

Harold Wilson's Labour Governments 1964-1970, 1974-1976**الحكومات العمالية 1970-1964 ، 1974-1976 تحت رئاسة هارولد ويلسون****Dr. Souad Guessar**

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Abstract

The article deals with the Labour governments, 1964-70, 1974-1976 and concentrates on Britain's domestic policy during Harold Wilson's tenure as Prime Minister. It discusses, in particular, how the Labour party tried to come to terms with the 1960s 'political revolution'. It is grounded in original research, takes a unique account of responses from Labour's grassroots and from Wilson's ministerial colleagues, and constructs a total history of the party at this critical moment in history. It focuses on how the party approached issues such as the apparent transformation of the class structure, the changing place of women, rising black immigration, the apparently widening generation gap, and increasing calls for direct participation in politics. It provides an unrivalled insight into the development of Britain under Harold Wilson's governments.

Keywords: politics; labour; socialism; Conservative Party (UK); Harold Wilson**ملخص:**

تتناول المقالة الحكومات العمالية ، 1964-70 ، 1974-1976 وتركز على السياسة الداخلية لبريطانيا خلال فترة ولاية هارولد ويلسون كرئيس للوزراء. ويناقش ، على وجه الخصوص ، كيف حاول حزب العمل التصالح مع "الثورة السياسية" في الستينيات. وهو يركز على بحث أصلي ، ويأخذ في الاعتبار ردود الفعل من القاعدة الشعبية لحزب العمال ومن زملاء ويلسون الوزاريين ، ويبني تاريخاً كاملاً للحزب في هذه اللحظة الحاسمة من التاريخ. وهو يركز على كيفية تعامل الحزب مع قضايا مثل التحول الظاهر للبنية الطبقية ، وتغير مكان المرأة ، وزيادة هجرة السود ، واتساع فجوة الأجيال على ما يبدو ، وزيادة الدعوات للمشاركة المباشرة في السياسة. إنه يوفر نظرة ثاقبة لا مثيل لها في تطور بريطانيا في ظل حكومات هارولد ويلسون.

كلمات مفتاحية: السياسة؛ العمال؛ الاشتراكية. حزب المحافظين (المملكة المتحدة) : هارولد ويلسون

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Labour Party fought the general election of October 1964 on the basis of revisionism and the coming of industrial modernisation. Social services would be ameliorated. Secondary schools would be comprehensivized, the school-leaving age would be promoted and there would be a massive expansion in higher education. On immigration, the Labours promised to restrict entry and introduce legislation outlawing racial discrimination. Foreign aid would be increased. In defence policy, Labour would re-examine Britain's commitments but despite rhetorical attacks on the government's nuclear weapons policy there were no pledges to disarm.

The Labours emerged with 317 against 304 of the Conservatives. A national swing of 3.5 per cent left Labour with 44.1 per cent of the poll, as opposed to 43.4 for the Conservatives and 11.2 for the Liberals. The Labour's support rose among both manual and non-manual workers from 57 to 64 per cent.¹ In terms of gender, with the proportion of women voting Labour fell from 43 to 39.5 per cent.² This failure to attract women voters in large enough numbers; many saw it as a symptom of the Party's continuing reliance on masculine appeal and trade union imagery and ethos.³

Labour won the 1964 election with the second largest majority in its history, with Harold Wilson as the third Labour Prime Minister of the country. The Conservative leader, Edward Heath, could not compete with Wilson's popularity. The new government's Parliamentary position was difficult. Since the election gave it an overall majority of just five, and a seat was lost at an early by-election. With the Conservative opposition in disarray, Labour had a good year in 1965,

¹ Smith, *Television Policies of The Labour Party 1951–2001*, 41.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

implementing many of its policies and promulgating the National Plan⁴ September 1965. Wilson was able to taunt Edward Heath with threats of an early dissolution. Harold Wilson needed to increase his majority in Parliament.

