

Section:Robin Cook0

Context: With the election of a Labour government led by Tony Blair at the 1997 general election, Cook became Foreign Secretary. He was believed to have coveted the job of Chancellor of the Exchequer, but that job was reportedly promised by Tony Blair to Gordon Brown. He announced, to much scepticism, his intention to add "an ethical dimension" to foreign policy. His term as Foreign Secretary was marked by British interventions in Kosovo and Sierra Leone. Both of these were controversial, the former because it was not sanctioned by the UN Security Council, and the latter because of allegations that the British company Sandline International had supplied arms to supporters of the deposed president in contravention of a United Nations embargo. Cook was also embarrassed when his apparent offer to mediate in the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir was rebuffed. The ethical dimension of his policies was subject to inevitable scrutiny, leading to criticism at times. Cook was responsible for achieving the agreement between Britain and Iran that ended the Iranian death threat against author Salman Rushdie, allowing both nations to normalize diplomatic relations. He is also credited with having helped resolve the eight-year impasse over the Pan Am Flight 103 bombing trial by getting Libya to agree to hand over the two accused (Megrahi and Fhimah) in 1999, for trial in the Netherlands according to Scots law. In March 1998, a diplomatic rift ensued with Israel when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu cancelled a dinner with Cook, while Cook was visiting Israel and had demonstrated opposition to the expansion of Israeli settlements. Although a republican, he and the Queen were on excellent terms, due to their mutual interest in horses. CANNOTANSWER

STUDENT: **When did Robin become foreign secretary?**

TEACHER: ⇨ "" (1997 general election, Cook became Foreign Secretary.)

STUDENT: **what did he do as foreign secretary?**

TEACHER: ⇨ "" (He was believed to have coveted the job of Chancellor of the Exchequer,)

STUDENT: **did he help in any changes while in his position?**

TEACHER: ⇨ Yes, "" (He announced, to much scepticism, his intention to add "an ethical dimension" to foreign policy.)

STUDENT: **was he successful in doing so?**

TEACHER: ⇨ "" (credited with having helped resolve the eight-year impasse over the Pan Am Flight 103 bombing)

STUDENT: **Are there any other interesting aspects about this article?**

TEACHER: ⇨ Yes, "" (Although a republican, he and the Queen were on excellent terms, due to their mutual interest in horses.)