Indirectly, the miners' strike had brought down the government. But the general election result of February 1974 was also inconclusive, leading to a hung parliament in which no party had an overall majority.

What was the result of the general election?



A CLOSER LOOK

The 1974 general election result reinforced the idea that 1974 was a year of political crisis not just economic crisis. Voters were not enthusiastic about either of the two main parties. There was also an increase in representation for other parties. The Liberals now had 14 seats; the Nationalist parties from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland had 23. For a few days, Heath attempted to make a deal with the Liberals but failed. Labour as the largest party formed a minority government.

What did the 1974 election reinforce the idea of?

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland became more prevalent during Heath's premiership.

Lesson 3 – Heaths government: The troubles in Northern Ireland and the Sunningdale agreement

Heaths government inherited huge problems in Northern Ireland . There was a explosion in sectarian violence, the British army were struggling to keep the peace and the political situation in Belfast was close to a complete breakdown.

As the situation deteriorated a number of paramilitary organisations sprang up on both sides.

Fill in the details of each group:

| | | |
|------|--|------------|
| IRA | Irish Republican Army – split between the Official IRA and the Provisional IRA in 1970 | Republican |
| INLA | Irish National Liberation Army – formed out of Official IRA in 1974 | Republican |
| UDA | Ulster Defence Association | Loyalist |
| UVF | Ulster Volunteer Force | Loyalist |

| | | |
|------|--|--|
| IRA | | |
| INLA | | |
| UDA | | |
| UVF | | |

Edward Heath's government made strenuous attempts to find a political solution. Since 1912, the Ulster Unionists had always been part of the Conservative and Unionist Party and had tended to support them. At first, Heath backed Brian Faulkner, the UUP (Ulster Unionist Party) leader who led the Belfast government, going along with the policies of imposing night-time curfews and the introduction of internment in 1971. But these were ineffective as security measures and they alienated the nationalist communities — 95 per cent of those interned between 1971 and 1975 were Catholics: Jim McVeigh, an IRA commander, is quoted as saying that internment was, 'among the best recruiting tools the IRA ever had'.

How did Heath try to gain support in Northern Ireland?

What was internment and why did it cause problems for the government?

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland became more prevalent during Heath's premiership.

Lesson 3 – Heaths government: The troubles in Northern Ireland and the Sunningdale agreement

These measures meant that the British Army came to be regarded as an enemy occupying power by Catholics and nationalists. The situation was made worse on 30 January 1972. The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association had organised a march to protest against internment. Attempts to control the march resulted in British soldiers firing live ammunition. Twenty-six unarmed civilians were shot, with thirteen being killed on the day. The day became known as Bloody Sunday.

What was Bloody Sunday? Why is this event controversial ?

A CLOSER LOOK

Bloody Sunday

The Widgery Tribunal reported in April 1972 that the army had acted in self-defence but it was widely considered a whitewash. A new enquiry was set up in 1998 by Tony Blair. The Saville Enquiry reported in 2010 and found that the deaths were 'unjustified and unjustifiable' and the British government issued an apology.

Why was 1972 the bloodiest year of the troubles:

Following Bloody Sunday, the British Embassy in Dublin was burned down. support for the IRA grew and they were able to raise a lot of funds in the United States. 1972 turned into the bloodiest year of the troubles: there were 1382 explosions, 10,628 shooting incidents and 480 people were killed. Heath suspended the Stormont Parliament in March 1972 and brought in direct rule from Westminster, appointing Willie Whitelaw as secretary of state.

Heath's policy was not only to try to defeat the IRA, as the unionists and loyalists wanted, but to look for a permanent political solution that would ensure peace. This led to negotiations with the main Northern Irish political parties

What was direct rule? Why did Heath believe this to be the right move?

KEY TERM

direct rule: Northern Ireland would be ruled from London rather than having its own separate parliament

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland became more prevalent during Heath's premiership.

Lesson 3 – Heaths government: The troubles in Northern Ireland and the Sunningdale agreement

Read source three and fill in the source evaluation:

SOURCE 3

Martin McGuinness was the leader of the Provisional IRA in Derry at the time of Bloody Sunday. He was interviewed in the early 1990s for a book about Irish Republicans during the Troubles:

The decision was taken that Republicans would attend the march and there would be no aggro whatsoever. It was important to have thousands of people marching in the street against internment as opposed to us trying to take advantage. We all went to the march and we ended up in the Bogside with all the paratroopers shooting people dead. I saw people being killed all around me but there was nothing I could do. I was absolutely raging.

| | |
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| Content | |
| Provenance | <p>KEY PROFILE</p> <p>Martin McGuinness (b. 1950) was a member of the Provisional IRA in the early 1970s, although he claims to have left the organisation in 1974. He was elected as an MP for Sinn Fein in 1997 (although like all Sinn Fein members he did not take his seat). He was Sinn Fein's chief negotiator at the talks that led to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. He later became deputy first minister in the devolved Northern Irish Assembly after 2007.</p> |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland became more prevalent during Heath's premiership.

Lesson 3 – Heaths government: The troubles in Northern Ireland and the Sunningdale agreement

This led to negotiations with the main Northern Irish political parties. Fill in details on unionist and loyalist parties:

| Unionist and loyalist parties | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) | The only major unionist party in Northern Ireland until the Troubles; it ruled Northern Ireland between 1921 and 1972 |
| Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) | Formed in 1971 by the Reverend Ian Paisley and other unionists disillusioned with moderate unionists in the UUP; Paisley remained its leader until 2008 |
| Alliance | Formed in 1970 to be a moderate unionist party and aimed to gain support from both Catholics and Protestants; over time it has become neutral in its view about the future of Northern Ireland |
| Nationalist and republican parties | |
| Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) | Formed in 1970 by nationalists such as John Hume to fight for civil rights for Catholics and a united Ireland but rejecting violent methods |
| Sinn Fein | A republican party that dated back to 1905, although in 1970 it split; the new Sinn Fein Party supported the Provisional Irish Republican Army; it was excluded from negotiations |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Ulster unionist party UUP | |
| Democratic unionist party DUP | |
| Alliance | |

This led to negotiations with the main Northern Irish political parties. Fill in the details on Nationalist and republican parties:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Social democratic Labour party SDLP | |
| Sinn Fein | |

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland became more prevalent during Heath's premiership.

Lesson 3 – Heaths government: The troubles in Northern Ireland and the Sunningdale agreement

KEY PROFILE

Ian Paisley (1926-2014) led the loyalist opposition to the Catholic civil rights movement in the 1960s and was involved in setting up paramilitary loyalist organisations. Paisley was an evangelical Protestant, establishing the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster in 1951, and was outspoken in his criticism of Catholics, famously denouncing the Pope as the Antichrist. He was an MP from 1970 to 2010 and an MEP from 1979 until 2004. The DUP was fiercely opposed to any form of power sharing or compromise throughout the Troubles and was initially opposed to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, although Paisley eventually served as first minister of Northern Ireland from 2007 to 2008 under its terms.

John Hume (b. 1937) was involved in the Irish civil rights movement of the 1960s. He co-founded the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) and became its leader in 1979. He was instrumental in working with Sinn Fein to bring about the IRA ceasefires in the 1990s and in bringing Sinn Fein and the British government together for talks. He won the Nobel Peace Prize (jointly with David Trimble) in 1998 for his role in the Good Friday Agreement.

Who were John Hume and Ian Paisley?

