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THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT OF LIBERAL PHILOSOPHIES IN GREAT BRITAIN IN THE 17TH CENTURY

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Résumé

Cet ouvrage analyse l'impact politique et social des philosophies libérales en Grande-Bretagne. Les philosophies libérales se sont développées au XVIIe siècle et ont rejeté les anciennes théories de gouvernement pour en établir de nouvelles. Les libéraux espéraient une société meilleure où les gens étaient libres et capables de s'améliorer. Les philosophies libérales s'opposaient à l'absolutisme du monarque et tentaient de restaurer la considération et le respect des droits individuels. Ainsi, les libéraux voulaient limiter les lois qui empêchaient les gens d'être libres dans leurs choix. Les philosophies libérales ont influencé la société et la politique anglaises et ont engendré des réformes. Elles ont contribué à l'établissement d'une monarchie constitutionnelle qui a mis en place un régime parlementaire soutenant la liberté, la pluralité des idéaux et l'ouverture. Elles ont également contribué à imposer des réformes sociales, car à une époque où les troubles étaient nombreux et où la majorité de la population vivait dans des conditions désastreuses, ces réformes semblaient nécessaires. Les Anglais, principalement les classes laborieuses, souhaitent une amélioration de leurs conditions de vie et de travail. Des lois ont alors été adoptées afin de répondre à leurs besoins. L'objectif de cette étude est d'analyser l'impact politique et social des politiques libérales en Grande-Bretagne. Un tel objectif nous amène à utiliser une perspective historique. La perspective historique est la description, l'analyse et l'explication des événements dans le temps. L'utilisation de cette perspective nous amène à poser les questions de recherche suivantes, principalement pour savoir en quoi consistent les philosophies libérales, comment elles se sont développées et ont évolué en Grande-Bretagne et quelles réformes politiques et sociales elles ont entraînées. À la fin de notre étude, nous avons découvert que d'importantes réformes politiques ont été apportées à la société et aux institutions britanniques**.**

Mots clés : : Grande-Bretagne libéraux, philosophies libérales, politique anglaise, réformes, réformes sociale.

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Abstract

This work analyses the political and social impact of Liberal Philosophies in Great Britain. Liberal philosophies developed in the 17th century and rejected the earlier theories of government and established new theories. Liberals hoped for a better society where people were free and capable of improvement. The liberal philosophies were against the absolutism of the monarch and attempted to restore the consideration and respect of individual right. So, the liberals wanted the limitation of laws which prevented people from being free in their choices. Liberal philosophies influenced English society and politics and engendered reforms. They helped establish a constitutional monarchy that set up a parliamentary regime which sustains liberty, plurality of ideals and openness. They also helped impose social reforms, for in a period when there were many disturbances and the majority of the population was living in dire conditions, these reforms seemed to be necessary. English people mainly the labouring classes wanted an improvement in their living and working conditions. Then, some Acts were passed in order to meet their requirements. The objective of the study is to analyse the political and social

impact of liberal policies in Great Britain. Such an objective leads us to use a historical perspective. The historical perspective is the description, analysis and explanation of events over time. The use of this perspective leads us to raise the following research questions mainly to know what do Liberal Philosophies consist on and how they developed and evolved in Great Britain and what political and social reforms they brought about. At the end of our we have found out that important political reforms were brought about in both British society and institutions.

Introduction

Liberalism is a political philosophy which protects individual freedom. It claims at the limitation of the monarch's power and the development of elected representation of the people. Liberalism emphasizes individual right and equality of opportunity. *The World English Dictionary (*2012, 3rd ed.) defines liberalism as:

> a political or social philosophy advocating the freedom of individual, parliamentary systems of governments, non-violent modification of political, social, or economic institutions to assure unrestricted development in all spheres of human endeavour, and govern mental guarantees of individual rights and civil liberties. (450)

The ideology of liberalism can be traced back to the *Magna Carta*, a political document that asserted the right of individuals even above the prerogatives of monarchs. That document which dates from 1215 was followed by the Humanists that questioned the established church during the Renaissance, and the Whigs of the English Glorious revolution who asserted their rights to choose their king. However, movements usually regarded as truly liberal date from the Enlightenment, in particular the Whig party in Britain, the philosophers in France, and the movement towards self-government in colonial America. So, there are different groups of liberals with different beliefs.

