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Even as the losses mounted, some politicians continued to refuse to believe that the downturn would persist. Happy Days, to paraphrase a popular song of the s, would soon be here again. But Happy Days remained elusive. In Canada and the United States, millions were unemployed. The prices earned by farmers in stood at half their levels. Social assistance was miserly at best. The depth of the misery dramatically intensified the challenge to capitalism from the political Left and Right. People can only stand so much, and one of these days there will be a settlement. Just a decade later he would be the U. In Canada and the U. In the economic buoyancy of the s, they had been marginal political players, preaching to the wind about the inevitable failure of capitalism. When the forecast failure did materialize in , the Communist Party stock went in exactly the opposite direction to the financial stocks of investors. Although they are often thought to dwell in lofty ivory towers, intellectuals were not blind to the human carnage wrought by the Depression. He explained in a letter to his brother-in-law: Internationally, the collapse of capitalism had a dual impact. One result was to make the Soviet Union a new focus of interest and admiration. In , fascism took control in a second European country, and this was not a secondary one. When Adolf Hitler seized power in Germany in January , many people understood that he represented a dangerous trend. Hitler openly proclaimed the end of democracy. One people, one leader, speaking with one voice. No tolerance for dissent. Soon there was pressure to bring neighboring countries under the banner of Nazism, and fraternal movements took to the streets even in countries like Britain that had deep democratic traditions. Canada too, had its admirers of Hitler. Some tried to take their politics to the streets. Others remained cosseted in boardrooms and government corridors. Faced with the demise of the system that gave it wealth and power, the capitalist class would struggle to keep its privileges. So capitalist states would turn increasingly toward rule by force. Leftists worldwide rallied to preserve democracy in Spain. Over 40, volunteers from 70 countries traveled there, often laying down their lives to prevent another country from falling to fascism. Many Canadians, however, did not have to seek out Spain to encounter repressive violence. City police in Vancouver and countless other cities clubbed protesters. Bennett, used extraordinary legislation, Section 98 of the Criminal Code, to prosecute and jail leaders of the Communist Party. The Province of Quebec also got into the act. Its Padlock Law allowed police to shut down homes and businesses used to promote communism. In the United States, violent repression of striking workers in the auto and steel plants was the order of the day. Then, in , the U. The Smith Act would become especially useful to jail communists in the Cold War years. This section contains documents that speak to the s. Many people who lived through the decade count themselves lucky to have survived, but those who did were still deeply scarred.

### 2: Formats and Editions of Culture and crisis in Britain in the thirties [www.enganchecubano.com]

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Lord Salisbury remained as prime minister and became the last premier to sit in the House of Lords. The Labour Representative Committee, a socialist federation formed in 1900, convinced the trade unions that the political representation of labour was now essential. This organisation later became the Labour party. Notably, it still ignored the rights of the black population. The cost and conduct of the war prompted concerns that Britain was no longer fit for its imperial role. He was premier for two-and-a-half years. In the long run, the pact may have done more to destroy the Liberal party than preserve it. Germany, in turn, hoped to persuade Britain to abandon the alliance. It did not, and Britain displayed its commitment to France by initiating military staff talks between the two countries in 1917. Armed with an overall majority, the Liberals embarked on a programme of social reform. It was by far the most powerful battleship afloat, and raised the stakes in the Anglo-German naval arms race. But an agreement to resolve imperial disputes took on the appearance of a European pact. Famously, the marathon ended in dramatic fashion when the race leader, Dorando Pietri of Italy, was disqualified after he collapsed and had to be helped over the finishing line. Widely recognised as the best organised Games to date, they featured 22 nations, events and more than 2,000 athletes. Only about half a million people received the pension, and thus the significance of the legislation lay as much in the fact that it established a principle as in its immediate benefits. He presented these increases as designed to fund social reforms. This ensured that House of Lords reform was one of the issues at stake in the next general election. The budget was then passed. They and the Conservatives each secured seats, and, with Labour supporting the Liberals, the Irish Nationalists held the balance of power. A Franco-German settlement was negotiated, but the British were alarmed, fearing the Germans planned to turn Agadir into a naval base. As with the first Moroccan crisis in 1905, Germany only succeeded in strengthening the Entente Cordiale between Britain and France. The reforms meant that the Lords could not veto legislation that had passed the House of Commons in three successive sessions, and that parliament itself would be dissolved after five years, not seven. In separate legislation, pay for members of parliament was introduced. December National Insurance Act provides cover against sickness and unemployment Chancellor of the Exchequer David Lloyd George devised a contributory scheme of health insurance for those in employment, which provided payment for medical treatment. Grafted on to the act was a limited plan for unemployment benefit drawn up by Winston Churchill. With this legislation, the Liberals laid the foundations of the Welfare State. In response, Ulster Protestants and unionists formed the Ulster Volunteer Force, a paramilitary force which threatened the government with civil war if the measure was carried. The army was divided within itself, representing a potential flashpoint for the government. The Austro-Hungarian government blamed Serbia and used the killing as a pretext for war. Britain, as guarantor of Belgian neutrality, told Germany to withdraw. The ultimatum expired on 4 August and Britain duly declared war. It retreated after an initial engagement close to the Belgian border at Mons, then took part in a successful counter-attack on the river Marne in early September. Already fighting Russia, Germany now faced a trench-based war of attrition on two fronts. The Germans tried unsuccessfully to break the line at Ypres in a battle which lasted until 22 November. British forces suffered 54,000 casualties. Britain, France and Russia responded with declarations of war. The implications for Britain, with a vulnerable empire stretching across the Middle East to India and including a large Muslim population, were considerable. A combined force of British, New Zealand, Australian and French colonial troops were unable to break out of their beachheads and the campaign ultimately ended in defeat, with all troops evacuated by the end of the year. The sinking aroused widespread anti-German feeling in Britain. The principal beneficiaries of this coalition in terms of the top jobs remained the Liberals rather than the Conservatives. However, the wind was not favourable, and gains were limited. The battle continued until mid-October. Conscription enabled it to do both. Opposition to the measure in the House of Commons was limited 36 votes to 135, but parliament still

