

Wilson's Complacency

As the economy started to improve, Wilson's popularity figures jumped. He had a 51% approval rating compared to Heath's 28%. This resulted in him becoming overly confident throughout his campaign, and believed that his campaigning skills were superior compared to Heath's.

However, he became too relaxed and was destroyed when poor trade figures revealed that the balance of payments was in deficit again just a few days before the election.

Split Within Labour

Splits within the party started reappearing, which became apparent when party membership dropped from ~830k in '64 to ~680k in '70. Many people thought that the current Labour government was too right-wing for various reasons:

- Britain had been too supportive of the Vietnam War, thus being too closely-aligned with America.
- Too much money was spent on defence rather than welfare, economic growth & education.
- Postponing devaluation to maintain the value of the Sterling only benefited the City of London & the Americans.
- The working class had been made poorer due to the economic policies.
- The government had abandoned their socialist & working class routes through their stance on industrial relations & the failure of 'In Place of Strife'

The government tried to appease the left through their progressive social reforms. However, these people were more likely protesting the foreign issues rather than praising them for their societal reforms.

Economic Failure

Wilson promised to modernise Britain in the '64 election, and he needed to live up to it. However, he proved that Trade Unions held the most power through the failure of '*In Place of Strife*' and he failed to tame them like people thought he would. Also, right before the election, poor trade figures were published that showed that the balance of payments was in deficit for the first time.

Heath's Leadership

The Conservatives had 6 years in opposition to draft new policies, such as: industrial relations reforms through new stricter laws, less state intervention in industry & failing businesses, attempts to stop price & wage increases by law would be scrapped, and Britain would try and join the EEC.

The Conservatives also gained a new leader - Heath, who came from a more humble background in Kent similarly to Wilson. Initially, he wasn't very successful - losing the '66 election to Wilson & having little support from his fellow MPs. However, as time went on, he gained more support & charisma through intelligently targeting Wilson's weak points - like how inflation had risen 33% since they gained power and unemployment rose by 200k. The press also praised him & supported his claims.

His first act of authority was the sacking of Enoch Powell. After his '*Rivers of Blood*' speech, Heath decided to sack him from the shadow cabinet. While many voters were angry at this decision & supported Powell, many Tory MPs backed Heath and started to believe in him more.

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