In 1973 Heath and Whitlelaw negotiated the Sunningdale agreement, a complex plan for a power sharing government with the support of the SDLP and the Alliance and the leadership of the UUP.

A CLOSER LOOK

The **Sunningdale Agreement** was named after the hotel in Berkshire where the negotiations took place.

It proposed:

- a power-sharing Executive of both nationalists and unionists – both sides would be guaranteed representation
- a new Northern Ireland Assembly elected under a system of proportional representation
- a Council of Ireland that would have some input from the Republic of Ireland

Why would supporters of the agreement think there was benefits?

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland became more prevalent during Heath's premiership.

Lesson 4 – Heaths government: The troubles in Northern Ireland and the Sunningdale agreement

Extremists, both republicans and loyalists, denounced Sunningdale as a sellout. Both the UVF and UDA were opposed. The UUP then voted to pull out in January 1974 and Brian Faulkner, the head of the Executive, was replaced as leader of the UUP by Harry West who was opposed to the agreement. Even worse, the prospects of a settlement were further undermined by the problems that were ongoing in mainland Britain, the miners' strike and the February 1974 general election. Those parties opposed to Sunningdale put up a single candidate in each constituency in Northern Ireland. In contrast, the pro-Sunningdale votes were split. Eleven of the twelve constituencies returned candidates that opposed the agreement. Moreover, concern about the Sunningdale Agreement meant that the Conservative Party could not on the support of the UUP, as might have been expected, preventing the Conservatives from continuing in government.

Why was their criticism of the Sunningdale agreement?

Exam practice

Answer the following exam question in your book:

'Sunningdale failed because of problems in mainland Britain.' How far do you agree?

Plan:

-
-
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-
-
-

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland became more prevalent during Heath's premiership.

Lesson 4 – Heaths government: The troubles in Northern Ireland and the Sunningdale agreement

Heath's government had to deal with three serious problems:

- Britain's economy
- Relations with trade unions
- The Troubles in Northern Ireland

Which of these factors was the most serious?

Which of these factors was dealt with most successfully?

L.O: To know political and economic policies impacted on Britain under Wilson and Callaghan.

Lesson 5 - Wilson and Callaghan – Political and economic policies

When the Labour government came back into power in March 1974, Harold Wilson found himself in a much less promising position than he had been in 1964. The economic situation was awful: inflation was at 15 per cent and the balance of payment deficit was E3 billion. The trade unions would need to be dealt with; the Northern Ireland situation was precarious. The Labour Party was less united than ever and Wilson himself was older and less energetic. In addition, as a minority government Labour had to depend on support from other parties to get legislation through Parliament.

What is the problem with this type of government?

- 1. Make a list of the problems that James Callaghan identifies in Source 1. Write a sentence about each, relating it to the context of 1974.**
- 2. How valuable is Source 1 to an historian studying the problems of the Labour government between 1974 and 1979?**

But by October 1974, Wilson felt safe enough to call a new election. Voters still associated Heath and the Conservatives with the three-day week and conflict with the miners. Wilson won his majority, but only just. Labour gained 18 seats. The Conservatives lost 21. Labour had 42 more seats than the Conservatives but their overall majority was only 3.

Analyse the October 1974 election results:

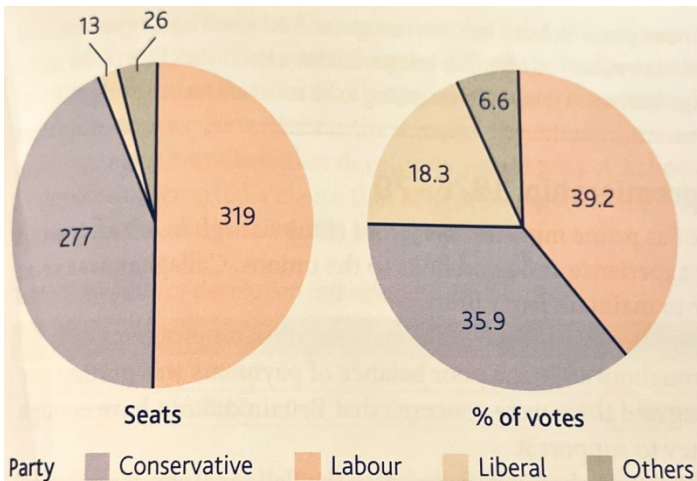


Fig. 2 General election results, October 1974

L.O: To know political and economic policies impacted on Britain under Wilson and Callaghan.

Lesson 5 - Wilson and Callaghan – Political and economic policies

Complete the source evaluation on source 1:

SOURCE 1

James Callaghan recalled in his memoirs, published in 1987, an informal cabinet meeting held at Chequers in the winter of 1974, just after the October election victory. At the time he was the foreign secretary:

Everyone was free to express his views on the medium term outlook. I was feeling particularly gloomy: 'Our place in the world is shrinking: our economic comparisons grow worse. The country expects both full employment and an end to inflation. We cannot have both unless people restrain their demands. If the pay guidelines are not observed, we shall end up with wage controls, even a breakdown of democracy. Sometimes when I go to bed at night I think if I were a young man I would emigrate.'

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| Content | |
| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know political and economic policies impacted on Britain under Wilson and Callaghan.

Lesson 5 - Wilson and Callaghan – Political and economic policies

Industrial relations, 1974—76

When Labour came into government, Wilson acted quickly. He wanted to demonstrate that the Labour Party was better equipped than the Conservatives to work with the trade unions. In 1973, while in opposition, he had negotiated the Social Contract with the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

What was the social contract? Why would this be beneficial for the government?

KEY TERM

Social Contract: this would involve voluntary pay restraint by the trade unions and in return the government would repeal Heath's Industrial Act and pay board

The trade unions were sent a clear message that the government was not looking for any confrontations. Agreement was quickly reached with the National Union of Miners (NUM) allowing Wilson to end the state of emergency and the three-day week. Two left-wingers, Tony Benn and Michael Foot, were put in charge of the departments of Industry and of Employment. Wilson's new chancellor, Denis Healey, issued two budgets, first in March and then in July, both aiming to deal with the economic crisis without annoying the unions.

Was Wilson's government able to successfully end industrial disputes? How did they do this? Why was this beneficial to the Labour government?

Economic reforms, 1974—76

The first major problem was a surge in inflation due to the rush of large wage increases that were deemed necessary to get out of the industrial crisis that had brought down Heath. In January 1975, Chancellor Denis Healey made a speech in Leeds, giving a stern warning of the dangers: that wage inflation caused unemployment and that it was vital to control public spending. In April 1975, Healey's budget imposed steep rises in taxation, and public spending was cut.

What measures were put in place to try and fix the economic crisis?

L.O: To know political and economic policies impacted on Britain under Wilson and Callaghan.

Lesson 5 - Wilson and Callaghan – Political and economic policies

The National Enterprise Board (NEB) was also set up in 1974 under Tony Benn to administer the government's share holdings in private companies. It could also give financial aid. While the NEB's aim was to increase investment, by 1975 its effectiveness was being questioned. The government's decision to nationalise the failing car manufacturer British Leyland caused renewed controversy about the role of government in rescuing 'lame-duck' industries. It was also becoming apparent that the Social Contract was not limiting wage demands. By 1975 a more formal pay restraint policy was introduced. These shifts in policy intensified party divisions. Left-wingers like Michael Foot and Tony Benn did not want to put so much pressure on the unions and they also believed in more, not less, State intervention in industry.