Labour started the campaign and when the results came in, it became clear that Wilson achieved the difficult task of increasing a Government majority. Labour took 48.0 per cent of the vote to the Conservatives' 41.4 and the Liberals' 8.6, and won 364 seats to their 253 and 12 respectively. Labour had an overall majority of 97. On a swing of 3.5 per cent, it made a net gain of 48 seats.⁵

2. HAROLD WILSON'S CABINET AND CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

The Harold Cabinet had a strong Gaitskellite feel, it included only three of the 23-strong Cabinet that had previous experience; ten had served as junior ministers under Attlee. The Cabinet included 13 graduates. Harold Wilson brought also those who were not elected in the Shadow Cabinet the previous year, like Dick Crossman, Castle and Frank Cousins of the TGWU.

Patrick Gordon Walker became Foreign Secretary, Denis Healey Defence Secretary and James Griffiths the first Secretary of State for Wales. Wilson's main rivals, Callaghan and Brown, were appointed in the Treasury and the new Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) respectively. Promising figures appointed to the junior office included Anthony Crosland, Tony Benn and Roy Jenkins while Peter Shore who was responsible for many of Labour's recent policy statements, became Harold Wilson's Parliamentary private secretary.⁶

The Wilson government set out to deal with a number of aspects of the

⁴ Labour's National Plan for economic development launched in August 1965 by George Brown, Department for Economic Affairs (PREM 13/274), National Archives, UK.

⁵ Dick, *A Century of Premiers Salisbury to Blair*, 242.

⁶ Beech, and Hickson, *The Struggle for Labour's Soul Understanding*, 171.

question which had bothered the Attlee government by reforming the House of Lords, the civil services and creating new government departments. An attempt to reform the House of Lords applied in April 1969, a victim of an alliance between the Conservative Right which wanted no change and the Labour Left, which wanted abolition and nothing less.

An attempt to reform and modernise the civil service on the basis of the 1968 Fulton Report came to very little. The Redcliffe-Maud committee, set up to look at the functions and boundaries of local authorities, came up with radical proposals, but its suggestion of eight provincial authorities was not adopted by the government; and centralisation continued.⁷

Increasing resistance to centralisation began to be expressed, especially through the growing support for Scottish and Welsh nationalism which emerged during the 1960s as new issues on the British political agenda. Labour had a paper commitment to Scottish home rule from the 1920s, a logical step given the Party's commitment to centralisation and the apparent political weakness of nationalism.⁸ The Labour Party's commitment to Welsh nationalism had been weaker. Yet the Welsh nationalist Party, Plaid Cymru, made progress during the 1950s, taking 3.1 per cent of the vote in Wales in 1955 and 5.2 per cent in 1959.⁹ Besides this, Wilson's creation of the Welsh Office with its own Secretary of State, in 1964, was aimed to reduce this threat in what was one of Labour's strongest areas of support.

The third attempt of reform was the creation of five new ministries in 1964. The DEA was scrapped in 1969, by the time the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources had already been abolished. Overseas Development was downgraded in 1967. Thus, only two of the new ministries, Mintech and the Welsh Office, survived.

⁷ Beech, and Hickson, *The Struggle for Labour's Soul Understanding*, 171.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 207.

3. HAROLD WILSON'S SOCIAL REFORMS

Harold Wilson enacted social reforms in housing, education, health, pensions, gender equality and youth. In the field of housing, there were great achievements. The period from 1965 to 1970 saw over two million new dwellings built and a net increase in the housing stock of 1.3 million.¹⁰ About half the new buildings were council housing for rent, built with financial help from the central government, but the type of council housing built at this time was often rather cheap. Social and extended family networks were disrupted by rehousing, a fact that contributed to increase stress on social services.

In education, Labour's main aims were to keep comprehensive secondary schools, to lift the school leaving age from 15 to 16 and to expand further and higher instruction. The ongoing elimination of selection was accelerated by Crosland's 1965 circular asking local education agencies to make up plans for comprehensivization. By 1970, about a third of secondary pupils in England and Wales were in comprehensives, a ten-fold increase over 1964.¹¹ As comprehensives came under fierce attack in the 1970s, the Labour Party was to be labelled as the Party which favoured levelling down in education.¹²

The other areas of significant achievement came in the higher education sector. Labour implemented existing Whitehall plans to establish polytechnics and increase the number of universities. By 1967, 29 polytechnics were being set up.¹³ The government's other significant achievement was the establishment of the

¹⁰ Steven Fielding, *The Labour Governments 1964–70 Labour And Cultural Change* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2003), 149.

¹¹ Beech, and Hickson, *The Struggle for Labour's Soul Understanding*, 175.

