

Depression, War and Recovery 1930-1951

KQ1

The coming of the depression

Reason for the decline of traditional industry in Britain

- **Competition from abroad**
- Old industries developed around the coalfields of the North
- Mostly produced raw materials or heavy goods e.g. ships, textiles, coal, iron and steel
- Very dependent on EXPORTS – profitable only if sold to worldwide markets
- Foreign competitors often bigger and could sell cheaper

Reason for the decline of traditional industry in Britain

- **New Markets**
- Policy of Free Trade – allowed imports to come in freely and cheaply
- British goods often subject to tariffs – more expensive
- Shipbuilding hit the worst – ships not needed if goods not being bought or sold
- Led to mass unemployment in shipbuilding, steelmaking and coalmining

Reason for the decline of traditional industry in Britain

- **Obsolete methods**
- Mass Production being used in the USA – pioneered by the car industry
- Not the case in Britain
- Also, national resources not switched quickly enough to new industries e.g. chemicals, rayon and automobiles

Impact of the Wall Street Crash and its effects on industry in Britain

- Business confidence fell and international trade declined
- Between 1929 and 1931 exports fell from Britain fell by half
- Balance of Trade badly affected – dropped from a surplus of £104m in 1928 to a deficit of £114m in 1931
- Slump in exports also affected industries supplying the domestic market
- Rapid growth in unemployment. By mid 1930 it had reached 2m, rising to 3m by 1932

KQ2

Life during the depression

The dole and the means test

- 1920 Unemployment Insurance Act
- System of payments for unemployed
- 39 weeks of benefit – known as ‘the dole’
- It was believed to be unaffordable during the economic downturn
- 1931 The National Government introduced the ‘Means Test’ – designed to reduce the amount of dole paid
- Was a hated policy

Means test

- Houses inspected – possessions and savings checked
- Carried out by inspectors from the Public Assistance Committees (PACs)
- Could be forced to sell possessions
- Any other sources of income led to deductions in the dole
- 1936 – maximum raised to £1.80 pw – well below average wage of £3 pw

Means test

Reaction

- ◉ More about saving money than helping the unemployed
- ◉ Inspections hated
- ◉ People forced to make relatives move out to receive higher dole
- ◉ Humiliating
- ◉ Dole stopped if it was believed there was sufficient money in a household
- ◉ Some local authorities carried it out very harshly. Co. Durham refused to carry it out
- ◉ Protests started – including the hunger marches

Hunger Marches

- **The Jarrow March 1936**
- Causes:
- Worst affected town during the depression
- Most either employed or dependent on one firm – Palmers shipyard.
- Was too small to build modern ships
- National Shipbuilders' Securities set up in 1934 – bought up smaller shipyards, then scrapped them. Palmers one of the first to go.
- Unemployment reached 80%

The Jarrow March

- ◉ A march, to attract attention was organised
- ◉ The government was very suspicious of hunger marchers – previous leaders had been found to be communist
- ◉ The PM, Stanley Baldwin, was especially unsympathetic
- ◉ Marches not supported by the TUC or the Labour Party
- ◉ Was not run by the National Unemployed Workers' Movement (NUWM)

The Jarrow March

- 200 men marched from Jarrow to London
- Dressed smartly and marched in step to attract maximum attention
- Took 8 months
- Covered 450 KM in 22 stages
- Given fantastic support everywhere they went
- Not by the government in London though

Consequences

- Petition presented to HoC
- Men returned as heroes
- Given lots of support by public
- Praised by the police
- Improved the public image of hunger marchers
- Brought the plight of the shipyard workers to the attention of the government
- Did little to stir the government into action
- Baldwin ignored the petition
- Refused to even comment on it

Hunger marches from the Rhondda valley

- ◉ Rhondda – a coalmining area
- ◉ Depression hit the coalmining communities very hard
- ◉ 14 October 1932 – a nationwide hunger march began with the aim of converging on London
- ◉ 2500 marchers attended
- ◉ 375 from the Rhondda
- ◉ Demanding the abolition of the means test and Anomalies Act
- ◉ Spies deployed by the Metropolitan Police
- ◉ Force used to confiscate the petitions
- ◉ Even King Edward VIII declared something had to be done about conditions in South Wales
- ◉ October 1936 – a hunger march supported by the labour Party was organised.
- ◉ Spies used again but not the Metropolitan police
- ◉ The march achieved little

