Lots of Liberal supporters joined Labour as they believed ‘war being started by secret diplomacy’

Why did the Liberal Party decline after 1918?

- Conflicts of the war affected the principles of Liberalism. E.g. censorship, conscription and free trade
- Asquith promised the coalition general support but this did not happen
- The split of supporters did not allow LG to do his job properly with full support
BRITISH POLITICS

- Put forward 513 candidates vs. 1924 340

1929 GE Results

- Lab – minority winners
  - 287 seats
  - 37.1% of vote
- Tories
  - 260 seats
  - 38.1% of vote
- Liberals
  - 59 seats
  - 23.6% of vote
- Turnout 76.3%

The Effectiveness of Stanley Baldwin 1924 - 1929

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Effective and skilled leader</td>
<td>- Safety first failed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Condemnation of 1926 GS as a “challenge to</td>
<td>- Unexciting and over cautious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament and ... the road to anarchy and</td>
<td>- Stuart Ball “the decision to call an election in 1923 was a serious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruin” his toughness in crisis.</td>
<td>failure in leadership on Baldwin’s part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Honest Stan</td>
<td>- Trade Disputes Act very unpopular with working class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Competent speaker and therefore appealed to</td>
<td>- 1928 Representation of the People’s act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the masses</td>
<td>- Self interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Homely and down to earth – likeable</td>
<td>- Assumed most women would vote Tory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Maintained unity of Tory diverse ministerial</td>
<td>- Backfired only received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>team</td>
<td>- 10% of extra vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Successfully exploited Red Scare of 1924</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Successfully dealt with the GS</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Why did the Tories Dominate Between 1924 – 1929?

a) Divided opposition
   - Lab and Lib
   - Lib never really recovered post L-G Vs Asquith split
   - Lab minority gvts of 1924 and 1929 showed it had replaced liberals but were not strong enough to get maj gvt like Tories were. Even the “Welsh wizard” of LG could not reverse the party’s long-term organisational decay.

b) Effective organisation
   - Organisation and funds superior to any other party
   - Able to field more candidates than anyone else

c) Dynamic Ministers
   - Neville Chamberlain 21 bills through including Pensions Act of 1925
BRITISH POLITICS

National Governments 1931-40

National Gvt Explained

**A coalition government, especially one subordinating party differences to the national interest in a time of crisis**

Why did it form?

- Desire for a strong gvt
  - To deal with economic, social problems
- Labour Gvt fell in 1931
  - Because reduction in public sector salaries and UE benefits was too politically expensive
- Baldwin & Tories embraced Nat Gvt idea
  - Wanted to govern but were unwilling to risk the unpopularity by implementing expenditure cuts – realised they need RMD
- Baldwin
  - Put “country before the party”

Baldwin’s initial reluctance

- Criticised the LG coalition: would have compromised his credibility
- Since 1923 Baldwin maintained that the Tory party was the National Party
- 1931 Cons party believed Labour should take the blame for the economic crisis
- May 1929 defeat, Baldwin’s leadership was attacked for not being Tory enough: he was criticised for being sympathetic with Labour and Socialism.

Aims

- Imperialism
  - Appeasement
  - LoN
  - Disarmament
  - PEACE

Who made up the Gvt?

- Aug 1931 → 4 Lab; 4 Cons; 2 Lib
- Oct 1931 → 11 Cons; 9 others
- 1935 → 15 Cons; 7 others
  - Small cabinet to make quick decisions
  - RMD made cuts in the interests of the people and not just the party
Key Facts

- Lab landslide victory. 48% of vote. 393 MPs
- 1st Lab Maj Gvt ever
- Atlee vs. Churchill
- Cons won 36.2% of vote. 197 MPs.
- Major distrust of Tories grew during WWII
- 5th July
- Vote not published until 26th July due to overseas soldiers.
- 76.2% turnout

How did Labour win?

