



UNIVERSITE
Abdelhamid Ibn Badis
MOSTAGANEM

Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria
Ministry of High Education and Scientific research
Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
Department of English

*The History of the Welfare State and the Labour
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Presented by

Supervisor: Mrs. Benmaati

Douaidia Hadj Benaouda

Chairperson: Mrs. Gharnout

Examiner: Mr. Teguia Cherif

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Dedication

To the dearest people to my heart

To my parent with love

To my dear mates Youcef, Daa and Khadidja

To my brothers and sisters

To my teachers

*Special gratitude is due to all those extraordinary people who have stood
by me in every hard moment.*

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Abstract

The present thesis aims at analyzing the birth of the British Social Reforms under the name of the “welfare state”, from the 1906-1914 Liberal reforms till the Labour Party Government in the period of 1945-1951. This study is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter focuses on the historical background of the Welfare State then, the introduction of the Liberal reforms in 1906, and directly the influence of these reforms as a result of the first chapter. However the second chapter shows the appearance of the economist Sir William Beveridge and the “Five Giants”. Then the 1945 General Elections and the reasons for Labour’s win. It explains the collaboration work of Beveridge and the Labour Government. The third and the final chapter discuss the 1945-1951 Labour reforms (Social security, National Health Service, Free education and the Full employment), and their effectiveness for the British society.

General Introduction

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Britain has witnessed a plenty of events such as the First and the Second World Wars. Britain suffered during and after these wars, as an example, The German Blitzkrieg which left behind around 40,000 civilians were killed and more than a million houses were damaged by bombing in London alone, without mentioning the other massacres and the misery and the bad conditions of life at that period.

By the early 20th century, exactly during the period 1906-1914, the Liberal Government introduced a series of new laws pointed towards 'the Young' and 'The Old'. It insures many of those in work against unemployment and sickness and improved conditions for millions of weak workers and citizens. It is important to examine the key social reforms undertaken during these years and attempt to measure their significance as steps on the road to establish the Welfare State.

The Liberal Government would have had to deal with a number of areas promoting the lives of British people; Social security, health care, unemployment, housing and education. Any measures introduced, would have been on the basis of being available to all in society according to their necessity and need, so many historian label this period the beginning of the welfare state. So what is the Welfare State?

The Welfare state is an idea of government in which the state plays a key role in the security and promotion of the social and economic well-being of its citizens. It is dependent upon those principles of equality of opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for those who are not able to avail themselves for a better life.

In 1941, the government commissioned a report into their plan on the road of Britain's reconstruction after the Second World War. So on The 1st December 1942, The Government published the report known as the "Social Insurance and the Allied Services" written by the economist and expert on unemployment problems Sir William Beveridge in which he recommended that the government should find ways to defeat the "*Five Giant Evils*" of "Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness" to provide a better life for the British citizens. What are the measures that should be taken to overcome these five giants?

By the end of the Second World War in Europe, in 1945 the general elections were held in Britain to choose a new government. The election was fought mainly between the Conservative and Labour Parties. The Conservative Party was led by Winston Churchill, while the Labour Party was led by Clement Attlee. In July 1945, the Labour Party won the election with an overall majority against the other parties.

When the Labour party led the government, the new Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, announced that it was the time to introduce the welfare state outlined in the 1942, "*Beveridge Report*". The program included the establishment of the National Health Service in 1948 with the foundation of the National Health Services medical to provide treatment for all, a national system of benefits was also introduced to supply "social security" so that the British citizens would be protected from the "*cradle to the grave*", the sick, the widowed. The new system was partly built on the national insurance plan established by the previous Prime Minister Lloyd George in 1911. Workers and employers were obliged to make weekly contributions. Did the Labour reforms were effective for the British society?

This dissertation aims to discuss the position of the Labour government before the Second World War in the period between (1945-1951) So, my research question is: was the welfare state the best option Britain had in the post-war period?

If there was anything that pushed me forward to search enthusiastically to learn more about the British welfare state, it was to be one of second year lectures of British Civilization, so my curiosity pushed me to search about the origins of the welfare state, and if it was successful in Britain or not.

The present dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter focuses on the historical background of the welfare state which means, the definition of the term "welfare state" and its origins, then its creation in Britain. Then the liberal reforms and their results

The second chapter shed the light on the economist William Beveridge and the introduction of his report known as The "Beveridge Report" and its recommendation on 1942, moving to the Five giants and the 1945 general elections, the reasons for Labour's win and the reaction of the other parties to the Labour's victory ending with Beveridge and the Labour party.

The third chapter discusses the introduction of the Labour reforms; Social security, National Health Service, Free education and The Housing council, and their effectiveness for the British society.

The beginning of the twentieth century marked a particular point in the history of welfare in Britain. So the first chapter focuses on the historical background or the atmosphere of Britain at that period in which I started the chapter by defining the concept “Welfare State” which there is no agreement amongst historians and social scientists over when the first welfare states were established or what the term actually means. Some historians have identified their establishment in nineteenth-century Europe, others exclusively in the period after the Second World War. Some have done both. Then directly the Origins of the welfare state and the creation of Britain’s Welfare state. At the end of the chapter I shed light about the liberal reforms of 1906-1914 and the introduction of old age pensions, Free school meals, National insurance and Labour exchanges.

A. The Definition of the Welfare State

According to the British professor Alfred Zimmern in the 1930s, the phrase ‘Welfare State’ started to spread during the war to point a sharp contrast with Hitler’s ‘Welfare State’ and since that time the phrase has been used in different ways but essentially it means that the central government together with the local authorities assumed a major responsibility for providing social and economic security for the population by means of pensions, social security benefits, free health care and free education in times of need.

The most fundamental of these problems is that of social security: the unemployed people can fail to have enough to live, through being unemployable, through being too old, through having lots of children, through being injured, pregnant or ill. But if people are ill, they do not just need revenue whereas they are unemployed, they need treatment. The second problem is that of the provision of medical services. The illness had often been emerged by bad housing; good housing for everyone, However the third problem to be dealt with by the welfare state. To make a civilized society, the individuals should have a decent education. The fourth problem is that, what interest in having national insurance benefits, free medical care, good housing, and wise schooling if there were no jobs? It was a fundamental assumption of the period of war and post-war that all of the several pieces of welfare state legislation would be backed up by economic policy designed to create jobs and avoid unemployment. Eventually, there were other areas of social life which a government, determined to clean into spotlessness the Britain of the slums, could also suck up, the arts, the environment in general, the care of their children (Marwick 27).

So the aim of the welfare state is to give the life standards for those who are not able to achieve it. It was widely spread during the Second World War as a reaction for Hitler's Welfare State in Germany. It signifies too the collaboration between both of the government and the local services in order to solve the problems of citizens during the post-war.

However there are difference opinions on the concept of the welfare state among writers who have interpreted it differently. Their interpretation are stated below; According to Williams The Welfare derives from well fare, that is from "well in its still familiar sense and fare, primarily understood as a journey or arrival but later also as a supply of food" (Williams 281). The word welfare has historically been related to happiness and prosperity, whereas its current understanding first emerged in the 20th century. G.D.H. Cole says that, "The welfare state is a society in which an assured minimum standard of living and opportunity becomes the possession of every citizen" (Cole 10).

Arthur Schlesinger remarks that, "The welfare state is a system where government agrees to under write certain levels of employment, income, education, medical aid, social security and housing for its entire citizen". While Herbert H. Lehman holds the view that "the welfare state is simply a state in which people are free to develop their individual capacities to receive just awards for their talents and to engage in the pursuit of happiness, unburdened by fear of actual hunger, actual harmlessness or oppression reason of race, creed of color" (Misra np).