Poverty & Diet

- **'Making ends meet'**
- Survey conducted in York at the beginning of the C.20th by Seebohm Rowntree
- 30% of people living in York lived below the poverty line
- By 1936 this figure was about the same
- 72% of unemployed lived below the poverty line
- Average weekly income of unemployed family = £1.46 against £2.57 for employed
- As a consequence they had to 'make ends meet' – often buying cheaper food, leading to poor health and malnutrition
- 1936 – a survey published showed that 4.5 m people had an inadequate diet and a further 5 m suffered some form of deficiency.
- Overall, 10% of the population was undernourished

Women

- Generally the first to be laid off
- Numbers in domestic service increased in the 1930s
- National Insurance only covered the worker – normally a man
- Therefore, not covered for medical treatment
- Government statistics from 1931-1935 showed the death rate for women aged 15-35 was more than double that of some areas of high unemployment

Children

- Poor diet led to higher infant mortality and poorer health of children in depressed areas
- 1935: Infant DR South East 42 per 1000 births; Durham 76 per 1000.
- For every 3 children that died from richer families, 8 died from poorer ones
- 1933 – Newcastle 1 in 3 children unfit

Self-help

- ◉ Women operated credit mechanisms
- ◉ Neighbours rallied around
- ◉ Communities would protect its unwritten conventions
- ◉ Church Clubs
- ◉ Mayors' Funds
- ◉ Promotion of effective 'leisure' time
- ◉ Central Advisory Council for Unemployed Workers received funds from the Commissioners for Special Areas

Emigration from Wales

- Industrial Revolution led to thousands of immigrants – to work in the coalmines, steel and ironworks
- The depression led to this reversing
- Between 1921-1938 approx. 440,000 left Wales
- 85% of these came from the valleys and Monmouthshire
- Welsh communities were established in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South America.
- Ministry of Labour set up a scheme to help
- New light engineering and car manufacturing in the Midlands had a large influx of Welsh workers
- The Morris Motor company in Cowley became one of the biggest employers of Welsh migrants
- This had a significant impact on the Welsh language and culture

The importance of radio and cinema

- **Radio**
- A distraction for harsh reality of life
- 1939 – 9 million registered radios in Britain (75% of British families)
- Could buy on HP – 1-2s pw
- Popular programmes – Schools; plays, music, comedy and sport and news.

The importance of radio and cinema

- **Cinema**
- Remained popular
- 1927 – the first ‘talkie’ – The Jazz Singer – with Al Jolson
- 1934 – Wales had over 320 cinemas. Over 20 in Cardiff alone
- Watched stars e.g. Clarke Gable, Greta Garbo and Errol Flynn
- Special Saturday matinees shown for children for a penny
- 1935 – first Welsh language ‘talkie’ shown
- By 1936 – 1,000 m cinema admissions per year I the UK
- Became more luxurious – new names matched this – The paramount, The Royal, The Empire.
- Provided a very different experience to ordinary life

Other forms of entertainment

- **Television** – just beginning but few could afford one.
- **Rugby** – One of the most popular games, especially in Wales. Most mining villages had a team. The depression led to many players moving North to play Professional Rugby League
- **Football** – regarded by many as a working-class sport but known as the ‘people’s’ game.
- Thousands travelled to support their team, many by train – the depression hit this.
- However, during this time many record attendances recorded
- **Boxing** – In the 1930s the best boxers were American and Joe Louis dominated the heavyweight division. 1937, Tommy Farr, a former miner from the Rhondda fought Louis and was paid £10,000. Lost on points.