¹² Fielding, *The Labour Governments 1964–70*, 88.

¹³ Dick, *A Century of Premiers Salisbury to Blair*, 306.

Open University, using distance learning methods to offer higher education to those who had missed it out earlier in life. As to expenditure on education, it rose by between 6 and 7 per cent a year under Labour.¹⁴ But Problems still remained; the raising of the school-leaving age to 16 in 1968 due to spending cuts was a dangerous blow.¹⁵

In other areas of social policy, more efforts on health and social services were registered. Poorer families, in particular, benefited from increases in pensions and family allowance. The abolition of capital punishment in 1965, the legalisation of abortion and male homosexuality for those over 21 in 1967 and the easing of divorce in 1969 were achieved. Thus, reforms tended to pay the government a tolerant image.

The issues of gender and youth attained a higher political profile during this decade 1960s. Before the First World War, it had forged alliances with women's groups, and its 1918 constitution had set up separate women's sections in CLPs, reserved four NEC places for women and established a separate women's conference. But the conference and the women's sections were largely ignored when it came to decision-making within the Party. By the 1930s, ambitious women like Barbara Castle were deliberately going around the women's organisation, realizing how it was slight. During and after the Second World War, Labour ministers had resisted women's demands for equal pay with men.

Indeed, the women's movements became more influential than at any time since the First World War while the Labour Party found it difficult to change. Barbara Castle was promoted higher than any previous woman Cabinet minister, and two women sat together in the Cabinet for the first time in 1968 when Judith Hart joined her as Paymaster-General. In 1970, an Equal Pay Act was passed. Merely owning one or two adult females in the Cabinet was rather a token victory

¹⁴ Dick, *A Century of Premiers Salisbury to Blair*, 306.

¹⁵ Beech, and Hickson, *The Struggle for Labour's Soul Understanding*, 177.

and the Equal Pay Act came into effect only in 1975.

Moreover, the youth issue was put in the political agenda. The growth of youth culture bloomed from 1950s, the Party did little attempts even in understanding modern movements and feelings among young people.¹⁶ The Party's youth movement, the Young Socialists, had been disbanded for ultra-Leftism in 1965 and reorganised as the Labour Party Young Socialists. Youth protest movements offended Party leaders and many stalwart Labour voters.

4. HAROLD'S PROPOSALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE ECONOMY

Labour's 1964 manifesto emphasised the application of new technology in the industry to achieve full employment, faster growth, distribution of industry throughout the country, control of inflation and a cure in the Britain's balance of payments problems.¹⁷ When Labour had won the election, administrative changes were made to implement these plans. The DEA was set up under George Brown, charged with developing a National Plan to encourage quicker development.¹⁸ Cousins became the Minister of the Ministry of Technology (Mintech), a new department charged with coordinating research and development (R&D) and with increasing the application of new technology in industry generally.¹⁹

A crisis followed in July 1965 that was met with more austere economic policies. The real difficulty was that the pound was overvalued against the dollar. On 17 July the Cabinet voted by 17 to 6 against devaluation. The following day agreed upon a severe deflation programme to calm the markets. It worked, at the

¹⁶ Fielding, *The Labour Governments 1964–70*, 166.

¹⁷ Dale and Kavanagh, *Labour Party General Election Manifestos 1900–1997*, 103.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 253.

¹⁹ Stephen Wall. *A Stranger in Europe Britain and the EU from Thatcher to Blair* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2008), 136.

cost of higher taxes, spending cuts a statutory six month income freeze.²⁰ In November 1967 the government was forced to devalue from \$2.80 to \$2.40. Past experiences of devaluations had not been politically happy for Labour; the issue helped to destroy one Labour government in 1931 and rocked another in 1949. Wilson did not want Labour to be known as the Party that could not hold the value of sterling.²¹

In 1964 the government took advantage of TUC's goodwill to get the latter agree to a joint Statement on Productivity, Prices and Incomes. A National Board for Prices and Incomes was set up in February 1965, wages and inflation continued to develop. In April 1965 the TUC agreed to a voluntary incomes policy which set a norm for increases of between 3 and 3.5 percent, but inflation increased to 4.7 per cent that year.²²