Most liberals agree that the freedom of speech, freedom of religion, free elections, democracy, and free trade are essential. Within the large group of liberals, there are different ideologies such as classical liberalism, and new liberalism also called social liberalism. Although its dimensions differ from one society to another, where it is allowed to go on, there do exist core elements which can be well-known, analysed and understood. British liberalism, for example, did not seek to overthrow the Monarchy but to reduce its powers by expanding the role of the representatives of the people.

The liberal philosophers exercised profound influence on political beliefs. Indeed, it was John Locke (1632-1704) who best represented the principles of Liberalism in the British tradition. His *Two Treatises of Government* (1689) constitutes a most important statement on the liberal political philosophy that has so much influenced politics in succeeding centuries. Liberal philosophy symbolises an extensive intellectual belief that has studied some of the most important and controversial principles of the modern world. Government exists to serve the people it governs. Its power is limited by concepts of natural rights of individual and moral or

natural law. Among these natural rights was the concept of the right to acquire property. Life, liberty and estate belong to individuals quite apart from any grant from society or its instrument Government. The basic duty of government is to protect the common good and private rights which are seen to be inextricably related if not to the same thing. Individuals agree to limits on their behaviour by granting to government certain limited powers but only if the government rules on behalf of the common good and in the protection of private rights. For reasons of convenience and mutual benefit people enter into an agreement whereby they willingly surrender some of their freedom of action and in return gain security and stability in their daily lives.

Liberal philosophies influenced English society and politics and engendered reforms. They helped to establish a constitutional monarchy which allowed a parliamentary regime which sustains liberty, plurality of ideals and openness. So, English liberalism has been strengthened through its restrictions of a certain number of institutions among which the monarch, the government. In a period when there were many disturbances and the majority of the population was living in difficult conditions, reform seemed to be necessary. English people mainly the labouring classes wanted an improvement in their working and living conditions. Then, some Acts were passed in order to meet their requirements.

The objective of the study is to analyse the political and social impact of liberal policies in Great Britain. Such an objective leads us to use a historical perspective. The historical perspective is the description, analysis and explanation of events over time. It also makes it possible to describe changes and study the process of change (Savitt, 1984). Historical research is mainly descriptive, using sequences of events over time. Such an exercise must involve an understanding of the period under study (Tamilia, 2003). Specific events are identified and then described in terms of particular characteristics. The analysis presupposes an explanation, highlighting the relationships and consequences of the events. Generally speaking, the studies are not predictive (Savitt, 1980), although historians do use extrapolation, which adds a pragmatic dimension to the approach. A complex task associated with this method is to contextualise the issues addressed in relation to the period under study. Let us not forget that the basis of historical research is to use secondary data, i.e. data that already exist to analyse it, which in many cases implies a precise research strategy in order not to waste time collecting data (Armstrong, 1990). Indeed, the search for secondary data can be a perilous and time-consuming exercise, hence the importance of clearly defining the problem and the phenomenon to be studied from the outset in order not to waste any more time.

The use of this perspective leads us to raise the following research questions : What do Liberal Philosophies consist on and how did they develop and evolve in Great Britain ? What political and social reforms did they bring about ?

To answer these questions we have divided the work into three sections. Section one deals with the development and evolution of Liberal Philosophies in Great Britain and section two is about the political reforms ; and section three analyses the social reform.

1. Development and Evolution of Liberal Philosophies in Great Britain

Liberal philosophies developed in the 17ᵗʰ century and rejected the earlier theories of government and established new theories. Liberals hoped for a better society where people were free and capable of improvement; that is the reason why in their writings, they defended individual right.

Liberalism is a political philosophy which asserts liberty as an individual right and claims for the limitation of the monarch's power. Liberal philosophies were against the absolutism of the monarch and attempted to restore the consideration and respect of individual right. So, the liberals wanted the limitation of laws which restricted people's freedom in their choices. The centre of liberals' political values is individualism; liberalism turns around the individual. So the state had to grant and defend individual rights. Moreover, they expected all government to be representative; they also claimed for the freedom of speech and assembly.