Labour Strengths:

- Lab had gained key positions in War Cabinet as a result of Labs “indispensable support for his (Churchill’s) premiership”.
  - Attlee became Deputy PM supervising Home Front gaining experience & popularity.
- Lab dominated “Reconstruction” on HF. (Cons took little interest – focused on Grand strategy’)
  - Beveridge Report Dec 1942 (public enthusiasm = 635,000 copies sold)
- Lab manifesto “Let Us Face the Future” – strong intentions of public reform, emphasis of improved social services.
  - Middle class saw its collective ideas in an increasingly positive light after the war.
  - Denis Healey, future Lab Chancellor (EVAL) “The atmosphere was ‘Get up & go’... key thing was to build a decent society based on social justice.”
  - Paul Addison in The Road to 1945 “1940 was the year when foundations of political power shifted decisively leftwards for a decade.”

Conservative Weaknesses:

- Br blamed Cons & former leaders Chamberlain for pre-war failure to rearm and appease. “Guilty Men.”
  - MacMillan “Not so much Churchill who lost the 1945 E. It was the ghost of Neville Chamberlain.”
- Cons campaign entirely focused on Churchill and him being the “Man who won the war”.
  - Manifesto stressed international affairs but not what people wanted – domestic reform.
  - Manifesto called “Mr Churchill’s Declaration of Policy to the Electorate.”
  - Only £3000 spent on publicity, barely 10% of amount spent in 1935.
### 3. Why did the Tories dominate 1951-64?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tory Strengths</th>
<th>Labour Weaknesses</th>
<th>Other Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Consumer boom created ‘the feel good factor’</td>
<td>• Wanted to drive the war-time spirit of self-sacrifice so that people didn’t hate rationing + restrictions still in place post-ww2</td>
<td>• The multiple PMs – all bought fresh ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Very strong cabinet</td>
<td>• Internal divisions</td>
<td>– Economy was going through boom phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Included eager young MPs such as Ian Macleod</td>
<td>– Gaitskell Vs. Bevan</td>
<td>• Low unemployment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Also included experienced MPs such as Eden (foreign minister)</td>
<td>– Divisions between Left + Right</td>
<td>• Low inflation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Housing</td>
<td>• Policy issues – dividing party</td>
<td>• 1953 Korean War had ended – they started to spend less on defence contributing to better economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Major triumph</td>
<td>– Tories could have clearer policies</td>
<td>• Consumer boom – socialist values replaced by materialistic values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Built 300,000 houses per year</td>
<td>– Lab undecided on what kind of party they were</td>
<td>• Lab’s history of austerity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Didn’t change social services Lab had introduced – consensus</td>
<td>• Slowness to respond to Affluence</td>
<td>• Suspicion over the USSR – cold war – sympathy for USSR within Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Got rid of rationing + restraints that Lab had put on society</td>
<td>• First post-war consensus doomed Lab to potential attacks on Cons</td>
<td>• Lost key figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Progressive</td>
<td>• Affluent workers no longer voting Lab</td>
<td>• The policies they put forward were unclear; like how they would pay for it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Worked with affluence</td>
<td>• Slowness to respond to Affluence</td>
<td>• Uncertainty over EEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Got the Bomb in Oct. 1952 – first post-war atomic bomb</td>
<td>• Policy issues – dividing party</td>
<td>• Lost key figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Produced H-Bomb</td>
<td>– Tories could have clearer policies</td>
<td>• The policies they put forward were unclear; like how they would pay for it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Built the first Motorway – M1</td>
<td>– Lab undecided on what kind of party they were</td>
<td>• Uncertainty over EEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Showing their commitment to the modern era</td>
<td>• Slowness to respond to Affluence</td>
<td>• Lost key figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• United party – even after Suez</td>
<td>• First post-war consensus doomed Lab to potential attacks on Cons</td>
<td>• The policies they put forward were unclear; like how they would pay for it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consensus meant Lab never really attacked them</td>
<td>• Affluent workers no longer voting Lab</td>
<td>• Uncertainty over EEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• M was experienced + successful in helping the Tories recover post Suez</td>
<td>• Never had it so good – affluent society</td>
<td>• Uncertainty over EEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Never had it so good – affluent society</td>
<td>• Created a period of consolidation after Lab’s major reforms</td>
<td>• Uncertainty over EEC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Note: The table above outlines the strengths of the Tories, weaknesses of Labour, and other factors influencing the political landscape of Britain from 1951 to 1964.*
BRITISH POLITICS

Why did Thatcher win the 1983 GE?