Then, in May 1966, a seamen's strike blew the agreement apart, and following that July's Sterling crisis the government announced a pay freeze to operate until the end of the year, despite TUC opposition. The stage of inflation fell in both 1966 and 1967, but the end of the freeze saw further upward pressure on wages. This, combined with the 1967 devaluation and general inflationary trends in all western economies, led to a renewed growth in inflation, which gained 4.7 per cent in 1968 and 5.4 per cent in 1969.²³

In 1968 the government appointed the Donovan Commission on trade unions, which reported broadly in favour of the *status quo*. The Commission originally was inclined to recommend legal constraints on unions, as presaged by Barbara Castle's White Paper, *In Place of Strife*, in order to back up governmental prices and incomes policy. However Clegg, by threatening to issue a minority report, persuaded it instead to back improved collective bargaining.

²⁰ Wall, *A Stranger in Europe Britain and the EU from Thatcher to Blair*, 136.

²¹ Dick, *A Century of Premiers Salisbury to Blair*, 289.

²² Ibid.

²³ Eccleshall and Walker, *Biographical Dictionary of British Prime Ministers*, 336.

Strong opposition, led by Callaghan, emerged within the Cabinet itself. In March 1969, almost 100 Labour MPs voted against the proposals, and the NEC declared its opposition. That June, after almost six months of bitter dispute, the White Paper was withdrawn. Instead, the TUC signed a 'solemn and binding undertaking' covering unofficial strikes and inter-union disputes, which amounted to little more than a face-saving exercise for the government. The whole episode had left Wilson and Castle, severely damaged. Wilson's approval rating in the polls fell to a then all-time low for a Prime Minister of 26 per cent.²⁴ The mixed economy was maintained in the same balance as had existed before 1964, the only exception being the renationalisation of iron and steel in 1967.²⁵

Labour set out to improve government support and to use regional policy to redistribute industry more evenly across the whole country. Wilson government used regional policy to end the drift of industry towards the south and build up declining economies elsewhere in Britain.²⁶ Macmillan had already made a start here, and there was a 16-fold increase in regional expenditure between 1962 and 1970.²⁷

This included new planning machinery; the creation, in 1966, of five development areas covering almost half of Britain. There were significant effects on employment, and the period between 1963 and 1970 had been seen as marking the most prolonged, most intense and most successful attack ever launched on regional problems in Britain.²⁸

²⁴ Hawkesworth and Kogan, *Encyclopedia of Government And Politics*, 68.

²⁵ Anthony Seldon and Kevin Hickson, *New Labour, Old Labour The Blair, Wilson and Callaghan Governments* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), 08.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Seldon and Hickson, *New Labour, Old Labour The Blair*, 320.

²⁸ Ibid., 101.

5. HAROLD'S COMMONWEALTH AND COLONIAL FOREIGN POLICY

Foreign policy under Harold Wilson's government was under the control of successive Right wing Foreign Secretaries, Gordon Walker, Michael Stewart and George Brown. On the other hand, the Left remained marginal throughout the Wilson years.

Britain remained strongly committed to NATO and the USA; American forces were involved in harsh fighting in Vietnam, supporting the South against the Communist North. In September 1965, Wilson made a private bargain with US President Lyndon B. Johnson promising tacit British support for the American situation in Vietnam, and the maintenance of Britain's existing international commitments, in return for American support for the current sterling exchange rate with dollar.

Britain's need for US supports, not just over sterling but also in its own Asian difficulties in respect to the Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation of 1963-66, impelled Wilson towards accepting Johnson's position.²⁹ Following devaluation in 1967, it was decided that British forces would be withdrawn from the east of Suez by the end of 1971. The government attitudes could be seen in the retention of Britain's nuclear weaponry and its continued loyalty to NATO.

The Commonwealth also presented problems for Labour. The Party was pledged to continue decolonization. In handling the Nigerian Civil War later in the decade aroused considerable criticism of the government. In addition, overseas aid was an early casualty of the continuing demand for public expenditure cuts, and the proportion of GDP spent on it actually fell between 1964 and 1970. The Ministry of Overseas Development, set up with high hopes in 1964, was rapidly downgraded. All this aroused leftwing criticism.³⁰

²⁹ Seldon and Hickson, *New Labour, Old Labour The Blair.*, 155.

³⁰ Ibid.

In Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), a white minority was adamant that there should not be black majority rule on independence, but Labour refused to grant independence without majority rule. The resulting stalemate ended in November 1965 when the white Rhodesians under Ian Smith unilaterally declared their independence. Rhodesia's action was illegal, and sanctions were imposed.

In foreign policy, it was the question of entering into the EEC. The Party was split on the matter, as it had been in 1961. While there were fervent supporters of entry, like George Brown and Roy Jenkins, there were many who were against. So people like Douglas Jay and Peter Shore, neither of them Left-wingers opposed entry.

Race and immigration were another issue which gave out onto the political agenda in the 1960s. Labour had long been committed to the right of Commonwealth citizens to settle in Britain, and had claimed to be in favour of racial equality. But the restrictive immigration legislation of 1962 had faced strong Labour opposition, because immigrants settled mostly in working-class areas. In 1965, the Labour leadership, running a Race Relations Act outlawed racial discrimination and established a Race Relations Board. But the issue was not really resolved, and the fact that it was not until 1987 that a non-white Labour MP being elected, hardly did much to draw in this section of the British population.³¹

6. THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE 1970 GENERAL ELECTION

Trade union membership was still expanding, but the unions, which had been the crucial underpinning of the Party since its early days were strongest in the very industries that were in decline: the National Union of Mineworkers fell from 586,000 members to 279,000 between 1960 and 1970, while in the same

³¹ Lynch, *The Politics of Nationhood Sovereignty, Britishness and Conservative Politics*, 33.

period the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) shrank from 334,000 to 198,000. Government pay policies and efforts at union reform loosened the loyalty of many trade unionists to supporting the Labour Party.³²

By the day of polling 1970, voters turned to the Conservatives, and Edward Heath came to power.³³ Labour made a net loss of 58 seats on a swing of 4.7 per cent, the greatest since 1945; in parts of the Midlands, and in east Lancashire, there were even heavier shifts against Labour. The Party did better in the remainder of the north and in Scotland, but in the south outside inner London its performance was weak. Support among men fell more heavily than among adult females, and while its percentage of the non manual vote scarcely declined at all, it had a vast loss of manual voters' support, from 69 per cent in 1966 to 58 percent.

Labour, then, was back in opposition. The opening between the leadership, on the unitary hand, and the unions and Party membership, on the other, was wide. There were worrying signs of a leakage of traditional trade union movement support. The government's revisionist strategy of seeking a more socialist society through economic development under capitalism had come to little, because the economy had passed up to grow as needed, even despite the extra feats that had been spent on it.

7. SECOND HAROLD WILSON GOVERNMENT 1974-1976

While the Labour's share of the vote of the February 1974 election fell by almost six points to 37.2 per cent, the Conservatives fared even worse, their share plummeting from 46.4 to only 37.9 per cent. The beneficiaries of the partial collapse of the 'two-party' vote were the minor parties, the Liberals and the SNP. In terms of seats, it gave the Party with the second-highest number of votes, Labour

³² Fielding, *The Labour Governments 1964–70*, 37.

³³ Brivati and Bale, *New Labour in power*, 189.

emerged with 301 MPs, and the Conservatives with 297. Thus, for the first time since 1929, a general election had produced a Parliament in which no Party had an overall majority.³⁴

Edward Heath tried to stay in office. He appealed to Jeremy Thorpe, the Liberal leader, to form some kind of coalition. However, Thorpe was under pressure from radical elements in his own Party to have nothing to do with any such arrangement. Heath's attempts failed to attract Thorpe meant that, on 4 March, Wilson was invited to form his second government.³⁵

Wilson's Cabinet was full of experience. Denis Healey became Chancellor, James Callaghan Foreign Secretary and, in a clear sign of his diminished standing, Roy Jenkins returned to the Home Office. Other prominent members of the social democratic right included Anthony Crosland and Shirley Williams at the newly created Department of Prices and Consumer Protection. Only the Left was also well represented, and used up some crucial situations. Tony Benn went to the industry; Michael Foot became Employment Secretary, a position involving close dealings with the unions, particularly in the 'Social Contract' and Barbara Castle went to Health and Social Security. The second Harold Wilson government emphasized on rights which was more apparent in the Race Relations Act (1976) ended the miners' strike, so, Wilson and his colleagues ended the coal dispute swiftly. The government called also for the referendum on the EEC.