Liberalism emphasizes equality of opportunity. Different forms of liberalism may propose very different policies, but they all defend principles such as freedom of speech, the limitation of the power of the government, the rule of law, a free market, and a transparent system of government. In addition, all liberals support another form of government known as liberal democracy. Among the different types of liberalism, we have classical liberalism, which is a political ideology that advocates limited government, constitutionalism, and the rule of law, reason, tolerance, and individual liberties including freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly and free markets. Classical liberals rejected many fundamental speculations which dominated earlier theories of government such as the Divine Right of the Kings, hereditary position and established religion. In fact, the 19ᵗʰ century classical liberals opposed government intervention in social programs and economic affairs. For them, the real freedom is freedom from coercion. Thus, they see State interference in the economy as a coercive power that limits the economic freedom and favours laissez-faire economic policy, meaning the removal of legal barriers to trade. Government was to remain apart from economy intervention. This principle is the first proposed by Adam Smith in his *Wealth of Nations* (1776). He proposed free enterprise where market forces would regulate price, and would create more than a serious controlled markets that were the norm of the tune. Politics has to protect individual right and to increase freedom of choice. Most Liberals developed the idea that individuals could structure both moral and economic life without direction from the state; they advocated an end to feudal and mercantile regulations. They promulgated laissez-faire government too:

> Beyond identifying a clear role for government in modern society, liberals also have obsessed over the meaning and nature of the most important principle in liberal philosophy: liberty. From the 17th century until the 19th century, liberals from Adam Smith to John Stuart Mill-conceptualized liberty as the absence of interference from government and from other individuals, claiming that all people should have the freedom to develop their own unique abilities and capacities without being sabotaged by others. (Young, 2002, p.33)

In fact, there are conflicts and controversies among liberals. Their views oppose; they use the same words for different beliefs, or sometimes they use different words for the same beliefs. Political liberalism emphasizes the rule of law and supports liberal democracy in a

constitutional monarchy over absolute monarchy. Cultural Liberalism focuses on the right of individuals pertaining to conscience and lifestyle, including issues such as religious freedom, sexual freedom, cognitive freedom and protection from government intrusion in private life. Economic liberalism, also called classical liberalism supports the individual rights of property and the freedom of contract which may allow people to exercise other liberties. As for social liberalism also known as new liberalism; it supports equality under the law and the help from government to protect citizens by granting them provision of basic necessities, the right to health care, the right to an education, and the right to a minimum wage. Unlike the classical liberals who oppose welfare state, the social liberals think that government must take an active role in promoting the freedom of citizens. But Friedrich August Hayek argues, "There can be no freedom of press if the instruments of printing are under government control, no freedom of assembly if the needed rooms are so controlled, no freedom of movement if the means of transport are a government monopoly."(Hayek, 1978, p. 149) For him there can be freedom only if moral values are independent from government.

As a matter of fact, social liberalism advocates some restrictions on matters that economic liberals view as fundamental rights. For instance, social liberals may favour a minimum wage law, which classical liberals view as violating of the liberty of the contract. They shy that unequal power cause contract to favour rich people. Nevertheless, Classical liberals thought that people did not need the help of government or whoever, because human being is not good. So, they needed natural state, in which everyone had a natural right to defend his interests within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave or depending upon the will of any other man. John Locke thought that natural right is essential for human being; in his *Second Treatise of Government*, Locke believed that human nature is characterised by reason and tolerance. Like Hobbes, Locke believed that human nature allowed men to be selfish. This is apparent with the introduction of currency. In a natural state all people were equal and independent, and everyone had a natural right to defend his "Life, health, Liberty, or Possessions. (Locke, 1690)

Likewise, Hobbcs has displayed this social contract theory in his *Leviathan*, he postulates the state of nature, but he thinks that life without a government will lead to war. For him a strong central authority is essential to avoid evil. Thus, all types of liberalism claim to defend freedom. They only disagree about the true meaning of freedom.

However, the 20th century is a century rejecting classical liberalism. The swing away from government action in the 1970s led to the introduction of some economic liberal doctrines. Militants used the word "neoliberalism" for global market liberalism and for free trade policies. It refers to a program of reducing trade barriers and international market limitation.