From the above definitions we can conclude that scholars have focused on the economic side of the welfare state but economic welfare is not the only duty of the welfare state. But it takes care about the protection of citizens and their social life, intellectual, moral, educational and cultural development so we can say that "The states based on public welfare are the welfare state"(Central European Journal).

The Welfare state is an idea of government in which the state plays a key role in the security and promotion of the social and economic well-being of its citizens. It is dependent upon those principles of equality of opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for those who are not able to avail themselves for a better life. The sociologist T.H.Marshall said that: "The general term may cover a variety of forms of economic and social organization and described the modern welfare state as a distinctive combination of democracy, welfare, and capitalism" (Marshall np).

However the social insurance considered as the major feature of the welfare state, which means a provision common to most advanced industrialized countries (e.g., National Insurance in the United Kingdom and Social Security in the United States). This insurance is financed by compulsory contributions and to provide benefits to persons and families during periods of greatest need.

Modern welfare states include Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, as well as the Nordic countries, such as Iceland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland which employ a system known as the Nordic model. A, Esping classified the most developed welfare state systems into three categories are; Social Democratic, Conservative, and Liberal. The welfare state includes an exchange of funds from the state, to the services to provide healthcare, education, food, housing and benefits directly to individuals. It is funded through redistributionist taxation and is often referred to as a type of economy. This taxation usually includes a larger income tax for people with higher incomes and rich people, called a progressive tax. Proponents argue that this helps reduce the income gap between the rich and poor.

1. The Functions of Welfare State

A welfare state in addition to the general functions of state discussed where performs the following functions. The primary objective of the welfare state is to stands for the welfare of its citizens, the welfare state for healthcare, public health and hygiene and preventive measures against diseases and epidemics. Secondly it takes care of old, invalid and sick people providing them financial assistance in the form of allowance, pension, relief ... etc. and finally in the third place it is the duty of the welfare state to provide opportunities for education to all its citizens and to make education free and compulsory up to a certain standard. Furthermore the state should establish and maintain a large number of institutions for general and technical education. These responsibilities are not detailed, they are indicative of the function which the state performs for the general well-being of citizens. However, the welfare state has wider implications than the ones we have discussed. However Modern states, in general, are welfare states; they are interested in the welfare people. They try to promote their development through a planning. And provide some basic fields like education, health and social security.

B. The Origins of the Welfare State

The term welfare was formed as a combination of *well*, in the sense we still use it, and *fare*. The latter was originally a verb meaning “to travel” (the modern German verb *fahren* is a close relative). So the phrase “fares well” was a wish on parting that you should have a safe journey, which later became our *farewell* (in *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare uses both forms in one sentence: “Farewell my dearest sister, fare thee well”). A figurative sense grew up of how you were doing or how well you were being provided for (“how are you faring?”), and this was the origin of the word in its sense of “food” (as in *bill of fare*). However The German term Sozialstaat ("social state") has been used since 1870 to describe state support programs devised by German Sozialpolitiker ("social politicians") and implemented as part of Bismarck's¹ conservative reforms. (Fay), The Italian term stato sociale "*social state*" reproduces the original German term and In French, "welfare state" is translated into “L'État-providence”.

The idea about welfare might have been presented over initial Islamic law concerning illustration structure of Zakat “*Charity*”; it is a standout among those five Pillars about Islamic religion, under those Rashidun caliphates in the 7th century. This practice continued well into the Abbasid era of the Caliphate. The taxes gathered in the treasury of an Islamic administration were used to provide money to those needy, including the poor, elderly, orphans, widows, and the handicapped. As stated by the Islamic legal adviser Al-Ghazali “The Caliphate considered as the world's first major welfare state” (Patricia 308-09).

According to the American Historian Robert Paxton, “The welfare state on the European continent were originally legislated by conservatives in the late nineteenth century and by Fascists in the twentieth century”. Then he recalls that “The welfare state in Germany was founded in the 1880s by Chancellor Bismarck”. A few years after, the same version was set up by the liberal party member Count Eduard von Taaffe in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (The New York Review).

However the foundation of the welfare state in Britain originated with the liberal party headed by Prime ministers H. H. Asquith and David Lloyd George. They supported a

¹ Otto von Bismarck was a conservative Prussian statesman who dominated German and European affairs from the 1860s until 1890. In the 1860s, he engineered a series of wars that unified the German states

capitalist economy, but by the turn of the twentieth century, they shifted from “laissez faire” economics and started to favor pro-active social legislation to confirm equal opportunities for all citizens. They were inspired by the German economy by Bismarck’s social reforms (Paxton np).

C. The Creation of Britain’s Welfare State

Before The Second World War, Britain's welfare often provided by private volunteer institutions. But some changes in outlook during the war allowed Britain to construct a 'Welfare State' after the war a country where the government provided a comprehensive welfare system to support everyone in their time of need.

The history of social welfare in Britain did not begin in this era, because people had spent centuries reforming how to deal with and put many problems such as the sick, the poor, the unemployed and other people struggling with poverty under control. Even churches and parishes had emerged in that period with the leading role in caring for the disadvantaged, and Elizabethan poor laws clarified and reinforced the role of the parish.

The modern Welfare State in Britain began in 1906, when Herbert Asquith and the Liberal party won a landslide victory and entered government. They would go on to introduce welfare reforms, but they did not campaign on a program of doing so; in fact, they avoided the issue. But soon their politicians were making changes to Britain, because there was pressure building to act. Britain was a rich, world leading nation, but if you looked you could easily find people who were not just poor, but actually living below the poverty line. The pressure to act and unify Britain into one mass of secure people and counter the feared division of Britain into two opposed halves (some people felt this had already happened), was summed up by Will Crooks, a Labour MP who said in 1908 "Here in a country rich beyond description there are people poor beyond description."

The early twentieth century reforms included all of the means tested pension, non-contributory, pension for people over seventy which is an Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom, passed in 1908. The Act is often regarded as one of the foundations of modern social welfare in the UK and a part of the welfare reforms of the Liberal Government of 1906–1914, as well as the National Insurance Act of 1911 which provided health insurance.

Under this system both of the friendly societies and other bodies continued to run the healthcare institutions, however the government organized the payments in and out. Insurance was the key idea behind this, as there was reluctance among the Liberals over raising income taxes to pay for the system. The Liberals faced opposition, but Lloyd George managed to persuade the nation. Other acts followed in the inter war period, such as the Widows, Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act of 1925. But these were making changes to the old system, tacking on new parts, and as unemployment and then depression strained the welfare apparatus, people began to look for other, far larger scale, measures, which would ditch the idea of the deserving and undeserving poor completely.

In 1941, with the Second World War raging and no victory in site, Churchill still felt able to order a commission to investigate how to rebuild the nation after the war. This included a committee which would investigate the nation's welfare systems and recommend improvements. Economist, Liberal politician and employment expert William Beveridge was made the chairman of this commission. Beveridge was an ambitious man, and he came back on December 1st 1942 with The Beveridge Report or 'Social Insurance and Allied Services' as it was officially known. His involvement had been so great his fellows had decided to sign it with just his signature. In terms of Britain's social fabric, this is arguably the most important document of the twentieth century. Published just after the first major Allied victories, and tapping into this hope, Beveridge made a raft of recommendations for transforming British society and ending 'want'. He wanted 'cradle to the grave' security (while he did not invent this term, it was perfect), and although the ideas were rarely new, more a synthesis, they were published and accepted so widely by an interested British public as to make them an intrinsic part of what the British were fighting for: win the war, reform the nation. Beveridge's Welfare State was the first officially proposed, fully integrated system of welfare (although the name was by then a decade old).

This reform was to be targeted. Beveridge identified "five giants on the road to reconstruction" that would have to be beaten: poverty, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness. He argued that these could be solved with a state run insurance system, and in contrast to the schemes of previous centuries, a minimum level of life would be established that was not extreme or punished the sick for not being able to work. The solution was a welfare state with social security, a national health service, free education for all children, council built and run housing and full employment.

