



Coleraine University Controversy

History – Leaving Cert

Quick Notes

Coleraine University Controversy

2.1 Lord Brookeborough

- Basil Brooke became the 3rd PM of Northern Ireland in 1943.
- At this point the Unionists had a lot of strength due to Britain resenting the South for not being involved in the war.
- The British government argued that due to the Government of Ireland Act, that Stormont was responsible for how the North was run.
- At this point the North was the most disadvantaged area in the UK with unemployment at an all-time high especially in agriculture.
- Numerous reforms were brought in which helped the situation.
- In Britain, Labour introduced the welfare state and agreed to subsidise the North.
- There were numerous reforms in Health (National Health Service), Education Act 1974 (student who pass primary exams can go to university), National Insurance Scheme etc.
- The government established the Northern Ireland Development Council in 1955 to promote new industries to help unemployment.
- In 1961 the Hall Committee produced a report on the economy saying that people should be encouraged to emigrate to Britain.
- More and more people called for Brookeborough to resign due to unemployment which he did on 23 March 1963.

2.2 Terence O'Neill

- Previous Minister for Finance.
- Planned to defeat the Labour party in Northern Ireland who were gaining ground-focused on economy.
- He conducted three reports-Benson-close rails, Matthew-limit expansion to growth areas.
- Wilson Plan 1964-create a new city not west of Bann (Craigavon), invest £450 million on attracting foreign industry, build roads not in west of Bann and set up a second university.
- Success-attracted Goodyear, Dupont except it did not help the Catholic West of the Bann which created a lot of resentment.
- Tom Wilson-"A vicious circle could be seen with the violent expression of discontent leading to a further worsening of economic conditions."

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- 1961-Robbins Report on Higher Education - need new university.
- Lockwood Committee under Sir John Lockwood was to look into the second university (No catholic on it).
- Derry had huge support-University for Derry Action Committee set up by John Hume (SDLP).
- Derry Case-2nd biggest city (70,000), Magee College.
- Results-10th February 1965-Derry was rejected due to 1. West of Bann Policy and 2. Economic reasons- housing, sectarian violence, finance.
- Denounced as sectarian bias due to Derry having over two thirds of its population being Catholic. Along with this was the gerrymandering, housing and voting and industry corruption e.g. 10% of Catholics only in RUC.
- Hume-“The plan is therefore to develop the strongly Unionist Belfast-Coleraine-Portadown triangle and cause migration from west to east.”
- Motorcade-18th February-2,000 vehicles, 25,000 people (almost half adults in Derry) went to Stormont, two-minute silence.
- Faceless Men-19th February-Unionists who O’Neill met with did not want Magee to be closed down but didn’t want new university in Derry either as it would threaten the Unionist control.
- Party Whip-Vote in Stormont, Unionist apply party whip which means anyone who votes against it is expelled from government. Lockwood recommendation was carried 27:19.
- O’Neill agreed to leave Magee College open as a branch of the new university.
- Later emerged that Lockwood had asked the government for their opinion.
- Results-Elections of 1965-Unionist Vote up, labour Vote down.
- Influenced the setting up of the civil rights movement-NICRA

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