acknowledged the rights of the individual in allowing conscientious objection. Most of the population was unsupportive and the rebellion was crushed within a week. The British executed the leaders, inadvertently making martyrs of the rebels and inspiring those who followed. The rapid advance on Baghdad outstripped itself and the troops fell back to Kut-el-Amara, where they were encircled. Efforts to relieve the garrison failed and it surrendered. British prestige in the Middle East plummeted. The British lost more ships than the Germans, but the German fleet was rendered unable to put to sea again, thereby ensuring British naval supremacy remained intact. On the Western Front, the French and British attacked astride the river Somme, where their two armies met. On 1 July, the British army suffered its worst casualties in a single day - 57, men, of whom nearly 20, were killed. The battle continued until 18 November. Once problems with reliability were overcome, the British and French used their new weapon to considerable effect against the Germans. His Liberal colleague and Minister for Munitions David Lloyd George, with the support of the Conservatives, used the split to force Asquith out and replace him as prime minister. Lloyd George set up a war cabinet whose members were freed from other cabinet duties. They failed and the campaign prompted the United States, the principal neutral power, to declare war on Germany on 6 April. The fighting continued until 18 November, ending on the ridge at Passchendaele. By then, unusually heavy rains and the destruction of the landscape by heavy shelling had turned the ground to an impassable morass of mud. The electorate increased to 21 million, of which 8 million were women, but it excluded working class women who mostly failed the property qualification. The terms were humiliating. Opposition to the treaty helped ignite the Russian Civil War, which lasted until. After a short but stunning bombardment, the Germans attacked across the old Somme battlefields and made the greatest advance on the Western Front since. It was eventually halted east of Amiens, France. In response, the Allies gave French general Ferdinand Foch overall responsibility for coordinating their armies on the Western Front. Despite the stunning success of the offensive, the German army had significantly overstretched itself without achieving a decisive victory - a factor that would contribute to its eventual defeat. The British broke through the principal German fortified defences, the formidable Hindenburg line, on the following day, and the advance continued unabated into October. Unlike the negotiations with the other enemy powers, these were bilateral talks between the British and the Turks, with no French or Russian involvement. Despite onerous terms, Germany eventually capitulated and signed an armistice that brought the fighting on the Western Front to a halt at 11am on 11 November. In , he advised on the Government of India Act. He became Baron Sinha of Raipur. One of the treaties prepared at the conference, the Treaty of Versailles, imposed harsh reparations on Germany, and is widely considered to have contributed to the eventual outbreak of World War Two. The Liberal government feared this mass rally was the beginning of a working class revolution along the lines of the Russian Revolution of. The rally was broken up by police, and troops and tanks were deployed on Clydeside. In reality, the protesters objectives were not that revolutionary - a hour working week and a living wage. Mohandas Gandhi of the Indian Congress Party asked Indians to use non-violent civil disobedience in protest against the act, and to refuse to cooperate with the British government. More than people were killed. Led by Mohandas Gandhi, the Indian Congress Party now became a nationwide movement committed to independence. With the IRA unable to deliver a decisive victory, and the British government increasingly worried about rising casualties and international criticism over its conduct of the war, a truce was called in July. Constance Markievicz became the first woman MP in , but as a member of Sinn Fein she had refused to take her seat. More reforms were to be discussed in ten years. The Congress Party responded with strikes and boycotts of British goods. This was declared illegal and Congress leader Mohandas Gandhi was imprisoned. Women could now become magistrates, solicitors and barristers. France and Britain were commanded to govern their mandates in the interests of their inhabitants, until these territories were ready to be admitted to the League of Nations. The British took over two areas that had previously formed part of the now defunct Ottoman Empire. In May , Arab unrest caused Samuel to halt Jewish immigration. July Unemployment reaches a post-war high of 2. Deprivation was widespread and industrial relations deteriorated. In an effort to quell the unrest, Emir Faisal was made king and administrator of the country. King Faisal was a member of the Hashemite family, who had been important British allies against the Ottoman Empire. The fact that the treaty still bound Ireland to Britain caused deep conflict and led

to the outbreak of the Irish Civil War. The pro-treaty faction under Michael Collins accepted partition and believed the treaty would eventually lead to a republic. The war ended in victory for the pro-treaty Free State government under Collins who was assassinated but caused lasting bitterness. With his government fatally compromised, Lloyd George resigned. Law called a general election on 15 November. Ill health forced Bonar Law to retire in . He died six months later. Baldwin proposed to abandon free trade, hoping that tariff reform would help to beat unemployment - an unpopular measure.

## 3: Context :: European History

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The End of Optimism? When stocks plummeted on the New York Stock Exchange, the world noticed immediately. The effects of the disruption to the global system of financing, trade, and production and the subsequent meltdown of the American economy were soon felt throughout Europe. While historians still debate the precise causes of the Depression, most now agree that the economic crisis began in the United States and then moved to Europe and the rest of the world. This section will provide necessary background information by exploring the ways in which national economies around the world were intimately connected, how the stock market crash in the United States triggered the European crisis, and how such connections shaped lives, societies, and political systems in Europe and elsewhere.