The key idea was that everyone who worked would pay a sum to the government for as long as they worked, and in return would have access to government aid for the unemployed, ill, retired or widowed, and extra payments to aid those pushed to the limit by children. The use of universal insurance removed the means test from the welfare system, a disliked - some may prefer hated - pre-war way of determining who should receive relief. In fact, Beveridge didn't expect government expenditure to rise, because of the insurance payments coming in, and he expected people to still save money and do the best for themselves, very much in the thinking of the British liberal tradition. The individual remained, but the State provided the returns on your insurance. Beveridge envisaged this in a capitalist system: this was not communism (Wilde).

D. The Liberal Reforms 1906-1914

At the beginning of the 20th Century, exactly during the period 1906-1914, the Liberal Government introduced a series of new laws pointed towards 'the Young' and 'The Old'. It insures many of those in work against unemployment and sickness and improved conditions for millions of weak workers. It is important to examine the key social reforms undertaken during these years and attempt to measure their significance as steps on the road to the Welfare State. To establish a Welfare State, the Liberal Government would have had to deal with a number of areas promoting the lives of British people; Social security, health care, unemployment, housing and education. Any measures introduced, would have been on the basis of being available to all in society according to their necessity and need, so many historian label this period the beginning of the welfare state.

The change in direction for the Liberal Party from laissez-faire, traditional liberalism to a party advocating a larger, more active government protecting the welfare of its citizens, G.R. Searle, 2004 argues that the outburst of activity had multiple clauses: “The need to fend off the challenge of Labour; pure humanitarianism; the search for electoral popularity; considerations of National Efficiency; and a commitment to a modernized version of welfare capitalism” (Searle 369). Here the following reforms:

1. The Children

In 1906, an Act was passed states that the local authorities allowed to provide free school meals for children and meant that the child would eat at least one decent meal a day. In 1914, 14 million meals were served up, most of them were free. Furthermore, only few Britain's

local authorities really set up a meals service. In 1907 School Medical Inspections started, but it was not until 1912 that free medical treatment was available. However in 1908, the Children and Young Persons Act gave both of children and young protection from cruelty and corruption and parents guilty of neglect could be fined. The children and young person's act aimed to stop the illegal insure of child's life. What had been happening was that some parents had been insuring the lives of their children and then allowing them to die, usually through neglecting them. This has been difficult to prove and to persecute; it also set up special courts to deal with child crime and also special homes or probation for young offenders rather than adult prisons.

2. The Old

In 1908, Lloyd George introduced the old age pension act which was funded by government. The individual over 70 years old with no other income would receive five shillings every week. Married couples would receive 7s 6d. Anyone who had an income of over £31 per year had not the right to receive the state pension. Only British citizens who had been living in Britain for the last 20 years are qualify to receive the state pension. Pensions could be refused to people who had failed to work to their best abilities during their working life. The effect on the elderly poor was enormous and the state pension was hardly generous. Their state pensions made them independent for the rest of their lives. In the first year, some 650,000 people collected their pensions. The number of people claiming help from charities fell by over 80,000. This was the first time poverty was tackled directly by central government instead of being left to charities or local councils.

3. The Sick (Heath Insurance)

Under Lloyd George the National Insurance Act of 1911 (Part 1 Health) would protect the sick if they became ill whilst working and help them and their family avoid ending up in the workhouse or in poverty. The worker would contribute 4d into the scheme while the employer would add another 3d, while Government added another 2d; this would give the worker 9d for only paying 4d. If the worker became ill, he would receive 10 shillings per week for up to 26 weeks and after that if he still was injured, 5 shillings disability pension. This scheme relied on the worker to protect himself from possible sickness / injury and built a structured work ethic for the working classes with a safety net if required; this is what Lloyd George hoped.

The National Insurance Act of 1912 then came in to protect those who worked in jobs that lasted for short periods, like ship builders and construction workers. They paid into the

scheme and could claim 7 shillings for 15 weeks whilst out of work until they either went back to their previous job or found another job. This was made easier with the set-up of the Labour Exchanges in 1909, where employers could advertise positions of work in a designated place to save time for the jobseeker travelling from area to area. By 1910 eighty three exchanges had been set up. This system can still be seen today with the local Job Centers helping skilled and unskilled workers find employment to keep the costs of welfare to a minimum and ensure no-one had the option to be idle.

4. The Workers

There were volunteers who run the Labour exchanges for some time. Here, workers could sign on to a register when they were unemployed, and find out about available work. In 1909 the government set up its own Labour exchanges as part of its campaign against unemployment. By 1913 Labour exchanges were putting 3000 workers in touch with their jobs in their area every working day.

The second part of the National Insurance Act 1911 dealt with unemployment. Most insured workers were given seven shillings (35 pence) unemployment benefit a week for a maximum of 15 weeks in any year if they became unemployed. This scheme was also contributory financed through a combination of worker and state contributions to the scheme. However, this Act only provided for the insured employee and not his family. Also, the Act was meant only to cover temporary unemployment and only applied to seven trades, most of which suffered from seasonal unemployment. When long term unemployment increased after World War I, the system began to break down as the government was taking in less money from workers than it was paying out to the unemployed.

5. The Agricultural Holdings act

The Agricultural Holdings act in 1906 is a different measure was introduced to improve the quality of rural life. Allowed farmers to farm their holdings without interference from landlords. The Small Holdings and Allotments Act of 1907 and the Consolidation Act of 1908 sought to limit the degree to which fixtures remained the property of landlords, and to increase the number of small farmers. Another Smallholdings and Allotments Act passed in 1908, empowered county councils to purchase agricultural land to lease as smallholdings. Between 1908 and 1914 some 200,000 acres were acquired by county councils and some 14,000 holdings were created. In Ireland, the Land Purchase Act of 1909 "helped force landlords to sell land to tenants under the leadership of David Lloyd George Liberals

extended minimum wages to farm workers starting in 1909 then succeeding in 1924, (Ranelagh 160).

The Liberal Reforms marked a change in philosophy for the “Liberal government” away from the idea of “Laissez Faire” towards more social responsibility which was a significant attempt to fight poverty. However, the reforms passed between 1906 and 1914 had very little impact on the problems of poverty in Britain. The reforms helped give children free meals and medical inspections at school, give workers health and unemployment insurance and give the elderly a weekly pension. On the other hand, however, the reforms did very little to actually help tackle poverty in British society as free school meals and medical inspections were not compulsory and were largely ignored, unemployment and health insurance payments were not substantial enough and covered only certain trades and pensions were only given to the few people who lived to over 70. In reality, little was done by the Liberal government to help improve the problems of squalor, disease and ignorance. Overall, the reforms were at best limited in their success as they made an attempt to tackle the evils but had very little actual success with some and failed to do anything to others for example slum housing, disease and education were ignored.

Winston Churchill summed up the aim of the Liberals when he said: “If we see a drowning man we do not drag him to the shore. Instead, we provide help to allow him to swim ashore.” In other words, the Liberals tried to provide some help for the poorer sections of society in order that they could help themselves.

In the twentieth century Britain had faced many obstacles such as elderly, unemployment, diseases, poverty and economic crisis. So in 1906, when Herbert Asquith and the Liberal Party won a landslide victory and entered government, they decided to introduce welfare reforms in order to overcome these problems and provide a better life for citizens. However, the second chapter showed the appearance of the economic expert Sr. William Beveridge with his famous report titled as “Social Insurance & Allied Services”, which was a turning point in the British history during the Second World War. So in the 1945 general elections the Labour Party won a crushing victory for the Labour party. Eventually the collaboration work between Atlee’s team and William Beveridge has began

By 1942, after many years of war, the British government published the “Social Insurance and Allied Services” report or the “Beveridge Report” according to his author the Journalist, academic and government adviser William Beveridge who suggested solutions for the government to deal with those problems and especially to fight the Five Giants “Poverty, Disease, Idleness, Ignorance and Squalor” to provide a better life for people and peace.

