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Revision Notes for Leaving Cert 2011

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History
Leaving Cert
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Katanga & India

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Introduction

These notes have been created by Mr Barry Finn one of Irelands leading history teachers and a teacher of History at St Columba's College, Co Dublin. The notes are very comprehensive and cover some areas of the Leaving Cert History course in great detail.

Topic 1: British Withdrawal from India, 1945 – 1947

On 15th August 1947, two new states came into existence, India and Pakistan, from the remains of the former British colony of India. India had once been the “jewel in the crown” of an empire on which “the sun never set”. The withdrawal was by no means a smooth and peaceful affair, and many questions have been asked about who was to blame for the explosion of violence that followed – the British, the Hindu majority, the Muslim minority?

(i) The origins and development of the Indian independence movement

Prior to WWII, India was the most important part of Britain's vast empire. It is an entire sub-continent, 20 times the size of Britain and containing 20% of the world's population (400m people), containing many different climates and landscapes – hot deserts, cold mountain ranges and massive rivers like the Ganges. Roughly 70% of the population was Hindu, 20% Muslim and the remainder other religions like Buddhists, Sikhs and Christians. Muslims were mostly concentrated in the north, forming a majority in some provinces. Muslims had conquered large parts of India in the Middle Ages and a legacy of religious tension had lingered ever since.

British control of India was known as the “Raj”, from the Hindi word to “rule”, and it encompassed a massive amount of territory covering modern Bangladesh, Burma, India and Pakistan. Broadly speaking, it was divided into two types of territory – the areas controlled directly by Britain, containing 75% of the population, and the “Princely States”, areas ruled by local princes (560 of them) which comprised 20% of the country and contained about 100m people. “Rajas” or “Maharajas” ruled the Hindus in these areas, “Nawabs” ruled the Muslims. Theoretically the princes were independent, in practice they were expected to follow British policy. In return for their support, the British permitted a large amount of autonomy to the princes.

The Westminster government included a Secretary of State for India, who was responsible for developing and maintaining British policy in India, and appointed a Viceroy, who lived in India, representing the king and assisted by a five-man council. The Viceroy was based in Delhi in the Punjab. “New Delhi”, a splendid new city, had become capital of India in 1911 when the Indian government re-located there. The Viceroy's palace was vast – 4.5 acres with 6,000 servants including 400 gardeners, paid for by Indian taxpayers. Those parts of India under direct British rule were divided into provinces and run by a governor with the help of a small civil service. Due to its small size, the civil service needed educated Indians, mostly educated at British universities, to help it.

British rule brought advantages and disadvantages:

- i. A vast railway system, fourth largest in the world, which linked remote regions and helped foster a common sense of Indian identity.
- ii. Economic benefits resulting from trade – often stimulated by the railways mentioned above.
- iii. Social reforms and public works.
- iv. Racism and exploitation – India was seen as a source of cheap labour and raw materials.
- v. Overwhelming majority of Indians were illiterate and very poor farmers.

British attitudes to India in the 1930s varied:

- Conservatives were proud of the empire and British rule of such a vast land – they wanted to maintain this prestige and argued that Indians were incapable of ruling themselves and that the country would descend into anarchy if Britain withdrew (the events immediately following withdrawal seemed to prove them right).
- Liberals and Labour politicians sympathised with Indians and felt they should have more control of their own affairs without ever considering full independence as a viable option.
- British settlers in India, former soldiers, civil servants and businessmen, blocked most attempts at reform including greater independence or legal equality, despite making up a tiny fraction of the population (168,000 in 1931).

Nationalist attitudes began to develop from the end of the 19th century. Reasons for this included:

- Lack of Indian representatives in government.

- Arrogance of many ruling British.
- An economy that seemed to exploit India's resources and people.



(ii) Moves towards British withdrawal

(iii) The debate about partition



(iv) The role of Viceroy Louis Mountbatten

The majority of the cabinet backed Atlee and on 20th February 1947 it was formally announced that Britain would leave India in June 1948. By this stage, Atlee had lost confidence in Wavell and replaced him with Lord Louis Mountbatten:

- Mountbatten was a cousin of King George VI and a great-grandson of Queen Victoria.

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(v) The eruption of violence on a massive scale

[REDACTED]



(vi) Were the British to blame?

(vii) Developments since independence



Topic 2: The Secession of Katanga

Overview

Background

Opposition to Belgian Rule

Belgium Agrees to Independence

The 1960 Elections

The Army Mutiny

Katanga Secedes

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The UN Intervenes

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The Cold War Dimension

The Overthrow and Murder of Lumumba

On 12th September Lumumba was arrested by soldiers under the command of his once trusted friend, Mobutu – he had irritated too many people, perhaps, including his former allies, and he would be brutally murdered within months. Mobutu had angrily resented the arrival of Soviet advisors, saying: *“I didn’t fight the Belgians to then have my country colonised for a second time”*. On 14th September, Mobutu seized power in a coup – Lumumba was put under house arrest in Leopoldville and the Soviet advisors were ordered to leave the Congo. Pleased with his anti-communist stance, western governments funded Mobutu’s new regime, one which would later become murderously corrupt, and the cash was used to buy the loyalty of the army. A new government was formed, with Kasavubu remaining as president but all those loyal to Lumumba excluded. The US in particular kept a close eye on events, determined to make sure Lumumba never returned to power. Journalist Michela Wrong wrote: *“In the space of months, Lumumba had managed to outrage the Belgians by insulting their king, appal the West with his flirtation with Moscow and alienate the United Nations. He had also frightened former colleagues by hatching a series of cack-handed assassination plots against his Congolese rivals”*.

On 27th November Lumumba managed to escape house arrest and attempted to make contact with his followers in the east of the country but was recaptured on 1st December. He was badly beaten as UN troops did nothing. His followers in Stanleyville established their own government in protest, meaning, just six months after independence, the former Belgian Congo had disintegrated into four states:

- The official government of Mobutu and Kasavubu, supported by the west and the UN
- The government of Katanga, backed by Belgium, under Tshombe
- The South Kasai Mining State, also backed by Belgium
- The *“Free Republic of the Congo”*, loyal to Lumumba and backed by the USSR and its allies

The Congo was on the verge of utter collapse and only the presence of UN troops was preventing that from happening. Lumumba still alive was a threat – many of his followers had taken up arms and were advancing on Leopoldville with the aim of freeing him and returning him to power. There were also fears of a coup in support of Lumumba. Both the Belgians and the Congolese decided to assassinate him – both played large roles in his murder. The Belgians persuaded Tshombe to allow Mobutu and Kasavubu to send Lumumba to prison in Jadotville in Katanga. The reason announced publicly was to step up security for a man who had escaped once already. The real reason was to have him killed – Lumumba was being handed over to his bitterest enemies and only one outcome was possible, death. The US and other western governments looked on and did nothing.

On 17th January 1961, Lumumba was flown to Elisabethville. Swedish UN soldiers watched but did not intervene as he was savagely beaten and then shot by a firing squad commanded by a Belgian officer. His body was dismembered and dumped and the Belgians began circulating a cover-up story claiming Lumumba had escaped and been murdered by local villagers. Few believed this story, Dutch journalist Luddo de Witte said: “*it was Belgian advice, Belgian orders and finally Belgian hands that killed Lumumba*”. In 2002, a Belgian parliamentary inquiry found the Belgian government “*morally responsible*” for Lumumba’s death and made a public apology.

The Impact of Lumumba’s Murder

The UN Intervenes Again

The End of the Secession of Katanga

The Simba Rebellion

Mobutu's Second Coup

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