**Class Relations Before the Depression**

To appreciate the significance of the Depression, one must understand how it impacted social and economic conditions within distinct societies. While European economies during the 1930s experienced unemployment and the subsequent deprivation, hunger, and despair, much remained invisible to the general public. Left-leaning political parties had tried for decades to expose the effects of economic exploitation, yet the political shifts of the 1920s combined to make such conditions less apparent than they had been before the war. Socialist parties, attempting to gain a new respectability, were reluctant to draw attention to the class divide, while Communists remained more interested in staging confrontations than in uncovering the daily lives of the working class. Moreover, to the middle and upper classes, the lives of the poor were either invisible or frightening. The Depression would transform many societies by making visible the unemployment, distress, and despair already there. Deprivation was evident everywhere, and conflict, rather than compromise, between classes appeared inevitable. In Germany, the Depression struck an already weakened economy barely beginning to recover from the combined effects of wartime destruction and postwar reparations. The Weimar government was deeply in debt, yet it tried to maintain high levels of unemployment benefits to forestall growing dissatisfaction among the lower classes. As unemployment grew, and even before the onset of the Depression, the government resisted pressure to cut payments. Under the terms of the Dawes plan, American banks loaned money to the German government, which used the loans to pay reparations to the French and British governments, which in turn used the money to pay war debts to American banks. The high interest rates sustained by the Dawes plan made Germany an attractive debtor for American banks, and, for several years, considerable money flowed from the American financial sector into Germany. In the words of historian Dietmar Rothermund, the plan was a "precarious solution," since everything depended on the continuous flow of American capital. Already by 1930, American banks had ceased to make loans under the Dawes plan. Germany, however, still had to service its American loans in addition to making reparations payments. The traumatic experience of extreme inflation in the early 1920s caused the government to respond to the crisis by decreasing, rather than increasing, public expenditure, which in turn worsened the economic conditions. Declining productivity, mass unemployment, and business failures ensued. In 1932, Germany defaulted on its reparations; two years later, Britain and France defaulted on their own war debts, which were owed primarily to the United States.

**Postwar Recovery in Britain**

In Britain, significant economic problems persisted throughout the 1930s. The First World War cost Britain many of its positions of relative economic advantage: Unemployment in Britain remained high throughout the 1930s, reaching 2 million in 1932 and then remaining at more than a million for the rest of the decade. The government, meanwhile, made financial security its priority. Domestic spending remained low relative to other European countries, as the government allowed private businesses to set their own policies on wages, hours, and conditions. The government remained committed to keeping the British pound on the gold standard, which meant that British exports were sold at inflated prices that made them less competitive with goods from other producers. Major industries, such as coal, steel, and textiles, were protected from foreign competition, which also meant that they had little incentive to update equipment, rationalize production, or diversify products. A growing wave of labor unrest had peaked in the General Strike, but the limited backing

for the radical aims of trade union leadership by the government, big business, and a strong base of middle-class supporters dampened efforts to effect political change through extra-parliamentary measures. The memory of the General Strike would become an important factor in the early years of the Depression, as spreading unemployment and increasing despair led to fears of deepening class conflict and political instability. So-called depressed areas remained particular sources of chronic unemployment, hunger, and disease. In the words of historian Gordon Craig, the British economy "continued to stagnate until it was overwhelmed by the world depression. As a result, French steel, coal, and textile production acquired more advanced machinery and adopted more effective techniques, which gave France a competitive advantage over countries that had not been forced to modernize, such as Britain. At the same time, the French government remained deeply in debt, while continuing to demand excessive reparations payments from Germany. Although the government did gradually implement tax reforms to spread the burden of payments more evenly across society, the value of the French currency remained high as the government adhered to the gold standard, and the growth of international tourism poured additional funds into the French economy. According to Craig, France experienced "years of solid prosperity" in the period from 1925 to 1929. During the first years of the global economic crisis, France was predominantly affected by a decline in international tourism, by decreased demand for French luxury goods, and by the wave of protectionism that cut into all international trade. The contrasting directions pursued by Germany and France led to strikingly different assessments: Yet France could not remain invulnerable to the more general European and even global crisis. When conditions did worsen, French society quickly succumbed to the same sense of desperation. The contraction in world trade at the same time the government maintained the high value of the French currency ensured that exports became less competitive in a shrinking world market. The combination in turn caused production decreases and the spread of unemployment. In addition, the French response to the economic crisis was made more difficult by political conflicts between the major parties, which led to a series of short-lived, ineffective governments and, ultimately, the attempted overthrow of the government in February 1934. Demonstrations, Protests, and Strikes in Britain As indicated above, the governments of France, Britain, and Germany grappled with how to respond to the social and economic crisis brought on by the Great Depression. In each case, the governments faced considerable pressure from demonstrations, protests, and strikes taking place in the streets. In Britain, increasing economic distress led to waves of protests in 1931 and 1932, and organized by a group of militant activists. During the 1930s, the combination of economic collapse and political radicalism had culminated in the General Strike of 1926, but divisions among labor leaders and sympathizers and the determination of the conservative government had caused the strike to fail. Yet public memory of the failed attempt persisted into the Depression. Labour Party leaders began to seek influence by working through, rather than against, the established political system. Labor protests still occurred frequently during the Depression, but in more localized ways. During 1931 and 1932, in particular, unemployed workers went on strike, demonstrated in public, and otherwise took direct action to call public attention to their plight. Protests often focused on the so-called Means Test, which the government had instituted in 1931 as a way to limit the amount of unemployment payments made to individuals and families. For working people, the Means Test seemed an intrusive and insensitive way to deal with the chronic and relentless deprivation caused by the economic crisis. The strikes were met forcefully, with police breaking up protests, arresting demonstrators, and charging them with crimes related to the violation of public order. The protests never approached revolution, however, since the actions of both protestors and police defined a realm of legitimate public engagement even in the midst of economic crisis. Civil Unrest in Germany In Germany, protests during the early 1930s arose out of a more long-term crisis of legitimacy of the Weimar system. In particular, the political extremes — the Communists on the left, and the National Socialist German Workers Party the Nazis on the right — were committed to the overthrow of the democratic system by any means, including direct action on the streets. With the spread of unemployment, dissatisfaction with the policies of the Weimar government also intensified. It was in this context that a series of strikes and protests occurred across Germany during 1931 and 1932. In contrast to Britain, however, protests became common among radicals on both the extreme left, which included Communists, and on the extreme right, led by the Nazis. The government, meanwhile, appeared both ineffective at controlling the waves of violence and repressive, as it