Liberal principles highlight the importance of representative liberal democracy. Liberals sought and established a constitutional order that respected individual freedoms. It is in this perspective that liberal Democracy has spread out in the world. It is a form of government in which represented democracy works under the ideals of liberalism. It is characterized by fair, free, and competitive election between the political parties, a separation of powers into distinct branches of government, the rule of law, the system of checks and balances, and the protection of human right and civil liberties for all citizens. Liberal democracies often draw upon

constitution to delineate the powers of government and also to protect the social contract. The liberal philosophies lay emphasis on individualism.

The liberal principles attempt to preserve individuals' freedom, and economic liberty. The Liberal principles give a new impetus to modern values. They will help to avoid the past mistakes.

2. Reforms in Politics

Political change in Britain has always been characterized by its slow but sure nature which in turn establishes strong traditions. The absolute monarchy gives way to a constitutional monarchy. People are elected to form a branch of government. So, the establishment of elected representative favours the growth of political parties.

The political parties which prevail today in England are influenced by the liberal philosophies. The first English political parties appeared in the XVIIth with the Whigs and the Tories, but it is the parliament that helped to the creation those parties. The Whig party and the Tory party are the political formation of Britain. They remind us the Catholicism and the Protestantism of the 17th century. At that time religious orthodoxy developed in Britain, and

English people were divided into two religious groups : Catholics and Protestants. Their religious beliefs brought about conflicts between people, that is the reason why English people mainly the Protestants rose against James II, because he favoured the Catholics. He appointed many Catholics to high office. The Whigs were Protestants and they opposed Catholicism. Primarily, they advocated the supremacy of the Parliament, while calling for the toleration for Protestants dissenters; they automatically opposed a catholic as a king. They opposed Catholic Church too, because they saw it as a threat to liberty. Then, the elder Pitt stated that, "The errors of Rome are rank idolatry, a subversion of all civil as well as religious liberty, and the utter disgrace of reason and human nature." (Basil, 1949, p. 75) Elder Pitt meant that the lack of religious liberty and social justice would incite a rebellion. He feared England to commit the same errors like Rome.

The Whig party was founded by Lord Shaftesbury in 1681. He was a puritan, a rich landowner who strictly opposed the absolute monarchy. Lord Shaftesbury had a link with Charles II though lie was one of his ministers before becoming Lord Chancellor in 1672. Shaftesbury became angry when Charles II secretively signed an accord with Louis XIV, an absolute monarch of France. The pact was the restoration of catholic as the religion of England. That crisis ended with the Glorious Revolution after which the Whigs became Liberals. The members of the Whig party are from liberal professions; they are against the Divine Right of the king and sympathy to the non conformist puritans. Thus, they are called Country Party in opposition to the Tories which are called Court Party, defenders of traditional values and the natural order of things.

The Tories believed in the Divine Right of the King. For them nobody had the right to object to a king, because he was chosen by God. Then, Sir Robert Filmer one of the first leaders of the Tories evokes the authority of the patriarchs in his best known work Patriarcha or the natural power of Kings (1680) published after his death. What is more, they deeply despise the non conformist puritans. But, John Locke, a liberal philosopher refutes Filmer's Patriarcha in

his First Treatise, he explains that the only legitimate governments are those that people have chosen.

Early liberal philosophers influenced the Whigs, because they contrasted liberalism to absolutism. The Whigs policies are alike liberalism and oppose Tories which later become Conservatives. For them, individuals are the basis of society and law, and that society and its institutions should defend individual rights without class distinction. Moreover, they support the right of property. The Whigs competed with Tories from 1680s to 1850s. They played an important role in the Glorious Revolution and were standing enemies of the Stuarts Kings and the Roman Catholics. In the 17th century, the Whigs took full control of the government. At that time liberalism grew up and acts were passed for the reformation of past policies. Among them, we have The *Habeas Corpus* Act, The *Toleration Act*, to note but a few.