What was the National enterprise board (NEB)? Was it successful?

Why were not all economic measures brought in by Wilson successful?

In March 1976 Harold Wilson suddenly resigned as leader of the Labour party. This was unexpected and conspiracy theories were dreamed up to explain it. Wilson encouraged some of this as he believed he was being bugged by the security services. However the real reason Wilson resigned was due to health concerns. Wilson had also promised his wife that he would step down after two years.

What problems would this cause for the government and the Labour party?

L.O: To know political and economic policies impacted on Britain under Wilson and Callaghan.

Lesson 5 - Wilson and Callaghan – Political and economic policies

Read source two. Fill in the source evaluation.

SOURCE 2

In 1979, in his memoirs about the period 1974 to 1976, *Final Term*, Harold Wilson commented on his leadership of the Labour Party:

To bridge a deep political chasm without splitting a party or provoking dramatic ministerial resignations is sometimes regarded as something approaching political chicanery. The highest aim of leadership is to secure policies adequate with any situation without major confrontations, splits and resignations. It may be bad for the headlines and news placards, but it has been sought and achieved by our greatest leaders, Conservative as well as Liberal or Labour. Baldwin, Macmillan, Churchill always sought consensus. It is sometimes galling to be criticised for achieving it.

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| Content | |
| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know political and economic policies impacted on Britain under Wilson and Callaghan.

Lesson 5 - Wilson and Callaghan – Political and economic policies

Was Wilson a successful prime minister? Give examples for your opinion.

Read source two. Do you agree with Wilsons assessment of his leadership of the Labour party?

Callaghan's premiership, 1976-79

Wilson's successor as prime minister was James (Jim) Callaghan, a safe pair of hands with long experience and good links to the unions. Callaghan was seen as an ideal leader to maintain party unity. This was not easy because the government faced difficult problems over the economy. Throughout 1976 the poor balance of payments was putting pressure on sterling and there were concerns that Britain did not have enough reserves of currency to support it.

In September 1976 Callaghan gave a speech to the Labour Party conference where he warned the party that the 'cosy world' whereby the government could ensure full employment was gone. Productivity would need to improve to avoid what he called 'the twin evils' of unemployment and inflation. He argued that governments of the previous 20 years had failed to sort out this problem. This seemed to be a criticism of both previous Labour and Conservative governments.

Bullet point below the problems Callaghan faced with the economy:

L.O: To know how Britain changed under James Callaghan.

Lesson 6 - Callaghan's Premiership, 1976-79: Devolution

This speech was made to help prepare the Labour Party for the fact that the government was planning to apply for an emergency loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It was anxious that there might be a run on the pound. In December the chancellor, Denis Healey, received a loan of £3 billion. In return, the government had to make big spending cuts.

In fact the economic situation was not as dire as the Labour government had feared. Callaghan handled the IMF crisis well and the economy recovered, but it reinforced the image of Britain as being in economic decline. The Conservatives denounced this as a national humiliation. The left wing of the Labour Party saw it as a betrayal, caving in to international financiers. Although Callaghan maintained unity among Labour MPs, there was a growth of leftist militancy in some public-sector trade unions and in local councils.

However, the economic situation did begin to improve as North Sea oil came on stream. By 1978, there were nine oilfields in production. Inflation rates fell to 10 per cent. Unemployment at 1.6 million was still considered high but had started to fall and the number of days lost to industrial disputes had fallen to a ten-year low

Make a list of advantages and disadvantages of the IMF loan.

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|------------|---------------|
| | |

- 1. Do you think Callaghan was justified in taking the IMF loan? Explain your answer.**
- 2. Did the economy improve? Explain your answer**

Lesson 6 - Callaghan's Premiership, 1976-79: Devolution

Devolution

By 1977 the Labour majority had disappeared. This was problematic for Callaghan as it would make it difficult for his government to pass new laws. The conservative party also proposed a vote of no confidence. Callaghan strengthened the government by making the 'Lib-Lab pact'. In this way he was able to defeat a vote of no confidence tabled by the Conservative Party. This deal meant that the 12 Liberal MPs agreed to vote with the government in Parliament and in return Callaghan promised to move ahead with devolution for Wales and Scotland.

What did Callaghan do to strengthen his government? What did he promise in return?

KEY TERM

vote of no confidence: a vote on whether the government is considered able to continue governing; if it is lost then the government must call a general election

devolution: the transfer of powers to a lower level of government

referendum: a public vote held on a particular issue

Define the key words below:

| Key word | Definition | Sentence |
|-----------------------|------------|----------|
| Devolution | | |
| Vote of no confidence | | |
| Referendum | | |

L.O: To know how Britain changed under James Callaghan.

Lesson 6 - Callaghan's Premiership, 1976-79: Devolution

Nationalists in Scotland and Wales had been growing in strength and welcomed the opportunity but many MPs in the Conservative and Labour parties were against any form of devolution. There were many debates in Parliament but eventually in 1978 devolution acts for Scotland and Wales were passed. This opened the way for referendums. Nevertheless the terms of the referendum were set up in order to make it unlikely that devolution would pass. A Labour MP opposed to devolution inserted a clause that at least 40 per cent of the electorate had to approve of devolution in order for it to pass.

What were the terms of the referendum? Why did this mean that it was unlikely to pass?

Look at table two. Analyse the results of the referendum. What did people vote for? Was devolution successful? Explain why it did not pass.

Table 2 *Results of devolution referendums, March 1979*

| | Scotland – turnout 62% | Wales – turnout 59% |
|-----|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Yes | 51.6% | 20.3% |
| No | 48.4% | 79.7% |

The referendums were held on 1 March 1979. The vote in Wales was conclusively against devolution. In Scotland, more people voted in favour of devolution than against it, but the rules stating that a simple majority was not enough meant that devolution was defeated. The disappointed Scottish nationalist MPs withdrew their support from the Labour Party. This was to prove decisive in the aftermath of the events of the winter of 1978 to 1979.

Why was the fact that devolution did not pass a problem for the Labour party?

L.O: To know how Britain changed under James Callaghan.

Lesson 6 – Callaghan’s premierships 1976-79: The Winter of discontent

The winter of discontent

In the autumn of 1978 the TUC rejected the Labour government's proposed wage increase limit of 5 per cent. This encouraged trade unions to put in higher demands. Ford lorry drivers achieved a 15 per cent increase in December after a nine-week strike. More unions followed their example.

The wave of industrial action included disruption to transport, through strikes by lorry drivers and the train drivers' union ASLEF. There was also shock and outrage in reaction to strikes by public sector workers, such as hospital porters and clerical staff in local councils and, above all, by dustmen and gravediggers.

What happened during the Winter of discontent?

The industrial unrest that gripped Britain in the winter of 1978 to 1979 was not on a massive scale and it was not as serious a challenge to the government as the miners' strike of 1974. The disputes were only brought to an end in March 1979 and the average pay increase achieved was 10 per cent but the psychological effect of the winter of discontent had a devastating impact on the public mood.

Compare the Winter of discontent to the strikes in 1974.

What was the impact of the Winter of discontent for society and the Labour party?