resorted increasingly to the so-called emergency powers. The street protests and the government response combined to undermine even further the legitimacy and viability of Weimar democracy. French Democracy The crisis of French democracy in February centered on allegations that the elected government remained ineffective at dealing with the immediate economic crisis. In addition, the French government appeared overall less vigorous and incisive when compared to the neighboring Nazi-led German government. The French government faced sharp criticism and demands for immediate action from both the extreme right and the Communists on the extreme left. On February 6, , thousands of people "most responding to summons by right-wing groups, but also Communist sympathizers willing to use any means to overthrow the government" assembled on the Place de la Concorde and appeared to organize an assault on the Chamber of Deputies. When police used arms against the crowd, twenty-one people were killed and more than a thousand injured. In the words of Gordon Craig, it seemed "as if action on the street was on the point of supplanting rule by law and parliamentary procedure. In the case of France, then, street protests served to redefine the basis of democratic legitimacy in the midst of crisis. Election Campaigns and Political Consolidation In addition to direct action on the streets by, in most cases, more extreme political movements, elections became an important measure of the impact of the Depression on Europe. Parties on the extreme left, such as the Communist Party, claimed that the interests of the working class could be served only by revolutionary, and inevitably violent, overthrow of the existing social, political, and economic order. Socialist parties, such as the Labour Party in Britain and the Social Democrats in Germany, argued that working-class interests were better served by working through the political system to promote egalitarian, democratic, and peaceful policies. To the right of the Socialists stood a variety of parties, such as the Conservatives in Britain and the Catholic Center Party in Germany, which argued that middle- and upper-class interests were best served by traditional policies that protected property, maintained order, and promoted changes through the existing economic system. In addition, a new force of political radicalism emerged on the extreme right arguing for stronger governments that took direct action to promote national interests for all classes at the expense of foreign and minority interests. The Nazi Party in Germany was the strongest example of such politics, although similar movements emerged in Britain and France as well. Conservative, Labour, and Liberal. In the elections, the new government won a solid victory, with supporters drawn from the three parties against 60 members of an opposition comprised predominantly of Labourites fighting against further cuts in welfare benefits. The election thus appeared as a sign of reassurance in a time of increasing demonstrations and protests in the streets. The National Government seemed to represent a middle ground that strengthened moderate forces of both the left Labour Party and the right Conservatives. Such a position of strength allowed the National Government to implement several unpopular economic policies, including the devaluation of the British pound by abandoning the gold standard. Freeing the currency allowed the government to offer financial assistance to the most distressed areas and provide protection for key industries. But the government never undertook a major recovery effort, like the New Deal in the United States, and unemployment remained high through the end of the decade. In the election, more than six million Germans voted for the Nazi party. In subsequent elections, Nazi support continued to grow at the expense of moderate parties such as the Social Democrats and the Catholic Center Party. By , the Nazi Party had won more than one-third of the seats in the Reichstag and had become the largest single party within the representative body, with seats compared to seats held by Social Democrats. The Popular Front in France In France, the Popular Front emerged as a powerful symbol of the collective determination to overcome both economic crisis and social division. By , however, the establishment of a Fascist government in Germany and its relentless destruction of the Communist and Socialist Parties there had convinced French Communists and, more importantly, the Soviet leadership that exerted strong influence over European Communists that they needed to support democratic and capitalist governments to fight the rise of right-wing fascism. The program of the Popular Front thus illustrated combined efforts to mediate political divisions while promoting a program in support of government intervention in the economy, the defense of civil liberties, and the protection of social welfare.

## 4: Britain since a brief history / Historical Association

*Book reviews: Culture and Crisis in Britain in the Thirties, ed. Jon Clark, Margot Heinemann, David Margolies and Carole Snee, Lawrence and Wishart, I Working-class Culture, ed. John Clarke, Chas Critcher and Richard Johnson, Hutchinson University Library, I*