In fact, opposition to absolutism developed in the United Kingdom, because English people became aware of the violation of their rights. The only law that existed was that of the monarch; English people were subjects rather than citizens, they only had to serve and obey the monarch. From then on, they rebelled against the king in order to gain their rights and liberties. That period was marked by the rise of radical political tendency next to more doctrinal liberal tendency. So the development of liberalism is the basis of changes in politics; the Radicals united with the Whigs into the Liberal Party. After decades in opposition, the Whigs came to power under Lord Grey in 1830 and carried the first Reform Act in 1832. This act gave the franchise to the middle classes, and led the development of the middle class liberalism, and the end of Wiggery. As early as 1839, Lord John Russell had espoused the name Liberal Party. Eventually, the Whigs became the Liberal Party in 1859. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, William Gladstone carried the party through governments; and he was seen as being on the centre of British politics. During the 19th century the liberal Party was mostly in favour of what would he called classical liberalism, supporting *laissez-faire* economic policies such as free trade and little or no interference of the government in the economy. But, the political term of new liberalism began to appear in the late1880s and became ever more common to denote the tendency in Liberal Party to favour an increased role for the state as more important than classical liberalism.

In addition, most parties identify themselves as liberal though their views differ from one another. But, all of them claim to protect people's rights. So, new parties emerged in United Kingdom. In the 19th century grew voter demand, the industrial workers needed the franchise in order to be represented. So, in 1906, the Labour Party was created to represent the rights of the newly enfranchised working men. During the World War I, the liberals governed Britain through a coalition government with conservatives, which ended in 1922. By the end of World War I, the Labour Party replaced the Liberals as the main rival of the Conservative Party in British politics. Then, the Liberals occupied the third place where they have remained ever since. Labour combined militant trade unionism with intellectual social democracies to create a pragmatic, gradualist ideology that sought to level class differences in Britain. However, a comeback of the Liberal Party was seen during the 1960s and 1970s, but it was until 1981 when the Liberals allied with the newly formed Social Democrats. The alliance was completed in 1988:

In 1988 the Liberals and Social Democrats merged to create what came to be called the Liberal Democrats. Over two-thirds of the members, and all the serving MPs of the Liberal Party joined this party. The merger of the two parties being completed in March 1988 to form the Social and Liberal Democrats, becoming the Liberal Democrats in October 1989. (BBC NEWS, 2001)

When the Labour government fell in 1979, the Conservatives under Margaret Thatcher won a victory which served to push the Liberals back into the margins. In 1981, the radicals from the moderate wing of the Labour Party led by the former Cabinet ministers David Owens, Williams, etc; founded the Social Democratic Party. It quickly entered into an alliance with Liberals; and they became Liberal Democrats in 1989. Nevertheless, some members of the Liberal Party left the party. Afterwards, a small Splinter Liberal Party was formed in 1989 by former members who opposed the alliance. In 2005 general election, the Liberal Democrats vote 62 MPs to the House of Commons. However, in the 2010 General election, the Conservative Party won more seats than any other, but not enough to form a majority government. After several days of negotiations, the Liberal Democrats agreed to join the Conservatives as part of a coalition government. Today the major parties are the Labour Party, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Conservative Party, but other significant parties are represented in Parliament. Political parties have seen many changes in the course of history. These changes came along with the expansion of liberal principles. Thus, the liberal principles helped to improve politics. New parties were formed, but they all attempted to defend the people's interests.

3. Social Reforms

With the enfranchisement of the working class, a demand for welfare measures put pressure on the political system to change. So, Reform measures were passed by Parliament, including legislation for public education, housing, works, and health care.

During the 20th century, classical liberals favoured laissez-faire economic policy and became discredited. The same old problems of poverty and ill-health still remained. The liberal reforms of 1906 to 1914 are very essential, because they show a marked change in government policy from a largely laissez-faire approach to a more collective approach. The government now accepted that it should have a much larger role and responsibility in helping those branches of society who could not help themselves. In the latter part of the nineteenth century governments began to take tentative steps towards the provision of basic welfare services; for example the education acts and the public health laws were passed. However, many problems still needed to be tackled and it was in the relief from poverty that the government made the least movement from the poor law act. Voluntary action, private charity and self-help were still the watch words of the day, but local and national government now began to play a more positive part in enabling people to get back on their feet. The real turning point was when the liberals passed their series of reforms between 1906 and 1914. In fact, the liberal reforms attempted to deal with the problem of poverty, for in the 19th century English people lived in extreme poverty. They focused on four groups in society: the old, the young, the sick and the unemployed. During that century, the working classes formed unions to protect workers' rights

on the job, but he liberals introduced reforms to help those employed in low paying jobs and also those who worked in bad conditions.