Growing light industry in parts of Britain

- Some areas prospered during the depression
- South East and the Midlands – car industry and electrical goods
- Mass production
- 1938 – 2m cars sold in Britain
- Efficient source of power needed for this – electricity
- 1938 – 9 million consumers
- New industries encouraged with grants
- Factories tended to be smaller and employ fewer people

Special Areas Acts

- ◉ Worst hit areas were: NE & NW England, Clydeside, S Wales & N Ireland – ‘special areas’
- ◉ 1934 – SAA - £2m of grants offered to companies to move to these areas
- ◉ 44,000 workers encouraged to move to other towns
- ◉ 30,000 unemployed men put on retraining courses
- ◉ 1936 a further SAA passed – favourable rents, rates and payment of taxes offered to companies
- ◉ Could not replace the number of jobs lost
- ◉ Unemployment went down in these areas but largely due to migration

Treforest Industrial Estate

- Established June 1936
- Non-profit organisation aiming to replace jobs lost in heavy industry
- 1937 – 3 small factories completed employing 69 people
- Government invested from 1939-45.
- Numbers working there grew to 16,000

KQ3

The coming of war

The threat from Germany

- Hitler's stated aims:
- To unite all German speaking people under his rule
- Lebensraum for the German people
- Restore Germany as a great power
- This meant violating the TOV

Hitler's Foreign Policy

- 1932 – reparations cancelled
- 1933 – withdrew from the LoN
- 1934 – signed a Non-Aggression Pact with Poland – supposed to last 10 years
- 1934 – Austrian Nazi Party fails to gain Anschluss
- 1935 – signs Anglo-German Naval Agreement. Limits German Navy to 35% of British Navy
- 1935 – Saar Region votes to return to German control from LoN

Re-militarisation of Rhineland

- 7 March 1936 took back the Rhineland breaking the terms of the TOV and the Treaty of Locarno 1925
- 1935 Franco-Soviet Pact made Germany feel encircled
- Only a small force sent
- Offered Britain and France a 25 year non-aggression pact
- Re-militarisation condemned by Britain and France

1938 - Anschluss

- Anschluss – 12 March German troops seize control of Austria
- April 1938 – a plebiscite held. 99.75% of population agree to German control
- Austria now part of the Third Reich
- More protests but no action taken

The Czechoslovakia Crisis

- Contained 3 m German speaking people
- Was in the Sudetenland – borders with Austria and Germany
- Called for leader of Nazi Party in Sudetenland to call for independence
- Very rich in raw materials
- Part of Czechoslovakia they couldn't afford to lose
- PM Chamberlain intervenes and meets Hitler – 15 September 1938
- Hitler convinces Chamberlain to support him
- France and Britain convince Czech PM (Benes) to concede to avoid war

The Czechoslovakia Crisis

- 30 September 1938 – Munich agreement – Czechoslovakia not invited
- Britain, France, Germany and Italy agree that the Sudetenland becomes part of Germany
- Britain and France guarantee the independence of the rest of Czechoslovakia
- If Czechs fight they are on their own
- Hitler and Chamberlain sign agreement that they will never go to war

Appeasement

Arguments for:

- Made Germany feel it was being listened to
- Avoid war by negotiation
- Horrors of WW1 still fresh
- Depression – couldn't afford war
- Better option than relying on LoN
- Communism seen as a bigger threat
- Arguments against:
- Made Britain look weak
- Suggested Britain would betray other countries
- Undermined Britain's key role in the LoN
- Allowed Hitler to become stronger

Outbreak of war

- By March 1939 Czechoslovakia had been carved up between Poland, Hungary and Germany
- Appeasement had made the USSR suspicious of Britain and France and so Stalin signed the Nazi-Soviet Pact in August 1939
- Poland to be divided between them
- Britain had a guarantee agreement with Poland to defend it
- 1 September 1939, Germany invaded Poland
- An ultimatum issued by Britain but this is ignored
- 3 September Britain declares war on Germany

Preparation for war

- The government had created a plan for a war that could last 3 years
- Started a programme to build new warships
- People had been encouraged to cut up and donate metal to be melted down for munitions
- Encouraged to plant vegetables to supplement rations
- Educational information – dangers of gas attacks; how to use food rations and how to stay healthy
- July 1939 Ministry of Supply set up
- Wartime regulations and wages agreed with trade unions
- 'Blackouts' to be used in all homes
- Gasmasks to be carried by everyone
- No military action seen until late spring 1940
- Referred to as 'The Phoney War'

Wardens

- Air Raid Wardens' Service created during 1937
- 1938 – 200,000 joined
- Czech Crisis – a further 500,000 joined
- By September 1939 – 1.5 m had joined the newly named Air Raid Precautions (ARP), later to be called Civil Defence
- Role –
- Work from home, shop or office
- Register all people in their sector
- Enforce 'blackout'
- Sound sirens during attack
- Help people to communal shelters and check on those in own shelters
- Carry out first aid, put small fires and co-ordinate with other emergency services