However there was already mass unemployment in the 1920s in Britain. Then, in the early 1930s, the economy was struck by depression. By the start of unemployment in Britain was However unemployment fell substantially in 1932, and By January it stood at However although a partial recovery took place in Britain in the mid and late 1930s there were semi-permanent depression areas in the North of England, Scotland and South Wales. On the other hand new industries such as car and aircraft making and electronics prospered in the Midlands and the South of England where unemployment was relatively low. The problems of depression and high unemployment were only really solved by the Second World War, which started industry booming again. Depression and unemployment are one side of the story. But there is another side. During the 1930s, for most people with a job, living standards rose significantly. Poverty had by no means disappeared in Britain by the 1930s but it was much less than ever before. Pensions and unemployment benefit were made more generous in 1925 and in 1935 Furthermore prices continued to fall during the 1930s. Even so in many children from cities were evacuated to the countryside to be safe from bombing. Many of them had never seen the countryside before. Worse some of them were used to sleeping in their parents bed or even under it. Some poor children were not used to sleeping in a bed at all. Homes in 1930s Britain In the 1920s and 1930s a new style of furniture and architecture was introduced. It was called Art Deco and it used geometric shapes instead of the flowing lines of the earlier Art Nouveau. The name art deco came from an exhibition held in Paris in 1925 called the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs. At the beginning of the 20th century only rich people could afford electric light. Other people used gas. Ordinary people did not have electric light until the 1920s and 1930s. Meanwhile in the early 20th century vacuum cleaners and washing machines were available but only rich people could afford them. The first electric oven went on sale in the USA in 1910 They went on sale in Britain in 1915 However home ownership became more common during the 20th century. Meanwhile the first council houses were built before the First World War. More were built in the 1920s and 1930s and some slum clearance took place. At that time women began wearing knee length skirts. In the mid and late 1930s it was fashionable for women to look boyish. Men also often wore pullovers instead of waistcoats. However in the 1930s they began to wear shorts that ended above the knee and sleeveless vests. The first y-fronts went on sale in Britain in 1915 Leisure in 1930s Britain The great age of cinema going in Britain was the 1930s when most people went at least once and sometimes twice a week. Early films were black and white but in the 1930s the first color films were made. Although it was decades before all films were made in color. Radio broadcasting began in 1922 in Britain when the BBC was formed. By 1935 half the households in Britain had a radio. Television began in Britain in 1936 when the BBC began broadcasting. Sales of ice cream boomed in the 1930s and many new kinds of sweets were introduced. Meanwhile Jaffa cakes went on sale in 1932 Twiglets date from 1932 and Penguins were introduced in 1932 In children in Britain sometimes left school when they were only 12 years old. However in the 1930s the minimum school leaving age was raised to 15 Between the wars working class children went to elementary schools. Middle class children went to grammar schools and upper class children went to public schools. In 1930 a speed limit of 20 MPH was introduced in Britain. It was abolished in 1935 However in 1935 a speed limit of 30 MPH in built-up areas was introduced. Meanwhile in 1935 the first electric traffic lights were installed in London. A driving test was introduced in 1935 The parking meter was invented by Carlton Magee. The first one was installed in the USA in 1935

### 5: Review: A Social History of Britain Between the Wars by Martin Pugh | Books | The Guardian

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**Tweet Overview** Victorian Britain was radically altered by the continuing Industrial Revolution, changing from an rural agricultural society to an urban industrial one. Similarly, posts Britain has been transformed by a technological revolution ranging from the atom bomb and space travel to the internet, laptop computers, DVDs and mobile phones. Communications technology in its various forms has permeated every aspect of life in Britain. The past 75 years have seen Britain change from a predominantly manufacturing to a service economy: In the late s there were one million miners in Britain; by the s there were more actors and more workers in Indian restaurants than miners, and Britain had become a wealthy consumer society. Major themes The full establishment of the welfare state This ensured that all inhabitants of Britain were entitled to free health care, education and social care. The result has been improved health and increasing longevity. In people over became the fastest-growing age group in the UK. Steady privatisation from the s onward of national industries such as coal, gas, steel, railways. Growing equality for women particularly greater working opportunities and changed attitudes to their role in society. Women also gained more power over their lives thanks partly to better birth control methods and inventions that reduced time spent on housework. Growth of popular culture including cinema, television, music, dancing, bingo. Increased liberalisation of laws for example the legalisation of abortion and homosexuality in the s. This trend has now been reversed. Internally, too, there has been greater mobility of people. By the beginning of the 21st century there was a significant difference in wages between the north and south of the UK, as people moved south after the closure of the large northern industries. Links with Europe On the wider stage, the period saw Britain joining the European Union, although the UK has retained its traditionally ambiguous attitude towards Europe. World War II was the largest and most devastating war of the period for Britain. However, she has sent her troops to fight in several smaller conflicts since including Korea, Suez, Kuwait, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq as well as in her colonies in Asia and Africa. Most of her former colonies joined her in a loose Commonwealth with the Queen at its head. Questions to ask How has Britain changed since ? Has Britain changed for the better since ? Outline history of Britain since The period divides nicely into decades, with each decade having its distinctive character. Post-war, the welfare state introduced. World War II, dropping of the first atomic bombs. Queen Elizabeth II crowned. Immigration from the Caribbean. Space age begins with launch of Sputnik. Abortion and homosexuality legalised. Vietnam War, Cuban Missile Crisis. Youth revolts all over the western world. First men land on the Moon. CND and Anti-Apartheid protests widespread. High taxation, economic weakness, crippling strikes. The Troubles in Northern Ireland begin. First test-tube baby born - in Oldham. Britain joins European Community. End of Vietnam War. Privatisation of national industries, collapse of mining and large-scale manufacturing. Prosperity of the majority. Church of England ordains its first women priests. Eastern Europeans arrive in large numbers as their countries join the European Union. Bosnian War between former Yugoslavian states. Al Quaida attacks American and other targets. Teaching Britain since This unit offers a variety of opportunities to combine history, local and community studies, citizenship and indeed, most other subjects. The era is the only one where oral history can be used: Many older people are more than happy to come into school, bringing photographs and other items to show the children and to answer their questions see Magdalen Road. The unit also provides an excellent opportunity to celebrate the diversity and richness of British society, to hear the voices and histories of families and children who have settled in Britain since This is a unit with more information available than for any other period - it is rich in still images, film, music, stories, documents and objects, so selection can be difficult. There is also a danger of over-emphasising specific aspects, if the children do not understand how these aspects fit into the overall picture. One way to establish an overview is to split the unit into decades, divide the class into groups, and give each group a decade to research. They then present the key headlines, features and themes of their decade to the rest of the class. This approach presents the children with a real challenge - to select what is significant and what is characteristic. Most local studies libraries will almost certainly have a good selection of resources

## CULTURE AND CRISIS IN BRITAIN IN THE THIRTIES pdf

about World War II, from photographs to war notices and posters, from newspapers to personal reminiscences. Contact your local authority, too, as many have produced packs of resources for teaching themes such as the Home Front. For both history and personal and citizenship education, The Diary of Anne Frank is an unrivalled resource for understanding the Holocaust and the issues it raises for us as humans in society.

