

The Tony Blair decade

Erwartete Schülerleistungen

Leistungsfach- und Grundfachanforderungen:

1. Describe the situation of the Labour Party at the end of Tony Blair's ministership.

According to the author, Tony Blair's Labour Party lies totally in ruins at the end of his ministership. This is the consequence of the disastrous decision to take part in the Iraq War, a war that most of Blair's fellow citizens did not want. As a consequence the party was finally regarded as an elected governmental party that did not do what the people expected it to do.

2. Explain how Blair misjudged the decision of taking part in the Iraq War. What were his real motives?

On the one hand Blair misjudged the Iraq War completely. He did not realize that it was obviously mere "American adventurism" that caused that war. On the other hand Blair's ideas were based more on Britain's historical status. He was motivated by idealistic aims and he wanted to liberate Iraq from a cruel dictatorship.

What makes it worse is that even though he is an intelligent man he totally ignored the historical and ethnic issues of Iraq, a country of the Middle East.

3. Analyse Gerard DeGroot's statement of the Iraq War being "a tragedy of Shakespearean proportions".

Shakespearean tragedies were always known to be brutal and bloody. The victims are murdered not always for heroic reasons. The main aspects that count are envy and the eagerness for power and wealth no matter what it may cost.

This resembles a lot the crusade in Iraq where a lot of civilians have been killed – so far only because of America's and the rest of the World's thirst for oil.

4. Justify the way Tony Blair has changed the Labour Party in the last ten years and say what this means for the political adversary?

After Margaret Thatcher had been in power for many years the Labour Party did not have a good reputation. Blair succeeded in transforming the Labour Party into a modern party which was no longer class-conscious and was able to lead Britain into the 21st century. Socialism and ideology were no longer dominating the party's programme and more and more untypical policies came into consideration. He was liberal while also being traditional and in the meantime erasing party lines. Blair got rid of dogmatism in the party structure, a fact that caused more and more problems for the Tories.

Thus it was all the more tragic that nearly all these achievements were destroyed by Britain's participation in the Iraq War.

Nur Grundfachanforderungen:

5. *Interpret what the author means by "principle" and analyse its importance for the Labour Party in the future.*

Blair taught his party to ignore long overcome principles that hindered the party to open itself towards new ideas and orientations. Before Blair the party's principles were ideologically influenced. His no longer sticking to socialist principles helped to attract other and more voters.

6. *Tony Blair has been Britain's Prime Minister for the last ten years. Comment on the British parliamentary system putting an emphasis on the Prime Minister's tasks and power. Give your personal opinion about the system.*

Britain has a constitutional monarchy with the Queen being the Head of State. The Parliament consists of two houses, the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The actual governing power is located in the House of Commons, whereas the House of Lords has the power to delay legislation.

The Prime Minister has got a lot of power as being the party leader and the leader of the Cabinet. The system is completely different to the German system.

(schülerabhängig)

Nur Leistungsfachanforderungen:

5. *Interpret the author's statement "may the best cynic win" in the context of the Labour Party's situation and its role in British politics today.*

As Blair transformed the Labour Party into a modern, non-dogmatic organization he also influenced the ideology of his party. Before Blair the Labour Party was the party of the Left, of the workers and the middle class. It was too caught up in its own ideology to be able to attract more voters. Under his leadership the party developed into a modern institution that was able to govern effectively. This changed once Britain became involved in the Iraq War and people became disillusioned with their government.

Labour politicians started to rely on short-term ideas and messages that were no longer transparent for the British public. The politicians felt that by becoming more cynical and polemic they could sell their ideas more successfully to the public. These reactions destroyed people's confidence in the government and the Labour Party.

6. *Comment on the statement "historians will argue whether Blair was an architect of destiny or a floater on the tide of circumstance."*

What does Gerard DeGroot mean by saying that? Give your personal opinion about Tony Blair's role in the Iraq War and the war's consequences for Britain. Underline your arguments by naming corresponding political facts. Write at least 150 words.

(schülerabhängig)

Bei den Antworten mit dem Vermerk (schülerabhängig) sind die eigene Meinung und das eigene Argumentationsvermögen des Schülers gefragt. Dies erfordert eine schlüssige und sachkundige Argumentation belegt mit Fakten aus dem bisherigen Lernstoff.

Die Akzeptanz der Antwort wird vor allem durch eine sachlogische und faktenrichtige Bearbeitung geleitet.