Air raid shelters

- Anderson shelters supplied by the government from February 1939
- 400,000 distributed in total
- Used outside but not popular
- Morrison shelters given out in 1941 used inside
- Many in city centres and flats had no shelter
- When the bombing became more serious in September 1940 the London Underground started to be used
- Often packed
- More popular as people could socialise
- 60% of all Londoners stayed in their own homes during the Blitz

Radar

- Developed in mid 1930s as a defence system against enemy bombing
- Could track German planes and concentrate defence where needed
- Fighter planes could be sent to intercept

Barrage balloons

- Large balloons filled with gas attached to steel cables
- Designed to stop low level flying
- 1936 Committee of Imperial Defence had 450 built to protect London
- By August 1940 2,368 flew over strategic sites across Britain
- Proved invaluable during the Blitz

Anti-aircraft guns

- Capable of rapid fire and could fire at high angles
- Bofors 40 mm anti aircraft gun used
- Could fire 120 rounds per minute and fire a 2 lb shell to a height of 2 miles

Conscription and reserved occupations

- September 1939 – National Services Act 18-41
- Exemption given to skilled workers in key areas
- Examples – railway workers; dock workers; farm workers; schoolteachers; doctors; wardens and those working in the engineering industry.
- Coalmining was added to this in December 1943 as there was a drastic shortage
- 1 in 10 randomly chosen to work down the mines – ‘The Bevin Boys’
- Many women worked in reserved occupations

KQ4

Life during wartime

The bombing of British Cities

- Started after Hitler gave up the idea of invading Britain in 1940
- Known as the Blitz – from September 1940-May 1941
Luftwaffe bombed Britain's major towns and cities
- Blackouts, air raid shelters and Home Guard brought in to combat this
- Britain survived the Blitz but then had to deal with V-1 and V-2 bombs
- Between 1944-45 his aims were to:
 - Force Britain to surrender
 - Break Britain's morale
 - Destroy homes and lives and force Britain to negotiate
 - Destroy industry, shipyards and railways hampering Britain's war effort

The bombing of British Cities

- London initially primary target
- Between September 2 and November 2 1940 was bombed every night.
- Over 15,000 killed
- 250,00 made homeless
- Focus soon spread to other highly populated areas
- Coventry suffered its worst attack on 14 November 1940. Over 30,000 incendiary bombs dropped on the aircraft factories there
- Much of the city was destroyed
- NW and Manchester suffered heavy attacks in December 1940

Case studies

- Swansea
- Belfast
- Glasgow

See detail in your books/revision guides

Evacuees

- 1 September 1939 – the evacuation began
- 1.5m children, pregnant women and women nursing babies were evacuated in first wave during 1939-1940
- Many city schools closed and teachers went with children
- Evacuated to safer areas – countryside.
- At their destination – children were chosen by foster parents
- Many drifted back to their families by Christmas 1939 due to homesickness and 'Phoney War'
- Second wave when the Blitz started
- Further evacuations when V-1 and V-2 Flying bombs launched at London in 1944.

Evacuation and Wales

- Swansea - see details in your book/
revision guide

The need for rationing

- ◉ Introduced almost immediately
- ◉ New ministry set up to look after propaganda and censorship as well
- ◉ 1938 – 55 m tonnes of food imported by Britain – almost 75% of its total consumption
- ◉ Over 50% of the meat consumed was imported
- ◉ Majority of cheese. Fruit, cereals and fats also imported
- ◉ 96 British ships sunk by Germany by Christmas 1939
- ◉ In March 1942 275 British merchant ships were sunk
- ◉ Food stocks dwindled. Drastic measures needed to ensure a fair distribution of food

Rationing

- National Registration Day – 29 September 1939. Data collated and an ID Card and ration book was issued to everyone.
- Ration books contained coupons
- Given or signed by shopkeeper in exchange for rationed goods
- Lord Woolton – Minister of Food oversaw rationing.
- Propaganda also used to promote the programme
- People encouraged to grow their own food
- Price controls and rationing stopped prices rising dramatically and ensured a fair distribution.
- 1941 – points system introduced
- ‘Dig for Victory’ also introduced