### 6: Death of a Diplomat: Herbert Norman & The Cold War

*Culture and Crisis in Britain in the Thirties* edited by Jon Clark, Margot Heinemann, David Margolies and Carole Snee Lawrence and Wishart, pp, £, March , ISBN 0 8 Professor Crick's subject is important and his research has evidently been diligent.

There is abundant evidence for this view. After the slump, so many smoke-belching textile mills went out of business that Blackburn began to look clean. One hunger marcher was noticed removing the ham from sandwiches he was given en route and posting it home to his family. Prices fell sharply between the wars and average incomes rose by about a third. The term "property-owning democracy" was coined in the s, and three million houses were built during the s. Land, labour and materials were cheap: The middle class also bought radiograms, telephones, three-piece suites, electric cookers, vacuum cleaners and golf clubs. The depression spawned a consumer boom. How to explain and resolve these conflicting interpretations? Such accounts exaggerated and falsified the social impact of the depression. It was, says Pugh, essentially a regional affliction. Hardship was concentrated in central Scotland, the north of England and south Wales, where mature industries such as coal-mining and ship-building were in precipitous decline. Pugh does not ignore the gloomy aspects of the time - when a third of the population had an inadequate diet, and unemployment benefit kept families well below the breadline. But he points out that a million men moved from the north and west between the wars, getting on their bikes to find work in the approved Tebbit fashion. He extols the nutritional value of fish and chips, and notes the importing of millions of bananas, which became the fruit of the poor. As his title suggests, Pugh looks on the bright side, and he certainly illuminates some of the more bizarre features of the age. When debating the criminalisation of lesbianism, Colonel Moore-Brabazon MP said the solution was either to ignore it, or to lock up lesbians as lunatics, or to impose the death penalty on them. John Reith had his own prejudices, forbidding the BBC to broadcast jokes about drink, clergymen, illness and Scotsmen - but not Irishmen. For the most part, though, his book is disappointingly prosaic - and when he does try to say something arresting, he is apt to signal it with an exclamation mark. He is stodgy about spiritualism, colourless about royalty and pedestrian about motoring. Its coverage is patchy: And Pugh occasionally errs: British voters expressed their gut hatred of that decade in , getting rid of the Tories who were held responsible for its most odious features. As this suggests, there is more to be said for the traditional view of the period than revisionists would have us believe. Admittedly, Orwell was prone to caricature; yet his blazing indictment of the destitution he had observed bore ample witness to its true character. Nor were such scenes confined to the regions. And fear of being thrown on to the economic scrapheap haunted even the suburban bourgeoisie. Some people danced all night; many more had nightmares.

### 7: The Thirties: an Intimate History by Juliet Gardiner: review - Telegraph

*Britain: crisis of confidence about British society - concerns about debt, immigration, inner-city crime, obesity, drugs. Wider world: Al Quaida attacks American and other targets. Results in invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq by US, Britain and some other states.*

Contact us for rights and issues inquiries. What is striking is that some interesting pieces of documentation by contemporaries touching on this are omitted from the biography. So far from doing that, he has censored King-Farlow and preferred not to quote a considered and revealing conclusion by Jacintha Buddicom. Further, we are warned off believing other witnesses of Blair, whom the biographer considers antipathetic, such as Rayner Heppenstall and Humphrey Dakin. Professor Crick thinks it more reasonable that we believe his version of how Blair behaved when he beat up Heppenstall than to believe Heppenstall. Writings, published and unpublished, of doubtful compatibility with the popular image of Orwell have been withheld and suppressed. Orwell, moreover, has made loyal friends among his readers; we feel he is speaking directly to us and may be unwilling to betray what seems like intimacy. Heightened, it seems, into an unwillingness to be harsh. Orwell would have called it a conspiracy, and denounced it. I mention examples of brutal behaviour, also of gentle and of kindly behaviour. What kind of people do Professor Kermode and Mr Thompson know who can be reduced to a single dominant characteristic? However, John Thompson is evidently a close reader of sources on Orwell and his first paragraph is perfectly fair criticism. But, though my method was external and unpsychological, I could not quote everything, nor accept all sources and memories as equal. I am not mindless. I judged that King-Farlow was exercising clever hindsight. The reader must decide. Now if Mr Thompson is truly as nice and as gentle as Miss Buddicom, let me honestly tell him that I have killed rabbits with sticks, have strangled chickens and that only one of my sons is a vegetarian: When she asked me, out of the blue, to write the *Life*, I made two conditions: These were tough terms, even if those that any scholar should ask for in similar circumstances. This was brave and public-spirited of her. Nothing was withheld and I quoted everything I wanted to quote, even though she disliked the finished portrait. But I neither painted out discreditable things nor highlighted them for effect. I draw attention in footnotes to political essays and early writings which should have been included in the admirably edited but perhaps misleadingly titled *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters*. Yet no two editors or anthologists ever agree completely. Everything Orwell published is available to be read in the Archive at University College, London; and when the unpublished and restricted material is made available as I hope it soon will be, no skeletons will be found. All new material I have found has also been put into the Archive. The opening will help interpretations other than mine to be better grounded, but I hope on grounds more complex than any single psychological trait, especially sadism. Happily, the very publication of my book has flushed out interesting new evidence on several topics which I will be incorporating into a revised edition later this year – an edition that will also give me an opportunity to correct some minor errors. He dredges up an old piece of Cold War theory by stating that there was little difference between the totalitarianisms of Stalin and of Hitler *LRB*, 22 January. He goes on to argue in agreement with Orwell? Whereas communist revolutions resulted in a radical change of the economic and political order, fascist regimes hardly touched the private ownership of the means of production and exchange, and by replacing the bourgeois state by the new fascist-leadership state, this private ownership was indeed strengthened. We can only begin to guard against them both by being very clear in our definitions as to what they are.