By the end of the 19th century, some basic provisions were made for social services. For example, in 1870, mandatory elementary education was put into law. The need to establish a national system of education had been campaigned for some time, but all efforts had so far been foiled by the inability of the Anglican and the Nonconformist sects to agree on the form of religious instruction to be given. Moreover, the working classes' children are not educated. Yet, The Liberal Prime Minister William Gladstone favoured Social Reform. One major achievement was the Elementary Education Act of 1870; it provided England with an adequate system of elementary schools for the first time and required attendance. Moreover, in 1906, children were provided with free school meals. However, some local council did not care for this system, as it was not compulsory for them to provide the free meals; and the cost to the council was far greater than was paid for: "The provision of freeschool meals was made compulsory in 1914, in Which year fourteen million meals per school day were served (compared with nine million per school day in 1910"(Watts, 2012); most of which were without charge. In 1912, half of all councils in Britain contributed to the system. The government realized that they could not fight the First World War with a force of malnourished and ill children, when they had to conscript. In addition, following an unfavourable report by the Board of Education's inspectors on infant education in 1906, school provision for children under five was restricted. In 1907, the number of free scholarship places in secondary schools was increased. If working-class pupils passed a scholarship examination, then their fees would be paid for them by the Local Education Authority. A part of places in most secondary schools would be booked for scholarship pupils. Bright working-class children were therefore provided with the opportunity to climb the instructive ladder, while for those pupils who failed the scholarship exam; some Local Education Authorities had "Central Schools" which almost provided a based programme of study for children between the ages of 11 and 15.

In fact, children were victims of industrialisation. In the 19th century, the industrial workers lived in dirty places where ill and healthy people were mixed up. That living condition brought about pestilence and early death. Moreover, most of them died with hunger, because of the high price of bread due to the Corn Laws. But British liberals truly succeeded in repealing the Corn Laws in 1846. As for the announcement of Births Act, it was until 1907 that it came into being. It sought to quantify and analyse the causes of the infant mortality. Besides, the 1907 Probation Act established a probation service to provide supervision within the community for young offenders as an alternative to prison. In 1908, the Children and Young Person's Act fonned part of the Children's Charter which imposed punishments for those neglecting children. As we know, in the 19th century many children were left by themselves; and most of them became offenders prowling in the streets. So, the charter attempted to protect children. It became illegal to sell children tobacco, alcohol and fireworks or to send children begging.

What is more, in the early twentieth century a free National Health Service did not yet exist. The liberal government introduced the National Insurance Act in 1911. In 1912, free medical treatment was then available:

Medical inspections began in 1907 but many poor families could not afford the cost of the doctors ' fees to get treated; it was not until 1912 that medical treatment was provided. However, education authorities largely ignored the provision of free medical treatment for school chi ldren. (GCSE Bitesize, 2010).

The National Insurance gave workers the right to sick pay and free medical treatment in return. The medical treatment was provided by doctors who belonged to a board in each district. Doctors received a fee from the insurance fund for each board patient they treated.

National Insurance Act 1911 compulsory health insurance was provided for workers earning less than £160 per year. The scheme was contributed to by the worker who contributed fourpence, the employer who contributed threepence and the government who contributed two pence. The scheme provided sickness benefit entitlement of nine shillings (£36), free medical treatment and maternity benefit of 30 shillings (£120). (Timmins, 2012)

Although the National Health Insurance method was not wide-reaching in its coverage, it was nevertheless of great benefit to the majority of British people. However, in 1948, the National Health Service was created under the leadership of the Labour Party. Even when Conservatives regained control in 1950, the reforms were not repealed. Though the electorate was divided largely by social class, with two-third of working class voting Labour and even larger percentages of middle class voting Conservative, both parties shared an agreement on the necessity of the welfare state.