The role of women

- Many volunteered for work with organisations such as the WVS (Women's Voluntary Service)
- Government asked women to carry on working as normal.
- April 1941 – due to shortages of male workers, all women were forced to register for work.
- October 1941 – Ministry of Labour Report – 2m more workers needed in the armed forces and war industries.
- December 1941 – conscription for war work of women aged 19-30 introduced
- By 1943, 17m women aged between 14-64 were either in the forces or in essential war work

Women's armed forces

- ◉ WRNS (Women's Royal Naval Services)
- ◉ WAAF (Women's Auxillary Air Force)
- ◉ ATS (Auxillary Territorial Service)
- ◉ WRNS most popular, followed by WAAF
- ◉ By 1944, 450,000 women in these services
- ◉ 212,000 in ATS
- ◉ Not involved in combat
- ◉ Typical jobs were: driving, office duties and domestic duties. Also worked as mechanics, welders, pilots, carpenters and even gunners on anti-aircraft guns – although not allowed to fire them.
- ◉ 335 killed in the ATS and another 300 wounded
- ◉ Many worked in intelligence
- ◉ Many of the Bletchley Park code-breakers were women
- ◉ By 1943 – 180,000 volunteers in civil defence
- ◉ 47,000 in the fire service

Heavy industry and transport

- Women worked in aircraft factories, doing a 16 hour shift 7 days a week
- Many worked in munitions
- 57% of workers in factories were women by 1943
- Ministry of Information published details of women's achievements, which showed they were often better than men
- However, pay and conditions remained poor
- Travel to the factories was often difficult
- Pay lower than men – usually 75% for the same job

KQ5

Keeping up morale

The role of radio and cinema

- ◉ **Radio**
- ◉ 1 September 1939 BBC closed down television transmissions. Didn't start again until 1946. Radio, however, continued with huge audiences
- ◉ 9 m licence holders
- ◉ BBC used self-censorship in the main
- ◉ BBC newsreaders became very popular and started to give their names at the beginning of broadcasts so that the listeners could identify with them
- ◉ BBC war reporters such as Richard Dimbleby and Frank Gillard sent back vivid accounts of the action
- ◉ Shows such as 'It's that man again' and 'Music while you work' were incredibly popular and maintained morale.

The role of radio and cinema

- **Cinema**
- Cheap and popular
- 1938 – 980m cinema tickets sold in Britain
- 1945 – 1,500m
- The Ministry of Information produced short films about coping with the war.
- British film industry continued to make films during the war. Many were patriotic but biased eg 'In which we serve' and 'Went the day well'
- One of the most famous films of the war was Henry V starring Laurence Olivier. Issued just before the D-Day landings

Propaganda posters and censorship

- Censorship on overseas mail
- Sensitive mail could be blacked out/cut out or returned to sender
- Soldiers' letters subject to censorship
- Telephone calls also subject to censorship (including Winston Churchill's and the King's)
- Certain news items and photographs were not published to keep up morale
- Newspapers carefully monitored
- Only one case of the press being closed down in January 1941. The daily Worker, a communist paper was banned for supporting Stalin

The Ministry of Information

- ◉ Controlled propaganda and censorship
- ◉ Produced many posters. Not successful at first
- ◉ Aim was to:
 - ◉ Encourage support for the war
 - ◉ Sell ideas
 - ◉ Convince people to act and think in a particular way
 - ◉ Appeal to a sense of patriotism
 - ◉ Educate on key issues

Campaigns and appeals

◉ Rationing

◉ Lasted until 1955

◉ Introduced 29 September 1939

◉ Despite the hardships of rationing, the people of Britain were healthier than before the war – more balanced diet.

◉ Fewer mothers died in pregnancy

◉ Young children were fitter – given milk and orange juice

◉ Basic foods were all rationed eg. Eggs, sugar, butter, meat, tea, fruit.

◉ Children and pregnant women given special attention through the Vitamin Welfare Scheme

◉ Types of meals changed to reflect the shortage of certain ingredients

◉ The Utility Scheme ensured that items such as shoes, clothes and carpets were affordable.

◉ Black market appeared – those with money could buy extra rations and luxury goods.

◉ Ministry of Food employed 900 inspectors to try and stop this.