Lesson 6 – Callaghan’s premierships 1976-79: The Winter of discontent

Analyse source 3 about the Winter of discontent:

SOURCE 3

On 20 January 1979 the right-wing journal *The Economist* commented:

If trade unions and their pickets are allowed to be above the normal laws of contract, then a free society based on the law of contract will break down. It will be glum if Lancastrians during a water strike have to get appalling diseases, if Merseyside children during the social workers’ strike have to continue to be battered, if housewives in an island blockaded by lorry drivers have to go hungry, if patients deprived of ambulances and other emergency transport have to die, if many more small firms have to go bust, many more workers to become unemployed, more of Britain’s exports and imports have to stay stuck at the docks, if sewage has to run in the streets, hyperinflation has to escalate, before Britain’s politicians recognise the fact.

| | |
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| Content | |
| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

What is the argument of source 3 about the Winter of discontent? Explain why the date of the source is important to understanding its content.

L.O: To know how Britain changed under James Callaghan.

Lesson 7 - Callaghan – The general election of 1979

The general election, 1979

At the 1978 Labour Party conference, Jim Callaghan teased the delegates about the timing of the election. In the event, he decided to wait. This turned out to be a mistake. By the spring of 1979, the political landscape had been reshaped by the 'winter of discontent'. The economic situation had deteriorated and the reputation of the trade unions had been damaged; even many skilled and unskilled workers began to consider voting Conservative.

Then, in March 1979, the government lost a vote of no confidence in Parliament, on the issue of Scottish devolution. The government was forced to resign, the first time since 1924 that a government was brought down by a confidence vote.

Why was waiting to call an election a mistake?

What was the significance on the vote of no confidence?

The images of the 'winter of discontent' dominated the media and the press weeks on end. Most of the press, including The Times, The Sun, the Mail and the Express, were supporting the Conservatives. The Conservatives were able to fight the campaign mostly by hammering away at the unpopularity of the government especially on the issues of unemployment, law and order, and the excessive power of the unions. In fact, many of the strikes in 1979 showed the weaken the old union leaderships and their failure to control the new militancy of their workers.

Why was the conservative party able to win the 1979 election?

Even with all these problems for Labour, the outcome of the election was not a foregone conclusion. The Labour vote actually held up quite well, dipping by 3 per cent overall. However, the Conservatives benefited from a sharp drop in support for the Liberals and for the Scottish Nationalist Party. The result was by no means a landslide, but produced a comfortable working majority of 43 for the Conservatives.

Analyse the 1979 election results:

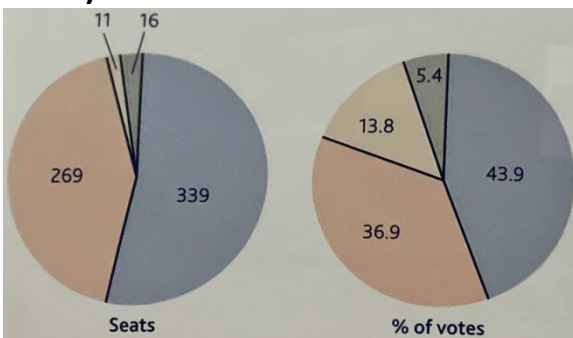


Fig. 4 General election results, 1979

L.O: To know how Britain changed under James Callaghan.

Lesson 7 - Callaghan – The general election of 1979



Exam question: How important is the Winter of discontent in explaining why the Labour party lost the 1979 election?

Use the space below to plan an answer to the question

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland put pressure on the Government.

Lesson 7 - Problems in Northern Ireland

Although the Heath government had negotiated the Sunningdale Agreement the UUP, the SDLP and the Alliance, both loyalists and republicans were opposed and the UUP were turning against it.

The Ulster Workers' Council was set up by a shipyard worker, Harry Murray, and it was determined to bring down the Executive. They announced a strike to start on 15 May 1974. The strike severely limited power and telecommunications and the British government declared a state of emergency. Within a fortnight Faulkner resigned as the chief executive of the power sharing Executive. Wilson was forced to reimpose direct rule. The Sunningdale Agreement had collapsed.

The Troubles continued. Wilson announced the establishment of a Northern Irish Constitution Convention, an elected body that would determine the future of government in Northern Ireland.

Why did Wilson need to act at this moment? What did Wilson do?

How valuable is source four for a historian studying the problems in Northern Ireland 1970-1979?

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland put pressure on the Government.

Lesson 7 - Problems in Northern Ireland

Read source 4 and complete the source evaluation.

SOURCE 4

In December 1974 the Northern Ireland secretary, Merlyn Rees, set out the aims of the Constitutional Convention in the House of Commons:

The Executive fell in May. This is a sober and testing time for the people of Northern Ireland. It is they who must create the circumstances in which progress can be made. Law, order and stability are not brought about by armies or by the police alone. They depend upon the desire, willing co-operation and indeed positive support of the people of Northern Ireland. Law and order, as we know it, depends on the responsible and willing co-operation of politicians and people alike in Northern Ireland. The Government are pursuing a steady and consistent policy of giving the people of Northern Ireland a chance to show, through the Convention, that they can work together responsibly to devise institutions of government which are fair to all.

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| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland put pressure on the Government.

Lesson 7 - Problems in Northern Ireland

The elections in July 1975 resulted in a majority for unionists who were opposed to any form of power sharing. An agreement with nationalists would not be possible. The convention was dissolved in 1976.

From 1976 Special Category Status was removed from terrorist prisoners; this meant they were no longer considered political prisoners but would be treated as criminals. This was disliked by paramilitaries, who believed that they were engaged in a war. As criminals they had to wear the prison uniform. Their refusal led to what became known as the 'blanket protest' by INLA and IRA prisoners whereby prisoners were either naked or wore only blankets. This escalated to become the 'Dirty Protest' after 1978. Republican prisoners, alleging ill treatment by prison guards, refused to leave their cells. This meant they were unable to 'slop out' and instead they smeared excrement on their cell walls. By 1979 over 250 prisoners were taking part in the protest and demands were growing for them to regain their political status.



Fig. 5 :A mural depicting the 'blanket protesters' in a republican area of West Belfast

Why did the troubles in Northern Ireland become more problematic for the government after 1975?

L.O: To know how the problems in Northern Ireland put pressure on the Government.

Lesson 7 - Problems in Northern Ireland

Summary task: Think back to the issues the conservatives faced in 1970-1974. Compare with the labour government of 1974-1979.

What are the similarities and differences between the problems faced in 1970 to 1974 and 1974 to 1979?

| Similarities | Differences |
|--------------|-------------|
| | |

Do you think the Conservative government of 1970 to 1974 or the Labour governments of 1974 to 1979 were more successful in dealing with these problems?

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 8 - Society in the 1970s - Feminism

The 1970s saw the high point of second-wave feminism which had developed in the 1960s and in some ways saw the fruition of changes that had started then. This was a movement that had support across the world as can be seen in the inauguration of International Women's Day by the United Nations in 1977.

Following the initial Women's Liberation meeting in 1970, Women's Liberation groups sprang up all over the country aiming to give support to women. Women's Lib organisations disrupted the 1970 Miss World Contest held in November because they felt that it objectified women. The host, Bob Hope, was heckled and protesters threw stink and smoke bombs onto the stage. Women's Lib also organised demonstrations in both London and Liverpool in March 1971 demanding equal pay for women and free 24-hour nurseries.

How had women previously been expected to act? How was this a direct difference?

How valuable is source one?