From 1906 until 1914, laws were enacted providing for old age pensions. In 1908, the liberals introduced old age pensions, which became law in 1909. This act gave pensions of five shillings per week at the single rate to persons over 70 whose incomes were less than £ 21 per year. "The single person's rate applied to those over 70 earning under £21".(Hugh, 2012) The major Criticism of this act was that it did not go far enough.

The industrial crisis increased the unemployment rate to a highest peak; wages were driven down with a rise in food prices which affected the cost of living. Then, Unemployment Insurance the second part of the National Insurance Act dealt with unemployment. In 1906, the 1901 Factory Act was amended to include laundries, and in 1909, labour exchanges were set up in order to help unemployed people find work, by providing centres where a large number of employers and the unemployed could post jobs and apply for them respectively. By February 1910, eighty-three labour exchanges were open, and proved to be important in helping people find employment. When long term unemployment increase 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 jobless people. There is the Mines Accidents Act too. It was passed in 1910, in order to provide rescue and assistance for men working in the mines.

Overall, the liberal reforms marked a transition point between old laissez-faire attitudes and those of a more collective nature. The reforms made only limited inroads into the problems of poverty. The pensions paid were not enough and the unemployment benefits were limited to only certain trades, and then provided only for employee and not his family. The government was prepared to intervene to help the poor, but the poor had also to help themselves. So, to

make assistance, they needed individual freedom and private property as many philosophers believed.

Conclusion

To conclude, we can say that the influence of liberal philosophies on the British institutions is very profound. As a matter of fact, the idea of the limitation of the Monarch's power, and the increase of the Parliament's power was accomplished. They also influence traditional politics and favour the emergence of parliamentary government. The House of Commons is freely chosen by people. English political parties are well-known parties in the world thanks to their originality and the liberal view they display. That is the reason why, English ideologies arc widespread all over the world.

There had been a transition in policy-making power from the king to Parliament. The absolutism of the monarch well existed when the Commons came up. They limited the power of the monarchy, because they changed the royal prerogative of the monarch, and it became the prerogative of the monarch and his Parliament. This meant that all actions need the assent of the Parliament and the Commons before being taken into consideration. Thus, the monarch's power decreased and the parliament's power increased.

It was in the course of the debates during the English Civil War and the Commonwealth period that the ideas of the rule or supremacy of law became finally articulated. After the Glorious Revolution of 1688, it became the leading principles of the Whig Party that it brought to power. The classical formulations were supplied by John Locke's *Second Treatise on Civil Government* (1689), which in some respects provides a still more rationalist interpretation of institutions than what came to be the feature of the 18th century British thinkers. It was also during this period that close association of the British liberal movement and the predominantly non-conformist and Calvinist commercial and industrial classes arose, and remained characteristic of British liberalism until modern times. Whether this merely meant that the same classes which developed a spirit of commercial enterprise were also more receptive to Calvinist Protestantism, or whether these religious views led more directly to liberal principles of politics is a much-discussed subject which cannot be further considered here. But the fact that the struggle between initially very intolerant religious sects brought about a controversy, and British liberal movement remained closely connected with Calvinist Protestantism.

Liberalism was mainly a constitutionalist movement which is somewhat more guided and more influenced by the British example. This expression chiefly in a different attitude towards the problem of limiting the open powers of government, of the sovereign produced a fairly severe idea of the Rule of Law and the separation of powers that stressed the independence of the administration from the courts. The liberal principles influence British people which led to the reformation of the policies. During the nineteenth century, the European country which seemed nearest to an awareness of the liberal principles was Great Britain. Most of the liberal ideals came to be accepted not only by a powerful Liberal Party but by the majority of the population, and even the Conservatives often became the instrument of the achievement of liberal reforms.

Liberalism has embraced several fundamental but imprecise elements. Moreover, at different points in history the liberal ideology put emphasis on different aspects of its basic principles. Those elements which have appeared as fundamental to liberalism are freedom and equality, the rule of law, individual rights of property, and natural rights as belonging to all people, the limitation or even the neutrality of the government in affairs.... Liberal thought and philosophies are much different today than they were in the past, but they all defend individual rights which the liberals view as fundamental for the improvement of British policies. Liberalism had exercised influence on traditional policies; and favoured the emergence of modern democracies.

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