Postwar: Lecture 2

Britain: A New Role for an Old Lion

I. Introduction

II. The Condition of Britain circa VE-Day
   A. Physical and Financial Devastation
   B. Shortages and Rationing: Bread, Bacon and Bananas
   C. Social Strains: Returning Soldiers, Wives and Children
   D. The Shadow of the Bomb
   E. Cricket at Lords and the 1948 London Olympics

III. Exit Churchill, Enter Attlee
   A. The July 1945 General Election
      1. Tory Weaknesses; Labour Strengths
      2. A “Blessing in Disguise” for Churchill

IV. Austerity Britain, 1945-1951
   A. Financial Prisoner of the USA
   B. Imperial Overstretch
   C. A Harsh Winter
   D. Sir Stafford Cripps and the Marshall Plan
   E. Embarking on the Welfare State; “Nye” Bevan
      1. Nationalization of Industries and Utilities
      2. New Homes in “Quick Time”
      3. The National Health Service (NHS)
   D. Ernest Bevin and Labour Foreign Policy
      1. Backing Away from Empire: India and Palestine
      2. Greece and Turkey: Handoff to the USA
      3. Britain Builds a Bomb
      4. Bevin and the Establishment of NATO
      5. Britain Misses the Bus on European Integration
V.  **Tory Return, 1951 – 1964**
   A. Churchill’s Second Premiership
      1. No Turnaround on the Welfare State
      2. Continued Cold-shoulder to European Integration
      3. Churchill on “Colored” Immigration
      4. Korea and the “Special Relationship” with Washington
      5. Hope for the Future in a New Queen
      6. The Belated Handoff to Anthony Eden
   B. Eden and the Suez Crisis: Not Britain’s Finest Hour
      1. Withdrawal under American Pressure
      2. Eden’s Retreat to “Goldeneye”
      3. James Bond: England’s Avenger
   C. Post-Suez Retreat from Empire
      1. The Sad Case of Kenya
      2. Migration into Britain and New Controls under Macmillan
      3. The Birth of Postwar British Populism: The BNP and Enoch Powell
   D. Britain’s Relative Economic Weakness in the Sixties
      1. Blackballed by de Gaulle
      2. Scandals at Home: John Profumo and Kim Philby

VI.  **Swinging in the Sixties: British Society and Culture**
   A. Cultural Prowess amidst Political Stagnation
   B. “Sexual Intercourse Began in 1963....”
   C. A Cascade of Social Reforms
   D. The Fashion Revolution and Angry Young Men
   E. Rule Britannia: The Beatles and the Stones