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 8 - Society in the 1970s - Feminism

Study source one. Fill in the source evaluation:

SOURCE 1

The feminist magazine *Spare Rib* was set up in 1971. One of its founders, Marsha Ware, was interviewed for a modern feminist website in 2008:

In the counter culture there were all classes and races, but by the end of the 60's the so-called freedoms were no longer freeing. It turned out that women really didn't have a voice and what had been freeing was imprisoning because women were more objectified. People were very frightened of feminism. We were always seen as such a threat. We really wanted to change the relationship between work and home, but we didn't really have answers. When we started *Spare Rib* we wanted to reach out to other women who had been repressed. At that time even pop music was male dominated. I remember going to the Isle of Wight festival in 1970, and Joni Mitchell and Joan Baez were the only two women performing in the whole festival, all the others were men.

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| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 8 - Society in the 1970s - Feminism

However, feminism was also split between different ideologies. Radical feminists, who were sometimes also separatists, believed that women were oppressed by the patriarchal society and campaigned particularly on issues such as reproductive rights. Socialist feminists identified a clearer class dimension to women's equality and campaigned on issues that would enable women to achieve financial independence.

Progress was made in advancing reproductive rights. Although the birth control pill had been available in the 1960s its use became much more widespread once it was available through the NHS in 1971. Attempts were also made to tackle violence against women. The first rape crisis centre opened in a London in 1976 and also in 1976 the Domestic Violence Act made it possible for women to take out court orders restraining violent partners. A year later, Reclaim the Night' marches were held in cities across Britain in response to the murders of the Yorkshire Ripper.

What methods did women's liberation groups use? How did this further the cause of feminism?

The Sex Discrimination Act was passed in 1975. It was passed to end discrimination against men or women on the basis of their gender or their marital status. It also aimed to ensure equality of opportunity in the fields of employment and education and to outlaw harassment.

The Act also set up the Equality Opportunities Commission. This was set up to oversee both the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act. It could bring court proceedings against any party it judged not to be compliant with these Acts. However, the Equality Opportunities Commission only launched nine investigations in eight years between 1976 and 1983 and only ten per cent of sex discrimination claims in the workplace were successful as it was so difficult to prove.

What was the sex discrimination act?

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 8 - Society in the 1970s - Feminism

What were the positives and negatives of the Sex discrimination act?

| Positives | Negatives |
|-----------|-----------|
| | |

But women's economic position did start to improve during the 1970s. From 1971 women were able to take out a mortgage without a male guarantor. The Equal Pay Act which had been passed in 1970 came into force in 1975. In the same year Barbara Castle steered through reforms to the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme with the Social Security Pensions Act; this became more generous to women whose contributions had been limited by caring responsibilities. The Employment Protection Act 1975 introduced paid maternity leave and outlawed dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy.

However, there continued to be inequalities. Trade unions still tended to be dominated by men and suspicions remained that women in the workplace would suppress wages for men. It was not until 1979 that the TUC published a charter, Equality for Women within Trade Unions. Furthermore, the Equal Pay Act did not solve all the concerns that women were not treated equally; employers could get around it by making the tasks slightly different and therefore not comparable. Nevertheless women's wages did go up from 59 per cent of men's wages in 1970 to 70 per cent by 1977.

Did the position of women improve? Explain steps forward and inequalities.

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 8 - Society in the 1970s - Feminism

Summary question: Feminism did not have much impact on women's lives in the 1970s. Explain why you agree or disagree.

Why do you agree?

Why do you disagree?

What is your overall opinion?

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 9: Society in the 1970s – Race and immigration

Immigration continued to be a source of social concern. In 1971 the conservative government passed the Immigration Act which restricted the right of people from the New Commonwealth from coming to Britain; they would need to have a guaranteed job and have at least one grandparent born in Britain. There remained a steady flow of immigrants from the Indian subcontinent (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) and events abroad often caused sudden influxes. In the early 1970s, the dictator of Uganda, Idi Amin, persecuted and then expelled the Ugandan Asians. Many of those affected had British passports, having moved from India to Uganda when India was still a British colony. These were made exceptions from the Immigration Act and Heath set up a resettlement board; 28,000 arrived in Britain. Similarly, there was also a sudden rush of immigrants from Bangladesh after its breakaway from Pakistan in 1974.

Why was immigration still an issue in the early 1970s?

By 1974 over 1 million New Commonwealth immigrants had come to Britain: 325,000 from the West Indies, 435,000 from India and Pakistan and 150,000 from Africa. These immigrants tended to settle in the same areas where there were already cultural and familial networks. However, despite this, political representation in these areas remained limited. For example, in 1974 in the London Borough council elections only 10 non-white councillors were elected; by 1978 this had gone up to 35 but this did not reflect the size of the immigrant population.

Why was the lack of political representation a problem?

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 9: Society in the 1970s – Race and immigration

Despite strict immigration rules, race relations continued to be an issue. In 1976 the Labour government passed another Race Relations Act to try and tackle discrimination on the basis of race. It established the Commission for Racial Equality which had the power to instigate investigations and to compel witnesses to appear in front of it.

The National Front became very active in parts of London where immigrants had settled, such as Brick Lane and Southall. Although it never won any elections, its popularity grew in the 1970s and it had up to 20,000 members by 1976. In February 1974 it put up 90 candidates in the general election and by 1977 it was being described as Britain's fourth largest political party.

The growth of the National Front that seemed to indicate ongoing concern over immigration produced a response by the main political parties. By the late 1970s, the Conservative Party announced that they would toughen up immigration policy even further in order to limit the number of immigrants coming to Britain.

What was the national front? What did they stand for?

How valuable is source two?

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 9: Society in the 1970s – Race and immigration

Read source two:

In 1978 the leader of the Conservative Party, Margaret Thatcher, gave a television interview to ITV. She was asked by how much a future Conservative government would limit immigration:

By the end of the century there would be four million people of the New Commonwealth or Pakistan here. Now, that is an awful lot and I think it means that people are really rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture and, you know, the British character has done so much for democracy, for law and done so much throughout the world that if there is any fear that it might be swamped people are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in. So, if you want good race relations, you have got to allay peoples' fears on numbers. So, we do have to hold out the prospect of an end to immigration except, of course, for compassionate cases. Therefore, we have got to look at the numbers who have a right to come in.

Complete the source evaluation:

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| Content | |
| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 9: Society in the 1970s – Race and immigration

Some people complained that Thatcher's words were designed to appeal to racists. She said afterwards that she received hundreds of letters in support and the Conservative Party opened up an 11 -point lead in the opinion polls following it.

One strategy of the National Front was to hold marches and demonstrations particularly in areas where there were high levels of immigrants living. These were considered provocative and were often marked by violence. The Trades Council of East London gave details of over 100 incidents including 2 murders between January 1976 and August 1978 and assaults on, and robberies of, Asians. And Afro-Caribbean's rose by a third. The pressure group, the Anti Nazi league was set up in 1977, in part to combat this.

What were the strategies of the National front? What impact did they have?

Some skinheads were attracted by National Front ideas. were often behind violent attacks on people from other ethnic backgrounds. However, other young people fought against racist attitudes. Rock Against Racism started in 1976 as a reaction to comments made by the rock guitarist Eric Clapton in support of Enoch Powell. A huge demonstration and concert held in Trafalgar Square in April 1978 attracted 100,000 people. The concert was headlined by The Clash (see Source 1) who drew on reggae and ska influences as well as reggae and ska: styles of popular punk rock.

How did young people respond to immigration?