## 8: Life in Britain in The s

Clark, John et al, eds. *Culture and Crisis in Britain in the Thirties*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, *Problems in Socialist Culture in Britain*, by.

Wages in the s James Holloway - Updated August 10, The s were a time of economic crisis for Britain, particularly in industrial areas in Scotland, Wales and the North of England. Despite the economic turmoil of the Great Depression, wages stayed relatively stable, even increasing in some industries over the course of the period. Like any other single economic indicator, however, the wage figures do not tell the whole story. Agricultural wage rates Wages varied from industry to industry and job to job in Britain, as anywhere else, but some jobs had legally established minimum wages. For example, the Agricultural Wages Regulation Act established a base rate of pay for agricultural workers. Industrial wage rates Wages in the industrial sector followed the same general pattern as the agricultural sector. In the average wage for a timework labourer in the engineering field was just under a shilling per hour; it dipped in , then climbed again to around 1s 2d by In some cases, wage cuts were more severe. News of these pay cuts sparked a naval mutiny at Invergordon in Scotland; lower-ranking sailors, already making less than half what workers in the private sector made, could ill afford the cuts. Economists prefer to use "real wages" to discuss earnings; real wages measure the ratio between pay and prices. From this perspective, wages in the s performed well. Even when wages fell, prices fell faster, and wages recovered much more quickly. In , wages were at By , real wages were at Gender and unemployment Most workers in heavy industry and agriculture, who were male, were paid proportionately more than female workers in the same or other sectors. In October , the average hourly wage for adult males was just under 1s 6d, nearly double the average hourly wage for women, which was 9d. In addition, wage statistics ignore the high levels of unemployment, particularly in those areas of the country hardest-hit by the decline of heavy industries such as shipbuilding. It did not return to its level until While the numbers show that wages for high for those who had jobs, conditions were severe for those without. Cite this Article A tool to create a citation to reference this article Cite this Article.

### 9: English Journeys: National and Cultural Identity in s and s England By Peter Lowe

*Rarely can this awkward relationship between the England of the history books and the England of the economic slump have been illustrated more effectively than in the Jarrow Crusade - a march to London from the town of Jarrow in the North-East, where the unemployment rate reached 40% in the mids after the closure of the shipyards.*

Great Depression The Great Depression of 1929-32 broke out at a time when the United Kingdom was still far from having recovered from the effects of the First World War. Relative to the rest of the world, economic output declined mildly in the UK between 1929 and 1932. From about 1932, Britain had started a slow economic recovery from the war and the subsequent slump. This made the pound convertible to its value in gold, but at a level that made British exports more expensive on world markets. The economic recovery was immediately slowed. The industrial areas spent the rest of the 1930s in recession, and these industries received little investment or modernisation. Throughout the 1930s, unemployment stayed at a steady one million. Economic crisis and the Labour minority government[ edit ] Unemployed people in front of a workhouse in London, In May 1931, a minority Labour government headed by Ramsay MacDonald came to office with Liberal support. We find the look ahead decidedly encouraging. Cole repeated the dire warnings they had been making for years about the imminent death of capitalism, only now far more people paid attention. World trade contracted, prices fell and governments faced financial crisis as the supply of American credit dried up. Many countries adopted an emergency response to the crisis by erecting trade barriers and tariffs, which worsened the crisis by further hindering global trade. The British Empire tried to hang together by lower tariffs among the members while raising them against the U. By the end of 1931, unemployment had more than doubled from 1 million to 2. Government revenues contracted as national income fell, while the cost of assisting the jobless rose. The industrial areas were hardest hit, along with the coal mining districts. London and the south-east of England were hurt less. Under pressure from its Liberal allies as well as the Conservative opposition, the Labour government appointed a committee to review the state of public finances. The May Report of July urged public sector wage cuts and large cuts in public spending notably in benefit payments "dole" to the unemployed to avoid incurring a budget deficit. In a memorandum in January 1932, one junior government minister, Oswald Mosley, proposed that the government should take control of banking and exports, as well as increase pensions to boost purchasing power. National Government United Kingdom The dispute over spending and wage cuts split the Labour government: The resulting political deadlock caused investors to take fright, and a flight of capital and gold further de-stabilised the economy. On 24 August, MacDonald submitted the resignation of his ministers and led his senior colleagues in forming the new National Government. MacDonald and his supporters were expelled from the Labour Party and adopted the label "National Labour". The Labour Party denounced MacDonald as a "traitor" and a "rat" for what they saw as his betrayal. Soon after this, a general election was called. The general election resulted in a Conservative landslide victory, with the now leaderless Labour Party winning only 46 seats in Parliament. After the election the national government became Conservative-dominated, although MacDonald continued as prime minister until Emergency measures[ edit ] In an effort to balance the budget and restore confidence in the pound, on 10 September with Philip Snowden still as Chancellor, the new national government issued an emergency budget, which immediately instituted a round of cuts in public spending and wages. The pay cuts did not go down well, however, and resulted in a non-violent "mutiny" in the Royal Navy protesting pay cut. These measures were deflationary and merely reduced purchasing power in the economy, worsening the situation, and by the end of 1932 unemployment had reached nearly 3 million. The flight of gold continued, however, and the Treasury finally was forced to abandon the gold standard in September 1931. Until now the government had religiously followed orthodox policies, which demanded balanced-budgets and the gold standard. Instead of the predicted disaster, cutting loose from gold proved a major advantage. British exports were now much more competitive, which laid the ground for a gradual economic recovery. The worst was over. The introduction of tariffs caused a split in the Liberal Party, some of whom, along with Phillip Snowden, withdrew support for the National Government. During the recession[ edit ] Although the overall picture for the British economy in the 1930s was