◉ Court fines and imprisonment for those found guilty

'Dig for Victory' campaign

- Set-up by the Ministry of Agriculture
- People encouraged to grow their own food on spare land to supplement rations
- Lawns turned into vegetable gardens
- Open spaces turned into allotments
- Many in towns started to keep hens, rabbits and even pigs
- The number of allotments in Britain almost doubled from 1939 to 1943
- The campaign had its own anthem
- Characters were also created to promote certain foods eg. Doctor Carrot and Potato Pete

The Spitfire Fund

- Launched in 1940 by Lord Beaverbrook, Head of the Department for Aircraft Production
- Spitfire named after them if £5,000 raised
- Painted in yellow on the fuselage
- Didn't cover the full cost of building the fighter it did cover the cost of the frame (full cost between £8,000-£12,000)
- Triggered many community events to raise the funds

Churchill

- Appointed PM on 10 May 1940. Led a coalition government
- **Reasons for appointment**
- Was against Appeasement
- Had improved relations with the Labour Party
- Speeches admired. Popular with the press and had served well as First Lord of the Admiralty
- Popular in Opinion Polls
- Clear that Hitler and Nazism had to be defeated
- Appeared to be the only politician willing to stand and fight after Nazi occupation of Denmark and Norway

Churchill's importance as a wartime leader

- Oversaw Dunkirk – the return of 300,000 British troops
- France then fell
- No immediate help from USA
- Britain stood alone and most saw negotiating with Hitler as the best way forward – Churchill thought differently
- Churchill set about:
 - Organising the military
 - Ensuring that the air force could control the skies
 - Organised a war economy
 - Created a command structure between the armed forces
- Ensured close relations between Britain and the USA – Lend Lease Scheme
- Provided strong, self confident leadership
- Kept up morale with motivational speeches and tours of the country that made the people believe that Hitler could be defeated

KQ6

Life after war

Economic position in 1945

- National debt £3,500m
- When a country sells its gold reserves it is a sign that country is in debt. Britain's gold reserves fell from £864m to £3m in 1945
- Had lost 30% of its total wealth
- USA ended the Lend-Lease agreement and bankruptcy loomed
- 1/3 of housing stock had been destroyed
- 2/3s of the merchant fleet had been sunk
- 1/2 of factories and shops had been destroyed
- Military deaths – 264,433
- Civilian deaths – 60,595
- Rationing remained in place as Britain could not afford to buy food from abroad

Demobilisation

- Plan to release service personnel in an organised way
- Calculation on release date based on age and service number (number of months in uniform)
- 'Key men' released early – key skills needed in reconstruction
- Priority given to married women and men aged 50 or over
- Plan put in place on 18 June 1945. Over 18 months, 4.3m were 'demobbed'

Demobilisation

- Food still rationed
- Homes and workplaces damaged or destroyed
- Re-adjustment to living a 'normal' life
- Some returned to find relationships had broken down. Divorce rates increased significantly
- Psychological effects made life difficult for many

War damage

- January 1944 – ‘Operation Steinbock’ under General Peltz (Baby Blitz)
- Mostly ineffective due to poor training and navigation and effective anti-aircraft defences
- However, still caused loss of life and damage
- The ‘Vengeance Weapons’ fired continuously at the SE. About 25% reached London

Reasons for Labour's victory in 1945 general election

- Labour Party had been increasing in popularity before 1945
- Opinion polls taken during the war years showed that Labour were more popular than the Conservatives
- Socialism no longer seen as threatening as in the 1920s. People no longer frightened of 'state planning'
- Socialism seen in a good light due to USSR helping defeat Hitler
- Conservatives blamed by many for the problems of the 1930s, eg. Unemployment and social deprivation
- Churchill regarded as a great wartime leader but not a peacetime leader
- The war changed people's attitude towards the class system. Social mobility and opportunity encouraged by Labour. Beveridge report ideas suggested by Liberal writer, Beveridge
- Labour had held important posts in the Coalition wartime government. People expected them to continue on with the work in a Labour government
- Labour won a landslide victory

KQ7

Rebuilding the country after 1945

The Beveridge Report

- Commissioned by the coalition government during the war
- Published in 1942
- Labour adopted the recommendations
- Central to these were attacking the '5 Giants'
:
- Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor, Idleness
- Public Opinion poll – 90% wanted these proposals carried out
- One of the key reasons for Labour's victory in 1945