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 9: Society in the 1970s – Race and immigration

Complete the source evaluation for source three:

SOURCE
David Widgery was a left-wing writer and activist who went to the Rock Against Racism concert in April 1978. He wrote a book, *Beating Time*, about the movement, which was published in 1986:

As the park slowly filled up one could float through three generations of the Left. At the outskirts there were couples who might have been in Trafalgar Square when Bevan spoke against the Suez invasion. Their sensible footwear had been learnt on the Aldermaston march. The middle group was the generation of 1968. They had henna on for the occasion even if it did remind them of a commune they'd rather forget. They quite liked Tony Benn's speech. And finally there were the front-line punks. This was their Grosvenor Square. The punks didn't like any of the speakers but knew exactly what the music was saying.

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| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 9: Society in the 1970s – Race and immigration

There was also distrust regarding the police's treatment of ethnic minorities. In 1976 there were only 70 police officers with a black or ethnic minority background in the Metropolitan Police out of a total workforce of 22,000. Young black people often felt that the police were harassing them unnecessarily. Tensions were often apparent at events like the Notting Hill Carnival. In 1976 this hostility erupted into a riot where over 300 people were injured and following this there were calls to ban the event. Suspicions regarding police attitudes were highlighted by events such as the death of Blair Peach in 1979. Blair Peach was a teacher and Anti-Nazi League supporter who was killed when a demonstration was blocked by police; it was alleged that he was struck on the head by a police truncheon. The Metropolitan Police finally admitted responsibility for his death in 2010.

Explain the issues with police treatment of ethnic minorities.

Both progress in race relations and ongoing racism were also visible in popular culture. Black footballers such as Justin Fashanu and John Barnes became increasingly common on the pitch and in 1978 Viv Anderson became the first black player to be picked for the England team. Reggae and ska music became increasingly popular. Local authorities began to follow multiculturalist policies. These sought to recognise and respect the different cultures of different ethnicities equally. However, football terraces were also scenes of overt racism with fans making racist comments at black players. Comedians still felt able to make racist jokes; The Black and White Minstrel Show, in which white actors 'blacked up', continued to be made until 1978. By the 1980 the Commission for Racial Equality was warning: 'Racial prejudice is still rife, and so is racial discrimination, while the response of the Government has been disappointingly inadequate'.

Explain the issues of ethnic minorities in popular culture.

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 9: Society in the 1970s – Race and immigration

Race relations were improving in the period 1970-1979.

Support for the statement:

Race relations were improving in the period 1970-1979.

Challenge the statement:

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 10: Society in the 1970s – Youth

Youth culture in the 1970s continued to cause concerns for older generations. In many ways youth subcultures reflected the social, political and economic battles going on elsewhere.

In 1975 to 1976 the punk movement started. It was influenced by bands from the United States such as the New York Dolls who rejected commercialism. British bands like the Sex Pistols, The Clash and the Buzzcocks played loud, fast guitar music where the words were often shouted over the top of the music. Much of the punk philosophy was nihilistic. It rejected the hippy culture that had gone before and embraced a DIY attitude — being able to play musical instruments was less important than the attitude. The lyrics reflected the social alienation that many young people felt.

The image of punks was also designed to be shocking. Punks wore bondage gear, safety pins and ripped T-shirts, and had spikey hair. Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren opened a boutique called SEX on the Kings Road in Chelsea, London which sold these items and was extremely influential on the punk image. At punk concerts both performers and audience spat at each other and there were often violent scuffles. Punk created a moral panic. The Sex Pistols, managed by Malcolm McLaren and fronted by Johnny Rotten, swore live on TV; newspaper headlines such as 'The Filth and the Fury' and 'TV Fury Over Rock Cult Filth' followed. The Sex Pistols also released a controversial single, 'God save the Queen', during the Queen's Silver Jubilee year, 1977. The BBC refused to play it but it reached number two in the chart.



What was punk culture? What impact did it have on society?

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 10: Society in the 1970s – Youth

Skinheads had developed from Mod culture at the end of the 1960s. They tended to be working class and were initially influenced by Jamaican music and culture. Although many skinheads were apolitical, by the end of the 1970s some skinheads were becoming increasingly linked to the National Front and football hooliganism.

Football hooliganism was already a growing problem at the beginning of the 1970s but it gradually worsened over the decade. Organised hooligan groups were set up linked to particular football clubs, such as the Chelsea Headhunters, and scenes of violence became so common that football hooliganism became known as 'the English disease'.

What was football hooliganism? How was this connected to skin heads?

Imagine you are a member of this subculture. How would you defend yourself against this criticism?

Do some extra research on punks or skinheads:

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 11: Society in the 1970s – Environmentalism

Environmentalism as a political philosophy covers a multitude of topics connected by their impact on the planet: industrial pollution, protection of wildlife, organic farming, and the dangers from radiation and nuclear waste. Pictures taken of the earth from space had a big impact on people's views of the planet as they highlighted the earth's fragility. A new word, 'ecology', entered the vocabulary, defining the health of the natural environment. It drew on a number of issues that had emerged in the 1960s but by the 1970s had gained enough potency to impact more greatly on the public consciousness. These ideas also drew on the counterculture of the 1970s that had rejected consumerism and commercialisation, and on emerging fears of a downside to what had been perceived as scientific progress.

What is environmentalism?

In 1962, *Silent Spring*, by the American biologist Rachel Carson, had an enormous international impact. The book sounded the alarm about the decline in birds and other wildlife in the farming countryside. The root cause was attributed to overuse of chemical pesticides, especially DDT, and the book also linked the use of these chemicals to cancer. In 1963, the Hunt Saboteurs Association was formed to carry out direct action against the cruelty of fox hunting. In 1967, the wreck of a giant oil tanker, *Torrey Canyon*, caused a massive oil spill and polluted a stretch of the coastline of southwest England. In 1968, a campaigning book, *The Population Bomb* by Paul Ehrlich, dramatised the threat to the environment from overpopulation.

Why did environmentalism come to the forefront in the 1970s?

1970 was announced as the year of European conservation and in the early 1970s, environmental concerns began to coalesce into organised campaigns. The environmental pressure group Friends of the Earth was formed in the US in 1969 and expanded to include Britain, France and Sweden in 1971. The original drive behind CND had been protest against atomic weapons, a new form of anti-nuclear protest campaigned against the use of nuclear power to generate electricity because of the long-term dangers in dealing with radioactive nuclear waste and the potential for accidents. Between 1957 and 1979 there had been five incidents at the nuclear Power station Sellafield, on the Cumbrian coast. The partial nuclear meltdown at Three Mile Island, New York in 1979 further increased anxieties.

Explain the issues around nuclear power.

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 11: Society in the 1970s – Environmentalism

Direct action was an issue that split the environmental movement. The radical organisation Greenpeace was founded in Vancouver, Canada in 1971, to campaign against whaling. Greenpeace UK was formed in 1977. There was outrage in 1975 when it was discovered that beagles in laboratories were being forced to smoke 30 cigarettes a day to study the effects. Animal rights protesters carried out violent attacks on pharmaceutical laboratories from 1973. The Animal Liberation Front, formed in 1976, adopted extreme violence: letter bombs were sent to politicians, including Thatcher, in 1984.

Explain the methods environmental pressure groups used.