A. The Beveridge report 1942

William Henry Beveridge was a British economist and Social reformer born in 5th march 1879 in Bengal (Bangladesh), India, Where his father Henry Beveridge was a judge in the Indian Civil Service. He was a vain and a difficult man Beveridge was a member of the upper class and known for his 1942 report “Social Insurance and Allied Services” known as the Beveridge Report which render as the basis for the post-Second World War and implemented in the Labour government of 1945. He trained as a lawyer educated at Charterhouse and Balliol College, Oxford and sub-officer of Toynbee hall for two years from 1903 to 1905, however he came to celebrity during the Liberal government of 1906 - 1914 when he was asked to inform David Lloyd George on old age pensions and national insurance.

During the First World War William was interested in mobilizing and controlling manpower. In 1919, he became director of the London School of Economics, and under his tenure, the university was regarded as one of the best leading centers for social science .where he took up mastership of University College, Oxford in 1937. It was in 1942 that he produced his greatest report, a looking into the ways that Britain could be totally reconstructed after the war (called the ‘Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services’) and pave the way for a better Britain. It was this report that identified the five ‘Giant Evils’ the government should defeat namely: ‘Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness.’ However the Beveridge report was attacked by many Conservatives other solid benefits (Marwick 28).

The Beveridge Report “Social Insurance & Allied Services” was a complex document of more than 300 pages, the publication of it was a huge success, Opinion polls reported that the majority of the British public welcomed the report’s findings and wished to see them implemented as quickly as possible. This shows the extent to which the population had shifted to the left during the course of the Second World War and therefore in order to maintain the welfare state after the end of the war, the Labour party had used the Beveridge report as a reference for achieving their aims and its development; the Labour adopted its main

assumption of social insurance, comprehensive health service and the maintenance of full employment. According to Gallup Poll, 90 percent of the British Citizens agreed to obtain the report only within two weeks of its publication. Their principal objective was “To abolish want by ensuring that every citizen willing to serve according to his power has at all times an income sufficient to meet his responsibilities”. This goal can be achieved through six main proposals are: the maintenance of full employment, a unified system of national insurance and health services, family allowances, abolition of poor relief and the payment of subsistence level benefits

In addition the Beveridge Report aimed to provide a comprehensive system of social insurance “from cradle to grave, it proposed that every employee or independent workers in general should pay a weekly contribution to the state. In return, benefits would be paid to the unemployed, the sick, the retired or widowed and extra payment to aid these pushed to the limit by children. This wanted to ensure that there was an acceptable minimum standard of living in Britain below which nobody fell (Pope 117).

1. Beveridge Recommendations

1st December 1942 made a big special event in the history of Britain’s Welfare State, in which the British government and The Lord Williams Beveridge as the “godfather of the British post-war welfare state” (Andrews 3) published The Beveridge Report also known as the Beveridge Plan or Social Insurance and Allied Services to the British parliament. This report aimed to banish “poverty” and “want” from Britain and he proposed a system of social security which would be executed by the state to be implemented by the end of the war. Social Insurance and Allied Services was a radical report. The report quickly became the blueprint for the modern British welfare state. Beveridge insisted that war provided an opportunity to make good. (Pope 116)

The Beveridge plan for Social Security in the report is structured upon these three principles. It uses experience but not tied with it. It is put forward as a limited contribution to a wider social policy, though as something that could be achieved now without waiting for the whole of that policy. It is, first and foremost, a plan of insurance.

“The first principle is that any proposals for the future, while they should use to the full the experience gathered in the past, should not be restricted by consideration of sectional interests established in the obtaining of that experience. Now, when the war is abolishing landmarks of

every kind, is the opportunity for using experience in a clear field. A revolutionary moment in the world's history is a time for revolutions, not for patching. The second principle is that organisation of social insurance should be treated as one part only of a comprehensive policy of social progress. Social insurance fully developed may provide income security; it is an attack upon Want. But Want is one only of five giants on the road of reconstruction and in some ways the easiest to attack. The others are Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness. The third principle is that social security must be achieved by co-operation between the State and the individual. The State should offer security for service and contribution. The State in organising security should not stifle incentive, opportunity, responsibility ; in establishing a national minimum, it should leave room and encouragement for voluntary action by each individual to provide more than that minimum for himself and his family" (Beveridge Report, pp. 6-16).

Beveridge famously set out to fight the five giants: Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness. The report recommended a global system of social security to take the place of both of the pre-war private insurance and means tested dole. It also made three basic assumptions about post-war society: a free and universal National Health Service; policies to promote full employment; and family allowances paid to all households with children regardless of whether they were in or out of work.

B. The Five Giants

In 1945, contrary to expectations, When the Labour party won a landslide victory at the General Election and with a total majority in Parliament, thus there was nothing to stop the new government led by liberals from carrying out their program. Simply, the British public believed that a Labour government would be more likely to pursue a strong plan of social reform. Labour's reforms were based on the Beveridge Report so to provide a better life for the British people and lead the country to a period of peace, so the government began tackling the five giants identified by Beveridge.

1. Poverty

Poverty was seen as the greatest social problem which affected all British community classes. In 1946 the National Insurance Act was passed which extended the previous Liberal Act of 1911 to cover all adults. It treated all of disease and unemployment benefit, retirement pension and widow and maternity benefit. It was said that social provision was made for citizens from the "*cradle to the grave*", which means serving them for their needs the whole

life from their time of birth to their death. However, because of the huge number of officials needed to lead it, the scheme was criticized and others said that the Act did not go far enough as the benefit was restricted to those citizens who had made 156 weekly contributions. In the same year the "Industrial Injuries Act" was passed. The act made insurance against industrial injury obligatory for all employees. According to the rules of the act, industrial injury benefits were to be paid more than for normal or daily illness.

In 1948 the National Assistance Act was passed which provided benefits for those who were not insured by the National Insurance Act. It helps citizens whose their incomes were insufficient to meet their needs.

2. Disease

1946 marked a turning point for the British people in whom they could and for the first time to receive medical dental and optical services for free without any charges, and even treatment by doctors and in hospitals was free also. These benefits were free at point of use, no patient being asked to pay for any treatment thanks to passing the National Health Service Act. However, the development of the NHS was obstructed by member of old and out of date hospitals. Costs were high and by 1950 the idea of free treatment for all was canceled when charges were introduced for spectacles and dental treatment.

3. Squalor

Most of Britain still suffering of slum areas and overcrowding was a serious problem during the war. In 1946 the new towns act was passed laid the plans for 14 new towns in Britain and to deal with the problem of squalor the government focused on building decent homes for the pre-war working class. The government aimed at building around 200,000 houses a year and many of these were renovated houses which were assembled quickly .However, the Labour Government's record in this area does not compare with pre-war levels of house building or with the achievements of the Conservatives in the 1950s.

4. Ignorance

During the war-time in 1944 the government passed the Education act. The act was actually proposed by the Conservatives, but after the 1945 general election, it was the Labour government that implemented its measures. The act made secondary education obligatory until the age of 15 years and providing meals, milk and medical services at every school. An examination at age 11 years (called the '11+') placed children in certain types of school,

according to their ability. Those who passed this exam went to senior secondary schools and were expected to 'stay on' after 15 years and possibly go to university and get jobs in management.

5. Idleness

After the war, there looked to be work for everyone as Britain reconstructs itself. The Labour Government succeeded to maintain high levels of employment after the war. Unemployment was reduced to 2.5 % by 1946, and this was despite of huge post-war problems such as lacks of raw materials or stuff and high war debts. And it was the only way in which the government kept almost full employment was through nationalization. By following the economist John Maynard Keynes's principals, the government took control of certain industries such as iron and steel manufacture. Under this managed economy the government could use money of taxations to keep the industry alive even if it faced economic difficulties (The Five Giants, p 2).