1. Success in the Falklands
   - Thatcher as a successful wartime leader, which therefore saw the Cons support increase by 11% between Feb and July 1982.
   - In the crisis she was likened to Churchill in her ability to inspire a nation in wartime. National newspapers portrayed the PM as a ‘Boudiccan’ figure in cartoons, illustrating her strength and determination to succeed.
   - Thatcher’s inspirational public speaking throughout the war enabled the PM to change public opinion in her and her government’s favour; “They risked their lives for the British way of life, to defend Britain’s sovereignty… These islands belong to us.”
   - Andrew Marr’s opinion that the PM revived national pride, particularly spurred on by tabloid support, validates the argument that Thatcher’s “new political image” led her to victory in the 1983 general election.

2. Weakness of the Lab campaign & manifesto
   - Lab published a controversial manifesto, with radical policies which damaged the appeal of the party to moderate voters. Gerald Kaufman (Lab MP so EVAL) described the manifesto as “the longest suicide note in history”, whereby Labour was by its own proclamation “committed to radical, socialist policies for reviving the British economy.”
   - Michael Foot, the leader of the party, expressed Labour’s ‘questionable’ support of unilateral nuclear disarmament, particularly throughout the Falklands war, which had a detrimental effect on the party’s popularity.
   - Labour had alienated themselves from moderate public opinion in 1983; by providing support for nuclear disarmament, withdrawal from the EEC and NATO, and the nationalisation of key industries predominantly in the financial sector.
   - Arguably, it was Labour’s approach to disarmament that led to Thatcher being able to capitalise so greatly on the Falklands war, and should the party have held a more pragmatic opinion towards the military conflict, the crisis would most likely have been negligible.

3. Lab’s poor Gvt record of the 70s
   - Administration between 1974 and 1979 was economically weak; inflation reached double digits, and peaked at 22% in 1979, which ultimately resulted in a decline in living standards throughout Br
   - Memories of the 1979 ‘Winter of Discontent’ similarly contributed negatively to the public image of the Labour party. eg. the story of the gravediggers striking.
   - Emergence of a third party in the 1983 election, commonly known as the “Alliance” had an impact on both the Lab & the Cons party number of votes. However the SDP placed a larger threat on the Lab party, as polling data showed the SDP took two votes from Lab for every one they took from the Cons.
   - Foot was weak and evident lack of control of his party throughout Thatch 1st admin – limited authority over party so weak reputation going into GE

4. Other Strengths of Thatcher
   - Her image of stability and economic recovery
   - In comparison to the bleak images of the 1970s, the general public were enamoured by Thatcher’s policy, which particularly projected an image of control in gvt. The PMs economic policy, to some extent, also worked in her favour; the Housing Act of 1980, which allowed council house rent payers the “right to buy” their homes at a greatly reduced rate, is one example of success, which increased party support.
   - Similarly the basic rate of income tax was decreased from 33% to 30% in 1979, which pleased the 63% of the public carrying the system.
   - David Sanders highlighted Thatcher’s legacy of economic reform as the most important strength of the 1983 campaign.
   - Successful policies not solely reliant upon success in the Falklands, which contributed to her re-election in 1983
BRITISH POLITICS

- 33 MPs stood against her, 25 abstained from the vote – Heseltine was among them – showing her popularity was beginning to wither away
  - Heseltine challenged her leadership
    - She won the 1st ballot by 52 votes – regarded it as the loss of confidence of 40% of the Tory MPs
    - Thatch withdrew from the 2nd ballot on 22nd Nov. 1990 and announced she would resign when her successor was chosen
  - Major and Hurd entered the race for leadership against Heseltine – ending his chances – the party wanted Major

Multiple opinions of Thatcher

- Alan Clark (a Tory MP and Thatch loyalist) The Poll Tax... has got everyone into a rage. The only objection to the tax, as far as I can see, is that no one will pay... And by ‘no one’ I mean all the slobs, yobs, drifters, junkies, free-loaders
- Historian Peter Clark Thatcher achieved her victories at a terrible cost
- John Campbell She was brilliantly combative, opportunist politician who, by a mixture of hard work, stamina, self-belief and uncanny instinct, bullied an awe-struck country into doing things her way for more than a decade
- Andrew Marr The most extraordinary and nation-changing premiership of modern British history
- EHH Green Thatcher was a creature of her time and not the creator of it
- Eric J Evans Thatcherism morally impoverished and desensitized a nation