Alongside environmental pressure groups, there general increase in interest in the natural environment and the need for conservation. Television programmes, many made at the BBC Natural History Unit in Bristol, did a lot to raise awareness. In 1979, David Attenborough's Life on Earth series used new techniques of colour photography and gained massive audiences worldwide. In the same year, the British thinker James Lovelock gained many adherents for his Gaia theory, about the interconnectedness of all ecological issues.

Explain the other methods that raised environmental issues.

Environmental concerns were also reflected in popular culture. The book Watership Down, about a group of rabbits forced to move by a road development, was published in 1972 and became a bestseller. A situation comedy, The Good Life, which started airing in 1975, depicted a couple trying to be self-sufficient in a suburban house.

Teddy Goldsmith published A Blueprint for Survival in 1972 which advocated a return to self-sufficiency and a de-industrialised society. This formed the political platform of The People's Party which was set up in 1973. The Peoples Party put up 5 candidates in February 1974, including Goldsmith. It changed its name to the Ecology Party in 1975 and put up 53 candidates in the 1979 general election. By the end of the 1970s, environmentalism had carved a permanent place on the political scene.

How did environmentalism become political?

Research a 1970s environmental pressure group.

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 11: Society in the 1970s – Environmentalism

Summary task: Draw a timeline of key events in the 1970s. Colour code to differentiate between political, economic and social/cultural events.

1970



1979

L.O: To know the progress of society during the 1970s.

Lesson 11: Society in the 1970s – Environmentalism



The growth of environmentalism was a reaction to the political and economic problems of the 1970s. Assess the validity of this view.

Use the space below to plan an answer to the question

A large, empty rectangular box with a dark blue border, intended for writing a plan for an answer to the question above.

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s
Lesson 12 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: Relations with Europe

Complete the source evaluation for source one:

SOURCE 1

On 9 February 1976 the House of Commons had a debate about the links between foreign policy and morality. The Labour backbench MP, Colin Jackson, said the following:

A British statesman, Palmerston, said that Britain had no eternal enemies and no eternal friends, only eternal interests. Even today, 100 years later, an element of that must exist because we are an international trading nation dependent upon links around the world. The two superpowers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, have massive amounts of armaments and show a considerable degree of immorality in the way they exercise their power. The medium nations come next. I believe that the French are just a little too pushing in the pursuance of their ambitions. Nations like the United Kingdom are a potential example of how morality can show itself in international relations. The United Kingdom is important because in terms of history, international connections and even of power we are significant. In my view, it is extremely important that we should debate this matter and in particular look at the way Britain conducts herself.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Content | |
| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s

Lesson 12 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: Relations with Europe

In 1973, and at the third time of asking, Britain finally joined the European Economic Community (EEC). However, the debate was far from over. Both the Labour and Conservative parties remained divided on the issue throughout the 1970s.

Entry into the EEC

By the time Britain's third application to join the EEC was being prepared in 1971, the situation was very clear. Everyone knew in advance that Britain's bid was likely to be accepted. Instead of Harold Wilson, who was uncommitted to European membership and worried about maintaining unity within the Labour Party, the British prime minister was the passionately pro-European Edward Heath. Heath's first speech in Parliament had been about the Schuman Plan, the forerunner to the EEC. As a student he had visited Germany in the 1930s and been appalled by the Nazi government; he saw European cooperation as key to preventing any repetition.

Instead of Charles de Gaulle, the French president who was suspicious of Britain's links with the United States, France was led by Georges Pompidou, a man convinced that the EEC needed Britain as much as Britain needed Europe. In addition, all the hard, detailed arrangements and exceptions were already in place, as a result of the work done in 1962 by Heath's team of negotiators. The formal process of Britain's accession, along with Ireland and Denmark, took more than two years but it was mostly a foregone conclusion.

How had the circumstances changed by Britain's third attempt to enter the EEC?

The bigger issue was gaining parliamentary approval in Britain. There were doubters in the Conservative Party, partly from those who believed strongly in the Commonwealth and also from those who believed that Britain would be surrendering her sovereignty. One of the most vociferous critics was Enoch Powell. His relationship with Heath was already very poor in the aftermath of the 'rivers of blood' speech.

Powell voted against the passage of the European bill through Parliament at every single stage. He believed that Heath had betrayed the country by signing the treaty before it had been debated in Parliament. He refused to stand as a Conservative candidate in the February 1974 election and even called on his supporters to vote Labour.

What issues were there with entry into the EEC?

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s
Lesson 12 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: Relations with Europe



The Labour Party was even more badly divided on the issue of Europe. There were some who were committed pro-Europeans, such as Roy Jenkins, but the Labour Left was mostly hostile. Wilson himself was neither strongly for nor against membership and he continued to be obsessed with ensuring party unity — a difficult task on this issue.

The Labour Party officially opposed Heath's plans when they came to Parliament. However, the Labour Party could not argue against joining on principle as there were too many pro-Europeans in the party. Instead Wilson argued that the terms offered were not good enough. Even this compromise didn't satisfy everyone. In the end Wilson could only keep the party together by promising a re-negotiation and national referendum — an idea of Tony Benn's — as and when Labour came back to power. In the end, 69 rebel Labour MPs helped the Conservative government to win the decisive Commons vote with 20 more abstaining. In January 1973, 'The Six' became 'The Nine'.

What issues did the Labour party have over entry into the EEC?

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s
Lesson 13 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: The European referendum

When the Labour Party returned to government in 1974, Wilson's main aim was party unity. This was demonstrated in the referendum campaign of 1975. Wilson's strategy was to allow his anti-European cabinet colleagues to campaign according to their own political preference rather than trying to enforce a party line. Wilson and Callaghan argued that they themselves were neutral.

Why do you think Wilson felt it was necessary to call a referendum?

By 1975, voter support for Britain staying in the EEC was much stronger than before. The economic mess the country was in seemed to prove Britain needed to be in for its own economic survival. Most of the press was strongly in favour. The 'Yes' campaign was well financed by business supporters; a survey in 1975 found that of 419 company chairmen, only 4 wanted to leave the EEC. The politicians at the head of the 'Yes' campaign included most of the cabinet led by Roy Jenkins, plus Edward Heath and most senior Conservatives and also the Liberal leader, Jeremy Thorpe. They therefore made a bigger impression on public opinion than those on the other side.

The 'No' campaigners fell into two main categories. There were those who argued that it would be bad for British workers — these included Barbara Castle and Michael Foot, both from the Left of the Labour Party. There were also those who were against membership on the basis that Britain would lose its independence. These included Tony Benn from the Labour Party, as well as Enoch Powell, formerly of the Conservative Party but now a UUP MP, and Ian Paisley of the DUP

Outline the main points of the yes and no campaign?

| Yes | No |
|-----|----|
| | |

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s
Lesson 13 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: The European referendum

Analyse source 2 and fill in the source evaluation:

SOURCE 2

'Why you should vote NO' was a leaflet delivered to all homes in Britain and an example of the 'No campaign' literature from the referendum in 1975:

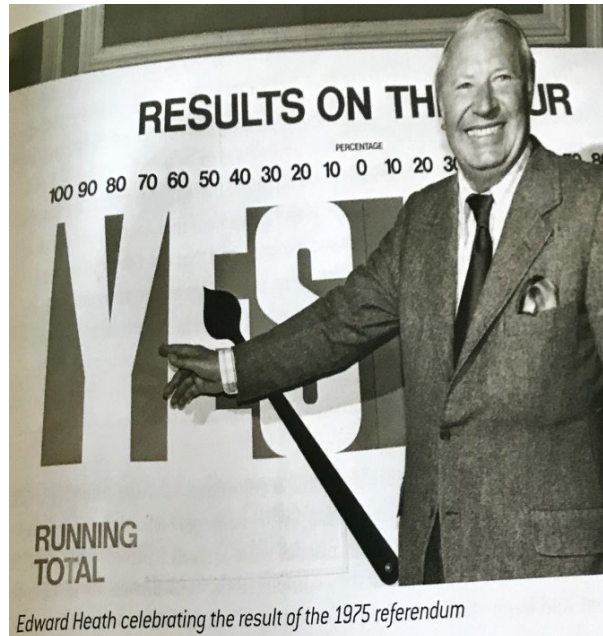
For the British people, membership of the Common Market has already been a bad bargain. What is worse is that it sets out by stages to merge Britain, Germany and Italy and other countries into a single nation. This will take away from us the right to rule ourselves which we have enjoyed for centuries. The

headlines and news placards, but it has been sought and achieved by our greatest leaders, Conservative as well as Liberal or Labour. Baldwin, Macmillan, Churchill always sought consensus. It is sometimes galling to be criticised for achieving it.

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| Content | |
| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s
Lesson 13 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: The European referendum

The question asked in the referendum was: 'Do you think that the United Kingdom should stay in the European Community (the Common Market)?' 17 million (68.3 per cent) voted 'yes' in July 1975; 8 million (32.5 per cent) voted 'no'. Britain's membership was confirmed.



The margin of victory was decisive, by more than two to one. This looked reassuring, proof that Britain really was 'in', but the fact that the referendum was held at all could be seen as a worrying sign of a lack of commitment. For Wilson personally though, the referendum was a triumph; he had successfully avoided a Labour split.

After the referendum the European issue quietened. Roy Jenkins, one of the key Labour supporters of membership, left Parliament to become a European commissioner. The Labour Party was increasingly anti-European and those Conservatives who were opposed to the increasing influence of Europe had not changed their opinions; but the people had voted to stay in so the debate was closed for the time being.

What was the outcome of the referendum? What was the impact of the referendum?

Lesson 17 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: The state of the special relationship with the USA

Because Edward Heath's approach was orientated towards Europe he was less inclined to strengthen the Atlantic Alliance. He rejected attempts by the United States' secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, to use Britain as a link with Europe and insisted that the United States should negotiate with the European Community as a whole, rather than using Britain as a go-between.

Kissinger commented that Heath 'dealt with us with an unsentimentality totally at variance with "the special relationship"'. However, Heath personally got on with the US president, Richard Nixon, and he was more forthright in his support for the United States' policy in Vietnam than Harold Wilson had been.

But relations between Britain and the United States worsened in October 1973 during the Yom Kippur War. The US wanted to use NATO bases in Europe for an airlift of supplies to Israel. Most European states, including Britain, refused permission; this was because they feared that supplies of oil from the Middle East would be put at risk. This put Anglo-American relations under great strain.

Wilson and Callaghan were both still keen on the Atlantic alliance. Callaghan forged a strong personal relationship with Kissinger and negotiated the replacement of Polaris nuclear missiles with Trident in 1979 with President Jimmy Carter. Nevertheless, they completed the withdrawal from East of Suez that had been started in the 1960s despite US disquiet.

How did the special relationship change with different prime ministers?

Lesson 17 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: The state of the special relationship with the USA

Read source three. Fill in the source evaluation:

SOURCE 3

In November 1973 Edward Heath and Georges Pompidou, the president of France, met at Chequers; they each took one official to the meeting. The official record of their conversation was made by a senior civil servant but was kept secret until it was released under the **30-year rule** in 2005:

As an example the prime minister took the present Middle Eastern Crisis. From the outset the position of Britain and France had been very clear and clearly known to each other. But he did not think that either of them had consulted as fully with other members of the Community (EEC) nor had those others consulted with each other. In logic, if there was to be a common policy in the economic field and support for each other therein, there should also be a common foreign policy approach and agreement that each would support the other in that as well. The prime minister said that the Community was now establishing with some success its position as a European entity in its relationship with the United States. It might be useful to consider a similar process of definition in respect to the Community's relationship with other countries or groups of countries in the world.

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| Content | |
| Provenance | |
| Language and tone | |

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s
Lesson 17 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: Attitudes to USSR and China

One of the reasons that Britain and the United States continued to work together in the 1970s, despite disagreements, is that they continued to share the policy of holding back communism. The USSR and China were the most powerful communist nations in the world. The context of the ongoing Cold War meant that relations between Britain and these countries had been based on suspicion, bordering on hostility. However, in the 1970s the United States' relationship with both the USSR and China improved — and in both cases Britain followed the United States' lead.

Attitudes to USSR

During the 1970s there was what was called a détente. After the tension of the Cuban Missile Crisis, successive presidents of the US and the USSR tried to prevent such a situation recurring by establishing direct contact. This led to meetings and eventually agreement to limit the build-up of arms.

Nevertheless, an underlying tension remained as there were still fears about the USSR's influence in Eastern Europe. This was demonstrated by the Georgi Markov affair. Markov was a Bulgarian who defected to the West in 1969 and was outspoken in his criticism of the Bulgarian communist regime. He was assassinated in London in 1978, supposedly by a poisonous pellet fired from an umbrella; the Russian secret service, the KGB, were suspected of being behind it though this was never proven.

Summarise Britain's attitude to the USSR:

Attitudes to China

Up until the early 1970s relationships between China and Britain, the United States and Western Europe were strained. This changed suddenly in July 1971 when Nixon surprisingly announced a thawing of relations followed by a visit to China in February 1972 where he held meetings with the Chinese leader Mao Zedong.

In March, Britain followed, agreeing an exchange of ambassadors with China. Edward Heath made many visits to China from 1974 onwards, and was awarded the title of 'People's Friendship Envoy', the highest honour given by the Chinese government to a foreigner. By the end of the decade, improved relations meant that in October 1979, the Premier Hua Guofeng visited Britain as part of a European tour; this was the first visit to Britain by a Chinese leader since the communist revolution.

Summarise Britain's attitude to the USSR:

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s

Lesson 17 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: Attitudes to USSR and China



The special relationship with the United States of America broke down in the period 1970 to 1979. Assess the validity of this view.

Use the space below to plan an answer to the question

A large, empty rectangular box with a dark blue border, intended for writing a plan for an answer to the question above.

L.O: To know how Britain managed foreign policy during the 1970s
Lesson 17 - Foreign policy during the 1970s: Attitudes to USSR and China



With reference to these three sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying British relations with the EEC between 1970 and 1976.

SOURCE 1

On 9 February 1976 the House of Commons had a debate about the links between foreign policy and morality. The Labour backbench MP, Colin Jackson, said the following:

A British statesman, Palmerston, said that Britain had no eternal enemies and no eternal friends, only eternal interests. Even today, 100 years later, an element of that must exist because we are an international trading nation dependent upon links around the world. The two superpowers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, have massive amounts of armaments and show a considerable degree of immorality in the way they exercise their power. The medium nations come next. I believe that the French are just a little too pushing in the pursuance of their ambitions. Nations like the United Kingdom are a potential example of how morality can show itself in international relations. The United Kingdom is important because in terms of history, international connections and even of power we are significant. In my view, it is extremely important that we should debate this matter and in particular look at the way Britain conducts herself.

SOURCE 2

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