C. The 1945 Elections

On 26th July just after 10 o'clock in the morning, the results were counted and announced. It was Labour who gained in South Salford. But this was not too disturbing for the Conservatives. Within few minutes the Conservatives heard that they had held Kingston upon-Thames (The principal settlement of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames in southwest London). Then they followed three more Labour gains in Lancashire and two Labour seats held. The Conservatives felt that they were in deep trouble and the tension was heightened when they heard the news that the first Cabinet minister, Harold Macmillan, was out. By 11 am. Over lunch, the results declared that Labour had made more than 100 more gains. During the early afternoon it became clearer that Labour led by Clement Attlee had won a decisive victory, and clearly Winston Churchill had failed to repeat the success of the previous elections.

The result was an unexpected landslide victory for clement Attlee's Labour party, over Winston Churchill's Conservatives, the first time the party had lost the popular vote in a general election since the 1906 Elections. Labour had won 393 seats. The Conservatives and their allies held 213 and the Liberals 12. In terms of the British electoral system Labour won a great victory in 1945, with an overall majority of 146 seats over all other parties. Labour's advance since 1935 was with 3.5 million more votes, whereas the vote of the Conservatives and their allies had fallen by 1.5 million to just under 10 million. However, the swing to

Labour was impressive but did not last for long. Labour had won a majority of the seats and now for the first time in the history of the Party could form a government with a strong base in Parliament. Labour's program could be carried out, as long as the state of the economy allowed it.

D. The Reasons for Labour's victory

The celebrations in London began immediately when the rumors of the German surrender on the 7th May 1945 were bruited. In Parliament Square, Crowds gathered and called for Churchill. He announced when he appeared before them, "My dear friends this is your hour. This is not a victory of a party or of any class. It's a victory of the great British nation". Surely, [any of his auditors recalled at that moment his comparable victory speech in November 1918]. "The victory which has been won amidst these hazards does not belong to any party or any class. It belongs to all" (Holland 194).

The resemblance between both speeches does not contain any element of banality. Nevertheless, it can explain the Conservative plans and aims to win the next election. It becomes quite clear that there were no change in their intentions and elements. But it leads them to an interesting point to understand the shift to the left in the 1945's elections

In 1943 both of poll and survey showed that the voters had swung to Labour. Such results astonished and surprised both parties' supporters and made historians curious to look after the deep and main reasons behind the dramatic failure of the Conservative party. The roots of such a swing could only be explained either politically or culturally.

Actually, during the wartime coalition the Labour politicians played a major role in the wartime coalition in which they obtained a great feeling of confidence. Ernest Bevin, who had been general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union in the period from 1919 to 1940, became minister of Labour. Herbert Morrison became home secretary after when he minister of supply in 1940. Hugh Dalton was minister of economic from 1940 to 1942 and president of the board of trade from 1942 to 1945. Their roles as ministers really helped the Party to feel confident and progressively changed the term that Labour was unfit and not qualified to govern, which their opponents had borne at their predecessors, and which the performance of the previous Labour government had justified.

The common agreement of the Beveridge Report after its publication in 1942 showed that nobody accepts to return to the pre-war hardships and miserable life when peace returned.

Labour and Liberal MP's were noticeably more eager about implementing its recommendations than were the Conservatives. Nevertheless Labour benefited from Conservative proposed plans for the reconstruction after the war. On the other hand, the Conservatives highly depended on the Churchill's status and tried to rely on his reputation, as the party manifesto was titled 'Mr. Churchill's Declaration of Policy to the Electors.' Churchill was popular and known as a war leader, and many people announced that they had doubts about his ability to deal with post-war problems, especially working-class problems. they became aware that the leader who led the country for two great world wars will never lead the country to peace so they had neglected a reform program to face the future and people had already chosen Labour whose manifesto was "*Let Us Face the Future*", the support for Churchill did not mean support for the Conservative Party, which was the responsible for most of the disappointments of many people. Some Conservative supporters swung against them, especially when voters' thoughts tended to be more interested on bread and butter issues rather than recent victories. Labour benefited from the general acceptance of state control of industry during the war and the commitment to social reform after it which all three major parties introduced, but which the electorate thought that the Labour party was most enthusiastic about. Many causes as the superiority of Labour party organization in many constituencies and the powerful writers who supported the party were behind the conservative's failure in 1945. The best that could be said about the Conservatives was that they showed more realism and more concentration on the present problems than future promises. Full employment and the Beveridge Report were accepted but they were to be balanced and practiced by the Labour Party.

One reason for the Labour victory in the General Election in 1945 is that the Conservatives expected to win the election just because of Winston Churchill. Churchill was the Prime Minister and Leader of the Conservative and many believe that if Churchill wasn't in charge, Britain would be speaking German today. According to this, the Conservatives expected that the British public would vote for their war time hero. However, Conservatives announced no plans to sort out the problems that the country experienced, such as poverty and unemployment, including the Great Depression. Obviously because of this, people wanted change but the Conservatives were happy and fully prepared to carry on running the country the way they did before the Second World War began. While they were relying on Churchill, in the other hand Atlee campaigned across the whole country, being driven in a car by his wife Violet, going door to door.

The Churchill's radio speech in June 1945 was another factor that effected a bit the final vote decision. Churchill has quoted that

“Socialism is in its essence an attack not only upon British enterprise, but upon the right of the ordinary man or woman to breathe freely without having a harsh, clumsy tyrannical hand clasped across their mouth and nostrils. (Labour) would have to fall back on some form of Gestapo, no doubt very humanely directed in the first instance”

Calling his opposition Nazi's was never going to fare well with the public, especially as he was in a coalition with them for the 5 previous years. Clement Atlee's response was short but sweet; “How great was the difference between Winston Churchill the great leader in war of a united nation, and Mr. Churchill the party leader of the Conservatives.” This fitted well with the opinion of many people at the time that Churchill was only “a great war time leader”

However the Beveridge Report also participated to labour's landslide victory in 1945. It was written in 1942 but the Labour party was much associated with the report under the slogan “freedom of want” while the Conservative were less associated with it. Even though Labour was ‘classed’ as a ‘working class party’, many of the middle class population were prepared to vote for them in 1945. This was because the country was in decline and the Conservatives were doing nothing about it. Another reason was the fact that the conservatives dealings with Hitler before the war at Munich (*Munich Agreement, country being led my Neville Chamberlain at the time*) and the policy of appeasement were now looked on in shame and blamed on the Conservatives, going as far as saying that they caused the war. (Greer NP).

E. Reaction to Labour's Win

After the Labour's victory, there had been much talk to a certain degree which the British society was transformed by the Second World War. The British people were wondering whether a “*people's war*” led to a “*people's peace*”. The British Professor Marwick explained that “The change, then, is not in basic structures, but in ideas and in social attitudes and relationships, in how they saw themselves” (Marwick 37).

Reaction to Labour's win differentiated from one to another as well as from one class to another. The Labour activist and supporters reaction was great jubilation with no doubt. A high number of the working class was with the Labour victory. This party was seen to be a sign of hope for the British people to find what they lost during the war. This was not the case for the middle class members. But It was for that section of society who's suffered during the

painful period of war. The incomes of the professional classes had not risen in proportion to those of the wage-earners and their nationalism did not extend to the acceptance of the new world of high salaries and full employment.

As well as, some members of the Establishment felt disappointment the day of the results. The British Governor of the Bank of England Montagu Norman commented in a letter, in 1946, that if Churchill had been Prime Minister, “I daresay we should have had more disturbances and ill-feeling within this country and possibly elsewhere in Europe”. Churchill had remarked when he heard the results, “I do not feel down at all. I’m not certain the Conservative Party could have dealt with the Labour troubles that are coming”. Then many Conservatives had already expected many problems under the rule of the Labour Party for the following years.