The emphasis on rights was more apparent in the Race Relations Act (1976) which made discrimination on the grounds of race unlawful. This was enforced by the Commission for Racial Equality, set up under the terms of the 1976

³⁴ Bulmer, Burch, Carter, Hogwood and Scott, *A British Devolution And European Policy-Making Transforming Britain into Multi-Level Governance*, 146.

³⁵ Ibid.

Act. This was directly in line with the other important liberating measure. The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) disallowed occupational discrimination on grounds of gender and set up an Equal Opportunities Commission.

On returning to power in 1974, Wilson tried to reintroduce a planned economy. Almost at once he faced problems: shortly after the conclusion of the miners' strike there was a spate of pay demands. The government attempted to deal with these in a reasonable manner by laying up the Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) and agreeing with the trade unions a Social Contract in promoting voluntary restraint on pay increases.

From 1975 onwards the economy went into the most serious crisis to date as inflation reached the unprecedented figure of 24, 2 per cent.³⁶ Sterling collapsed a year later and the pound fell to its lowest level ever. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Denis Healey, now held to apply for urgent bans from the IMF in meeting payments on debts. For its portion, the IMF insisted on a reduction in public expenditure by £3 billion over the period of two years. Yet, the government headed for the worst yet confrontation with the trade unions.

Wilson and his colleagues ended the coal dispute swiftly, reaching a settlement favourable in the miners on 6 March, and repealed the Industrial Relations Act. Value added tax (VAT) was reduced from 10 to 8 per cent, although income tax was increased.³⁷ The council house rents, which the Conservatives had aimed to increase, were frozen.³⁸

A new poll was held; the referendum on the EEC. Labour had set out to renegotiate Britain's terms of first appearance shortly after its restoration to office. It was light, nevertheless, that the Party remained deeply split, and that the division ran right up the Party in the Cabinet room. Consequently, it was decided that

³⁶ Ravi. K Roy and Arthur. T Denzau, *Fiscal Policy Convergence from Reagan to Blair The Left veers right* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), 92.

³⁷ Seldon and Hickson, *New Labour, Old Labour The Blair*, 319.

³⁸ Ibid.

ministers would be relieved from the normal obligations of collective responsibility, whereby they were supposed to speak with one voice, although the government's official line would be to support continued membership.

In March 1975 the negotiations were complete, and a referendum was set for 5 June. The renegotiated terms came in for considerable criticism, with the left in particular feeling that they were 'very far short' of what Party policy demanded, and only passed through Parliament with opposition support, as a total of 145 Labour MPs, including seven Cabinet ministers, voted against.³⁹ On 26 April, a special Party conference rejected the terms by a two-to-one majority.⁴⁰

The successful outcome of the referendum came with the final act, with characteristic theatre, on 16 March 1976 when, he announced that he would resign the leadership as soon as the Party had elected a successor,⁴¹ and one of the few people to be informed in advance was Callaghan, in order to allow him to prepare for the leadership election, this was a notable sign of the extent to which relations between the two men had improved.⁴²

8. CONCLUSION

The government's effort had its success. The National Plan indicated that the British growth rate could be raised to the level of 3.5 per cent over nine years and thus to enable the social and economic life to be transformed. Although these estimations were overoptimistic, the growth rates between 1964 and 1970 averaged 2.7 per cent per annum. In the first two years of Wilson's premiership the rate of unemployment was slightly lower than the 1.5 per cent at the end of the Conservative government and exports between 1963 and 1970 increased by 40 per

³⁹ Dick, *A Century of Premiers Salisbury to Blair*, 260.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Richards, *New Labour and the Civil Service Reconstituting the Westminster Model*, 244.

⁴² Ostergaard, "*The Transformation Of The British Labour Party*", 21.

cent. Labour managed to improve Britain's balance of payments position impressively by turning the inherited Conservative record deficit of 800 million pounds into a comfortable surplus in 1970. The industry benefited largely from the enormous boost the government gave to technical education and, in addition, the technical modernisation improved the British infrastructure. For the British society the Labour government brought measurably more social equality and certain achievements in the field of personal freedom. As a consequence of its successful start, the Labour government won an easy victory in the 1966 elections.

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