bleak, the effects of the depression were uneven. Some parts of the country, and some industries, fared better than others. Some parts of the country such as the South Wales Valleys experienced mass unemployment and poverty, while some areas in the Home Counties did not. The brightest spot was in home building. From through over , new houses were built every year, with the peak reaching , in The South and the Midlands[ edit ] In London and the south east of England unemployment was initially as high as The south was also the home of new developing industries such as the electrical industry, which prospered from the large-scale electrification of housing and industry. Mass production methods brought new products such as electrical cookers , washing machines and radios into the reach of the middle classes , and the industries which produced these prospered. Nearly half of all new factories that opened in Britain between and were in the Greater London area. For cities that had a developed motor industry such as Birmingham , Coventry and Oxford , the s were also a boom time. Manufacturers such as Austin , Morris and Ford dominated the motor industry during the s, and the number of cars on British roads doubled within the decade. British Agriculture also flourished in the s. In the North and industrial heartlands[ edit ] Northern England , however, was a quite different matter. The north was hit so hard in the Great Depression because of the structural decline in British industry. Staple industries such as coal, steel and shipbuilding were smaller, less modern and efficient and over-staffed compared to continental rivals. In the north east including Sunderland , Middlesbrough and Newcastle-upon-Tyne this was especially so. The north east was a major centre of the shipbuilding industry. The Depression caused a collapse in demand for ships. The north west , a centre of the textile industries, was also hard hit, with places such as Manchester and Lancashire suffering a slump. In these areas, millions of unemployed and their families were left destitute, and queueing at soup kitchens became a way of life. In , a compulsory national unemployment and health insurance scheme had been put in place by the Liberal government of Herbert Henry Asquith see Liberal reforms. This scheme had been funded through contributions from the government, the employers and the workers. At first, the scheme only applied to certain trades but, in , it was expanded to include most manual workers. Anyone unemployed for longer than that had to rely on poor law relief paid by their local authority. In effect, millions of workers who had been too poorly paid to make contributions, or who had been unemployed long term, were left destitute by the scheme. With the mass unemployment of the s, contributions to the insurance scheme dried up, resulting in a funding crisis. In August , the scheme was replaced by a fully government-funded unemployment benefit system. This unemployment benefit was subject to a strict means test , and anyone applying for unemployment pay had to have an inspection by a government official to make sure that they had no hidden earnings or savings, undisclosed source s of income or other means of support. For many poor people, this was a humiliating experience and was much resented. As a result, British exports became more competitive on world markets than those of countries that remained on the gold standard. This led to a modest economic recovery, and a fall in unemployment from onwards. Although exports were still a fraction of their pre-depression levels, they recovered slightly. Unemployment began a modest fall in and fell further in and , but the rise in employment levels occurred mostly in the south, where lower interest rates had spurred the house building boom, which in turn spurred a recovery in domestic industry. The North and Wales remained severely depressed for most of the decade. In severely depressed parts of the country, the government enacted a number of policies to stimulate growth and reduce unemployment, including road building, loans to shipyards, and tariffs on steel imports. These policies helped but were not, however, on a sufficiently large scale to make a huge impact on the unemployment levels. The United Kingdom was able to recover more quickly than other countries that were equally as developed, because their economic growth had been stagnant for some time. This meant that they did not have exponential growth, as the United States did, leaving them with less room to fall. Due to the abandonment of the gold standard in Britain was able to cut interest rates which led to a drop in real interest rates. This drop in interests rates subsequently led to a boom in construction in the south of Britain; stimulating some renewed economic growth. Also, the government began spending money on goods and services within Britain which aided in the foundation of financial recovery. From onwards, the National Government followed a policy of mass rearmament in the face of the rise of Nazi Germany. By unemployment had fallen to 1. At the general election , to the surprise of many observers, Winston Churchill was defeated by

the Labour Party headed by Clement Attlee. The Labour government also enacted Keynesian economic policies, to create artificial economic demand leading to full employment. These policies became known as the "post-war consensus", and were accepted by all major political parties at different times. There were noted disagreements about the involvement of the state with the steel industry. With one government, it was state owned, to then be sold off with the following conservative administration only to be then re-nationalised by the following labour government. For the most part, the post-war consensus lasted until the late s. Throughout the s, it was becoming clear from all sides that radical change was needed as a result of such economic crises as the oil shock, high inflation, industrial unrest and sterling devaluation. But s governments lacked the necessary political will, leadership and the House of Commons majority from which to change the system until the Conservatives led by Margaret Thatcher won the general election. Historic evaluation[ edit ] The events of the s, and the response of the Labour and National governments to the depression, have generated much historical controversy. In the decades immediately following the Second World War, most historical opinion was critical of the governments of the period. Certain historians, such as Robert Skidelsky in his *Politicians and the Slump*, compared the orthodox policies of the Labour and National governments unfavourably with the more radical proto-Keynesian measures advocated by David Lloyd George and Oswald Mosley, and the more interventionist and Keynesian responses in other economies: Since the s opinion has become less uniformly hostile. In the preface to the edition, Skidelsky argues that recent experience of currency crises and capital flight make it hard to be so critical of the politicians who wanted to achieve stability by cutting labour costs and defending the value of the currency.

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