F. Beveridge and the Labour Party

“There are some to whom the pursuit of security appears to be a wrong aim. They think of security as something inconsistent with initiative, adventure, and personal responsibility. This is not a just view of Social Security as planned in this Report. The plan is not one for giving to everybody something for nothing and without trouble, or something that will free the recipients forever thereafter from personal responsibilities. The plan is one to secure income for subsistence on condition of service and contribution and in order to make and keep men fit for service.”

(Beveridge 455).

In the early post-war years, one of the clear divisions between Conservatives and Labour Parties centered on the conditions on which services were to be provided. In 1941, the government commissioned a report into their plan on the road of Britain’s reconstruction after the Second World War. So on The 1st December 1942 The Government published the report known as the “*Social insurance and the Allied Services*” Written by the economist and expert on unemployment problems Sir William Beveridge in which he recommended that the government should find ways to defeat the “*Five Giant Evils*” of “Want, Disease, Ignorance,

Squalor and Idleness” to provide a better life for the British citizens. While it was clear that Beveridge was the best choice to take charge.

In the election of 1945, the Labour Party defeated Winston Churchill's Conservative Party with an overall victory of 49.7 percent against both of the Conservative with 36.2 percent and the Liberal party with only 9 percent. Then there was also the military vote. Britain had millions of men and women in uniform in 1945, in different countries in Europe and the Far East, and elsewhere. They were more than any other section of the electorate, they wanted a change and for a better civilian life. The military vote was overwhelmingly for Labour.

The new Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, announced that it was the time to introduce the welfare state outlined in the 1942 “*Beveridge Report*”. The program included the establishment of the National Health Service in 1948 with free medical treatment for all, A national system of benefits was also introduced to supply “*social security*” so that the British citizens would be protected from the “*cradle to the grave*”, the sick, the widowed. The new system was partly built on the national insurance plan established by the previous Prime Minister Lloyd George in 1911. Workers were obliged to make contributions each week, as did employers, but the benefits provided were now much better. By 1946, Beveridge became the leader of the Liberals in the House of Lords.

After the publication of “Social Insurance and Allied Services” report or the “Beveridge Report”, the Labour party led by Clement Attlee won the 1945 general election, with an overall victory against the Conservative party. The Labour government by the help of Beveridge introduced a series of reforms to overcome the five giants “Poverty, Disease, Idleness, Ignorance and Squalor” and provide a better life for the British people. So the third chapter presents the Labour reforms and their impact of the British society in the period 1945-1951.

Between 1945 and 1951 the Labour Government passed a series of measures which some people call the welfare state. This means that the government or state takes on the responsibility of looking after the well-being or welfare of all its citizens throughout their lifetime, here is the following reforms:

A. Social Security

1. The Family Allowances Act 1945

Family allowances were the subject of the White Paper (which is a guide that helps the readers to understand an issue or to solve a problem) in 1942, but there was disagreement between Labour and Conservative politicians about the way the act should be implemented. The Beveridge Report, written by the civil servant William Beveridge, suggested an allowance of Eight shillings per week for all children except the family's first child if one parent was working, which is given according to age. It was to be non-contributory and funded from general taxation. After some debate, the Family Allowances Bill was enacted in June 1945. The act provided for a flat rate payment funded directly from taxation. The recommended to reduce the nine shillings a week to only five shillings, and family allowance became a good help for citizens, rather than a subsistence payment as Beveridge had envisaged.

2. The National Insurance Act 1946

In the 1945 Labour Party Manifesto they promised that if they won the 1945 General Election they would bring the welfare state. Actually, when Clement Attlee and the Labour party won an overall victory in the election they passed the revolutionary National Insurance act in 1946 which created structured the Welfare State. The act provided for compulsory contributions for unemployment, sickness, maternity, widows and death benefits, finally the old age pension from all of employers and employees funded by the government.

James Griffiths, the new Minister of National Insurance, said about the contribution rates for the people in work except married women should paid 4 shillings a week and the average workers who paid around 5 per cent of their income, that is was "the best and cheapest insurance policy offered to the British people, of any people anywhere"(Simkin np).

3. The Industrial Injuries Act 1946

During the period 1945-1951. The Labour Governments finally dealt step by step towards state insurance in 1946 with the passing the Industrial Injuries Act. This provided for compulsory insurance against industrial injury for all employees. Under the conditions of the Act, industrial injury benefits were to be paid at a higher rate than for ordinary sickness. Compensation payments were paid from the state treasury, not by individual employers, (National Insurance Act).

4. The National Assistance Act 1948

In 1948, the passage of the National Assistance Act, it officially canceled the Poor Law that had existed since the reign the Elizabeth the First (Spicker np). The act provided basic social security cover for all British people, especially those who did not pay national insurance contributions, such as the homeless, the physically handicapped, and unmarried mothers. It also provided help to old age Britons who need supplementary benefits to make better living conditions and obliged the local authorities to provide suitable equipment for those who suffered through infirmity, age, or any other reason were in need of care and attention (Byrne, Tony and Padfield).

The National Assistance introduced a new service which was more generous than the previous one where the rate for the married couple before the new service was 31 shillings (£1.55) a week, it became 40 shillings (£2.00) a week with the new service (Nowell).

B. National Health Service

1. The National Health Service Act 1948

During the war, Sir William Beveridge was asked to review the schemes of social insurance. He explained this plan widely and produced proposals for a National Health Service which had centered on sponsoring simply a rationalization of the hospital services. Beveridge thought that the National Health Service would be financed upon the expense of national insurance but mainly from the state treasury (Beveridge Report). He took on consideration whether health should be free at the police protection, or the use of roads, so he concluded that a medical service without a charge which meant free for any person was the right answer (Edwards p3).

After the 1945 General Election, Clement Attlee, the new Labour Prime Minister, appointed Aneurin Bevan as Minister of Health. In the autumn of 1946, Parliament passed the revolutionary National Insurance Act. It instituted a comprehensive state health service, and it became effective till “the appointed day”, 5th July 1948. The Act provided for compulsory contributions for unemployment, sickness, maternity and widows' benefits and old age pensions from employers and employees, with the government funding the balance. The (NSH) plan faced many financial difficulties during the years of the war which were also effective in making the pressure for change, as the creation of the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) during the war. But his major problem was concerned the shortage of resources and the conflicts of interests within the medical profession, and between the profession and the local authorities.

The National Health Service (NSH) program to medical care has meant many things for many people. For some civil workers it was a solution to administrative disorder of medical services before the war, and an end to the wrong promises. For some working in the voluntary of hospitals The National Health Service was an end to their economic difficulties. However and for the first time, the middle class and those working people had free access to the general practitioner service, which meant the free access to the specialist medicine. For the small group of specialists it was a strategy of modern medical practice without harming their income or power. And to the medical profession in general it marked a huge number of Labour opponents who were against the National Health Service plan to avoid local government control of medical care. And to the Left it meant, as the best way to a locally controlled national health service based on a network of health centres.

By July 1948, The British minister of Health Aneurin Bevan had guided the National Health Service Act safely through Parliament. The Government resolution was carried by 337 votes to 178. The British Journalist Niall Dickson said that: "The UK's National Health Service (NHS) came into operation at midnight on the fourth of July 1948. It was the first time anywhere in the world that completely free healthcare was made available on the basis of citizenship rather than the payment of fees or insurance premiums... Life in Britain in the 30s and 40s was tough. Every year, thousands died of infectious diseases like pneumonia, meningitis, tuberculosis, diphtheria, and polio. Infant mortality - deaths of children before their first birthday - was around one in 20, and there was little the piecemeal healthcare system of the day could do to improve matters. Against such a background, it is difficult to overstate the impact of the introduction of the National Health Service (NHS). Although

medical science was still at a basic stage, the NHS for the first time provided decent healthcare for all - and, at a stroke, transformed the lives of millions" (Lee np).