Beveridge Report

- Proposal was to extend pensions and unemployment insurance and produce a health system for all – the cornerstone of the ‘welfare state’
- Recommended compulsory insurance scheme for all workers, supplemented by employers and government
- Would provide a weekly benefit to those who were sick or unemployed.
- Would provide an old age pension
- Also recommended:
 - Family allowance for second and subsequent children
 - Marriage grant
 - Maternity grant and benefit
 - Death grant
- **Ending the ‘means test’**
- Looked after from **‘CRADLE TO GRAVE’**

Aneurin Bevan and the NHS

- 1945 – about 50% of the population had free medical treatment under the National Insurance Scheme (wage earners)
- Private Insurance needed for the rest – unaffordable to most
- **NHA 1946**
- Free to the public at the point of use
- Comprehensive service
- Prescriptions, dental and optical care included
- Hospitals co-ordinated into a single national system, operated by local Health Boards
- Overall responsibility with the Minister of Health

Opposition

- BMA opposed it
- Feared a loss of private patients would lead to a loss of money for members
- Did not want to become merely government workers – wanted independence
- January 1948 – overwhelmingly voted against joining the NHS
- Bevan allowed consultants to work within the NHS and also continue private practise

Impact

- **Problems**
- Cost £248m in 1st year - £140m more than expected
- £2m put aside for free spectacles over first 9 months used up within weeks
- More than 5m people issued with NHS spectacles in the first year
- By 1949 cost of running NHS was £400m, rising to £500m by 1951
- 1951 – a charge for some dental treatment introduced and for prescriptions. Bevan resigned.
- Retained by the Conservatives after their general election victory in 1951 – too popular to be removed

Education

- Education Act 1944 - Passed and put into operation by the coalition wartime government
- Education split into 3 categories: Primary; Secondary; Further
- Provided by Local Authorities through LEAs
- Education would be free but paid for by the state
- School leaving age raised to 15 in 1947
- Secondary stage catered for by 3 types of school: Grammar; Technical; Modern
- Which type attended determined by sitting an exam, the '11 plus'. Higher pass – grammar. Lowest pass – modern
- Gave those that attended Grammar schools an advantage, despite intentions.
- More attended university and achieved better jobs.
- Very few technical schools opened

The Homes for All Policy

- Massive building programme needed to recover after the war
- 200,000 prefab homes needed (designed to last 10 years)
- Aim was to build 500,000 to cover all eventualities
- 1.2 million homes built between 1945-1951 – only 156,623 were prefabs.
- New Towns Act 1946 & Town & Country Planning Act 1947 shaped council house provision

Nationalisation

- ◉ During the war many industries were run by the government
- ◉ The impact of the war and government control had been largely positive as many had not recovered from the depression
- ◉ Some saw this as socialist control
- ◉ Some agreed that these industries were vital to Britain's recovery
- ◉ Justified on the grounds of: industrial efficiency; creating jobs to maintain full employment; lower prices for the consumer.

Nationalisation

- ⦿ Coal Industry Nationalisation Act 1946
- ⦿ National Coal Board set up under the Minister of Fuel and Power.
- ⦿ 850 coalmine owners compensated
- ⦿ Electricity industry nationalised in 1947. Gas nationalised in 1948. These attracted opposition.
- ⦿ January 1948 - British Rail
- ⦿ Designed to make transport around Britain more efficient

Reaction to reforms

Welfare State

- Cost continued to rise
- Expectations of what it could do deemed unrealistic by many
- 'Nanny state' accusation.
- 'Cradle to the Grave' support

NHS

- Highly regarded
- Too costly
- Unrealistic expectations

Education Act

- Some saw it as fairer and available to all
- Others saw it reinforcing social class

Reaction to reforms

Homes for All

- ◉ Essential for recovery
- ◉ Slowly restored housing stock and allowed those that couldn't afford to buy to rent
- ◉ Temporary housing used for longer than intended

Nationalisation

- ◉ 10% of working population employed by newly nationalised industries
- ◉ Previously failing industries were rescued
- ◉ Created 'standards' and safety levels at work
- ◉ Rescue at the taxpayers expense
- ◉ Created monopolies that were inefficient