The National Health Service aim is to provide a comprehensive range of services and to respond to the different needs of different populations. The NSH helps Shape its services around the needs and preferences of individual patients, their families and those who take care of them and to keep people healthy and work to reduce health inequalities by using the public funds (The NHS in England).

However the idea of a National Health Service was opposed by the right-wing national press. in which it stated "The State medical service is part of the Socialist plot to convert Great Britain into a National Socialist economy. The doctors' stand is the first effective revolt of the professional classes against Socialist tyranny. There is nothing that Bevan or any other Socialist can do about it in the shape of Hitlerian coercion" (Simkin np).

Winston Churchill was one of the opponents of the program where he led the attack on Bevan. In one debate in the House of Commons he argued that unless Bevan "changes his policy and methods and moves without the slightest delay, he will be as great a curse to his country in time of peace as he was a squalid nuisance in time of war." While The Conservative Party voted against the program. The Tory amendment stated that it "declines to give a Third Reading to a Bill which discourages voluntary effort and association; mutilates the structure of local government; dangerously increases ministerial power and patronage; appropriates trust funds and benefactions in contempt of the wishes of donors and subscribers; and undermines the freedom and independence of the medical profession to the detriment of the nation"(Bevan np)

However, on the 2nd July, 1946, the Third Reading was carried by 261 votes to 113. Michael Foot commented that the Conservatives had voted against the "most exciting and popular of the Government's measures a bare four months before it was to be introduced" (Foot np).

In the inter-war period, the failure of reform was a motive to these civil servants. In 1911 the National Insurance Act had changed medical care in the United Kingdom, resulting in the provision of free health care from the five million to fifteen million workers, around a third of the nation. At the end of the First World War, the working class family could receive medical care and as many as nine different doctors working in five different organizations. The

working man would see his panel doctor for all illnesses except tuberculosis. And Concerning his wife if she was separately insured would see the same panel doctor for her illnesses, except tuberculosis too and problems of pregnancy and child birth. But If she was not insured she could consult a private doctor if she could afford it a parish doctor which is provided under Poor Law regulations or a doctor from a medical charity if she could not. During the time of pregnancy she could use the municipal maternity service, which provide child health services for the new births and children till the school age and when the children were at school, a school's medical officer would attend to 'school diseases', a private doctor only would be called if the children were too ill to go to school. Between leaving school and sixteen years of age the children would be seen by the private doctor but after their sixteenth birthdays they could join the same doctor.

The national Health Service aim was good healthcare should be available to all, regardless of wealth, one of the NHS's core principles. With the exception of some charges, such as prescriptions, optical services and dental services, the NHS in England remains free at the point of use for all United Kingdom's residents. This currently stands at more than 64.6 million people in the Kingdom and 54.3 million people in England alone. The NHS in England deals with over 1 million patients every 36 hours. It covers everything and everyone, including antenatal screening, routine screenings such as the Health Check, and treatments for long-term conditions, transplants, emergency treatment and end of life care. Responsibility for healthcare in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales is devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Assembly Government respectively.

The hospitals were managed either in groups or individually through Hospital Management Committees who reported to Regional Hospital Boards. Those hospitals who participated in medical teaching were managed by Boards of Governors who reported directly to the Ministry of Health. Each hospital board or Committee had a Secretary who managed their business.

The NHS in England is the biggest part of the system by far, catering to a population of 54.3 million and employing around 1.2 million people. Of those, the clinically qualified staff include 150,273 doctors, 40,584 general practitioners (GPs), 314,966 nurses and health visitors, 18,862 ambulance staff, and 111,127 hospital and community health service (HCHS) medical and dental staff. The NHS in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland employs 161,415; 84,000 and 66,000 people respectively.

Once the NHS was introduced, it proved to be popular with most of people. 95% of all the medical profession joined the plan. Actually, the NHS proved to be too popular as it quickly found that its resources were being used up. From its earliest days, the plan seemed to be short of money. All the annual money was spent for many treatments such as dental surgery and glasses. £2 million put aside to pay for free spectacles over the first nine months of the NHS went in six weeks. The government had estimated that the NHS would cost £140 million a year by 1950. But in fact the National Health Service was costing £358 million.

In 1951, the Labour government introduced a charge for some dental treatment (free false teeth) and for prescriptions for medicine. Thus Aneurin Bevan resigned from the government in protest at this. Bevan wanted a free health service and nothing else.

C. Free Education

1. The Education Act 1944

The Education Act 1944, it is also known as the "Butler Act" according to the Conservative politician Rab Butler who wrote the act after consultation with the other parties. The act made numerous major changes in the provision of secondary schools in England and Wales.

Butler worked for setting the school-leaving age at 15, and provided free secondary school for all. Pupils took an '11-plus' IQ exam that place children in certain types of school; whether they went to grammar school for academic pupils, secondary modern school teaching practical subjects, or technical school to teach practical skills. The main feature of the Act was to replace both of the primary and secondary schools by three progressive stages of primary, secondary and further education under the responsibility of local education authorities. Primary and secondary educations were to be provided in separate schools, on the other hand to the past when many primary schools had continued to provide schooling for children to the age of fourteen. The Act also recognized the need of children who are less than five years for provision, through nursery schools. Local authorities were also obliged to provide free medical treatment and free milk and meals for the British schools until the 1970. Another central feature of the Act was the creation of a new partnership between central and local government. The Minister for Education had increased powers of local education authorities to secure the effectiveness of the national educational policy. In theory, the authorities were

responsible for their own systems but in practice they would look to government for guidance and had to obtain its approval in order to implement their recommendations.

However the plans for post-war secondary education in Britain aimed to remove the inequalities which remained in the system. But The 11+ exam went against the principle of equality that was at the heart of the Labour education reforms, those in senior secondary were seen to receive a better education (www.parliament.uk).

D. Council Housing

The provision of housing was a major issue by the end of the First World War. The 1919 Addison Housing and Town Planning Act required local authorities to survey housing needs and draw up plans. The 1923 Chamberlain Housing Act reduced the housing subsidy to local authorities. In 1924, John Wheatley, the Minister of Health, introduced the Financial Provisions Housing Act. The Wheatley Act survived the Baldwin government during the 1920s and 500,000 houses were built.

Under Labour, the Greenwood Housing Act of 1930 addressed to eliminate slum by providing subsidization (help by the government) by the local authorities to rehouse tenants. Policy was reversed under the Conservative-strong coalition government, and the 1933 Financial Provisions Housing Act abolished the Wheatley subsidy. The concentration was on the construction of cheaper blocks of flats to house former slum habitant.

1. The New Towns Act 1946

By the end of the Second World War, the all the attentions were directed to the post-war reconstruction of Britain's towns and communities. The possibility of building new towns had been accepted in 1945 by a government committee chaired by Lord Reith, the founder of the BBC in which he recommended that the new town developments should have a population of up to 60,000, the homes had to be organized in neighborhoods around a primary school and nursery schools and it must be a balance of housing and jobs and finally, the towns should be built as far as possible from the greenfield places.

In 1946, The New Towns Act was established by the parliament of the United Kingdom. It was an ambitious program aimed for building new towns and financed through the state treasury. It gave the government power to appoint areas of land for new town development. A series of development corporations were established under the Act and each corporation was responsible for one of the projected towns. The first new town created under the Act was

Stevenage, in Hertfordshire, with ten other cities following by 1955. Most were proposed to be equipping for the growth of population in London. Since the 1950s, Parliament has authorized more developments in England, Scotland and Wales.

The Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 and the parliament saw that it was essential to restrict the growth of the large cities and laid down procedures to control urban sprawl into the countryside. All planning was to be subject to planning permission by local councils. Most importantly, every area of the country was to have a ‘development plan’ showing how each area was either to be developed or preserved.

Finally, here are some towns which were created under the New Towns Act; Basildon, Bracknell, Central, Lancashire, Corby, Harlow, Hatfield, Hemel Hempstead, Milton Keynes, Washington,...Etc.

2. The Housing Act 1949

The Housing Act 1949 was a British Parliamentary act which enabled the local authorities to acquire homes for improvement with 75% state treasury grants (Fraser np). It also gave upon local authorities a wide range of useful powers, such as to provide restaurants, canteens and laundry facilities for tenants of municipal flats and housing estates, and to sell furniture to them. The legislation also removed the restriction imposed upon local authorities by previous pieces of housing legislation which limited them to providing housing for working-class people only. The aim of this change was to allow local authorities to develop mixed estates of houses of more varied types and sizes, by the way attracting all income groups (Nowell np). In addition, housing improvement grants for private landlords and owner occupiers were introduced under the Act. According to Norman Ginsburg, “this piece of legislation was the first example of a “welfarist” policy in respect of owner occupiers, as local authorities were to direct these grants towards bringing properties up to a sixteen-point standard” (Page & Silbum).

The housing reforms were welfare for the British people during the post-war. It provided prefabs for temporary housing, around 700,000 council houses were built and 12 New Towns were designed and built which helped the overcrowding of the other cities, these executions are considered as a great deal despite the shortage of workers and materials.

3. The Children’s Act 1948

The Children Act 1948 was a Parliamentary Act in the United Kingdom. It established a children's committee and a children's officer in each local authority. It followed the creation of the parliamentary care of children committee in 1945 after the death of 13-year-old Dennis O'Neill at the hands of his parents.

E. Full Employment

1. The Marshall Aid 1948

The Marshall Plan, also known as the European Recovery Program, provided over \$13 billion to finance the economic recovery of Europe between 1948 and 1951. The government used Marshall Aid to get industry going. The government nationalized the road transport, railways and coal industries in 1947 and steel in 1951. By adopting the ideas in the economist JM Keynes's book - the "General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money 1936" the government learned how to keep a vibrant economy by increasing public spending. This meant that there has never been a depression like the one of the 1930s again.

The Marshall aid Plan was very successful. The western European countries witnessed a rise in their gross national products of 15 to 25 percent during this period. The plan contributed greatly to the rapid renewal of the chemical, engineering, and steel industries of the Western Europe.

General Conclusion

Britain in 1945 was suffering from the social, political and economic impact of The Second World War, and it was looking for a better Britain than the one which entered into the war. Britain faced five main social problems call “The Five Giants” which were outlined in the 1942 Beveridge report poverty, health, education, housing, and unemployment. During The war the Government became much more involved in people's lives. The local authorities made an effort to provide Foodstuffs, clothing, housing, milk and extra meals for the pregnant and children. In 1945, contrary to expectations, Labour won a landslide victory at the General Election and with an overall majority in Parliament. There was nothing to stop the new government led by clement Attlee from carrying out it programme. The British public believed that the Labour government would to establish a vigorous programme of social reform. Labour's reforms were based on the Beveridge Report known as “Social Insurance and Allied Services”. Many people welcomed this government intervention and wanted it to go further by providing a better life for them.

Poverty was seen as the major problem which affected all the other sectors. In 1946 the government passed the National Insurance Act which covered the individual for sickness, unemployment, and gave pension for old age, widows, orphans, maternity and death grants compulsory comprehensive insurance against most eventualities. The National Insurance act provision was made for the British Citizens from the “cradle to the grave”, which means catering for their need from the time of birth to their death, as it reduced poverty in Britain. However the scheme was criticised for the large number of officials needed to operate it and others claimed that the Act did not go far enough as the National Insurance benefit was restricted to those citizens who had made 156 weekly contributions and took up 5 per cent of people’s salaries.

In the same year the Industrial Injuries Act was passed. The act made insurance against work injuries for all employees. Under the term of the act industrial injury benefits were to be paid at a higher rate than for ordinary sickness and they were paid by the government not the employers. By 1948 some citizens (Old and very sick people) whose resources were insufficient were struggling for the bad conditions of life during post-war. The government passed The National Assistance Act to cover them. On the other hand, the benefits were still too low which left families still living below the subsistence level.

Most of Britain's Towns still had slum areas and suffer from the overcrowding of population was a serious problem made by bombs damages during the war. So to deal with this problem of squalor, the government introduced The New Towns Act passed in 1946 for building fourteen new towns in Britain to reduce overcrowding and aimed at building 200,000 houses a year and many of these were prefabs (prefabricated houses) which were built quickly onsite. Around 700,000 council houses were built between 1945 and 1951 to provide good quality family accommodation which was a big improvement with a reasonable rent. While in 1951, 750,000 homes still needed so the homelessness and poor housing problem continued.

In 1946 the National Health Service (NHS) Act was passed and came into operation in 1948, under the the Minister of Health & Housing Aneurin Bevan. And for the first time every British citizen could receive medical, dental and optical services free of charge. (Universal, comprehensive, and free). Treatment by GPs (general practitioners) and in hospitals was free also. In the same year 88 per cent of doctors and 95 per cent of dentist joined the NHS. 8 million dental patients and 5.25 million sick were treated.

The NHS was considered as the greatest single achievement in the development of the welfare state as it meant that healthcare was no longer based on your ability to pay. But it faced many serious problems like the rising of the prescriptions from 7 million per month to 13.5 million per month in September 1948. By 1950 the National Health Service was costing £358 million per years. After a great success of the plan the number of dentists reduced to 10,000 to cater for 47 million people and costs were much higher than expected, nevertheless the NHS was a wonderful achievement of the Labour government.

During the war, in 1944 the government passed the Education act. The act was actually proposed by the Conservatives, but after the 1945 general election, it was the Labour government that implemented its measures. The Butler Act made secondary education compulsory until the age of 15 years and provided meals, milk and medical services at every school. Butler set an examination at age 11 years (called the 11+) placed children in certain types of school, according to their ability. Those who got the best marks in this exam went to senior secondary (grammar schools in England) and were expected to 'stay on' after 15 years and possibly go to university and get jobs in management. However children who failed in the exam went to a 'junior secondary' or 'technical school' and were not expected to stay at school after 15 years.

However the education act had also negative side such as the exam “11+” went against the principle of equality that was at the heart of the Labour education reforms, the building of new schools concentrated on the primary sector to cope with the baby boom so the secondary sector was largely neglected.

The fifth and the final issue is idleness. The period after the Second World War seemed to provide work for everyone for the Britain’s reconstruction. The government followed the principals of the economist John Maynard Keynes in order to take control of certain industries such as iron and steel manufacture. By 1946, the Labour government succeeded in its commitment to maintain high levels of employment and unemployment was reduced to 2.5 per cent. Under this manage the government used tax money to keep sufficient industry even if it faced economic difficulties.

Despite this, nationalisation did little to improve working efficiency in these industries. Supported by taxation money, these industries had little incentive to be profitable. As such, wages and working conditions remained generally unimproved.

There is much debate over whether the Labour government reforms of 1945-1951 met the need of the British people. But according to what I had mentioned above, on the one hand, the advantages of the labour reforms were more than its limitations despite the economic problem that faced the government by the rise of pensions and the number of prescriptions, the costs hospitals. On the other hand, the welfare state provided pensions for the old and the industrial injuries, free medicals and housing for the poor. According to Kerr by 1951 the Labour government had transformed British society and improved the lives of millions of people. However other historians said that the Labour had failed to fully meet the needs of the British people. Finally, I think that the welfare state was the best option Britain had in the post war period.

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