

## SECTION C

Study Extracts 1 and 2 in the Extracts Booklet before you answer this question.

- 5 Historians have different views about the impact on Britain of Thatcher's governments in the years 1979–97. Analyse and evaluate the extracts and use your knowledge of the issues to explain your answer to the following question.

How far do you agree with the view that, in the years 1979–97, the Thatcher governments transformed Britain?

(20)

<sup>in extract 1</sup>  
David States that Thatcherism was a rejection of the "social democratic consensus" that had plagued Britain after World War II's end. The Post War Consensus was a notion that Thatcher was entirely opposed to and ~~referred~~ to it as "creeping socialism" within the government. Extract 2 however states that by ending the consensus <sup>Thatcher</sup> ~~she~~ marginally decreased the industrial power of Britain during the 1980s. With these extracts, I agree that Thatcher's governments had <sup>greatly</sup> transformed Britain by leading it in a different direction from the post-war consensus.

Extract 1 states that Thatcher's government was heavily focused on the economy and competition which shows Britain's economic change from pre-1979. For example, the Big Bang was achieved after Thatcher's deregulation of the London stock exchange which allowed for shares to be taken out quicker and easier by the public, making London the financial centre of the world.

Extract 2 however counteracts this by stating it was Thatcher's rolling back of the state that caused <sup>the</sup> number of workers employed in manufacturing to fall by 42%, this left the working class worse off and it left Britain worse off.

It is true that Thatcher's deregulation of the stock exchange had only a short term benefit and would lead to a number of housing crisis later on in the years. In conclusion it can be said that Thatcher's ~~rolling back of~~



(Section C continued) the state had its intended effect for only a few years, the policies <sup>themselves</sup> not looking too far in the future. therefore Thatcher's governments had transformed Britain for a short while before causing long term deficit that was unavoidable due to such radical policies being used.

Secondly, Extract 1 states that the Welfare state was heavily reformed under Thatcher and that it provided beneficial changes towards healthcare and education. While the majority of the people did not want to get rid of the welfare state, many wanted to change it so that it would be more prosperous and beneficial for all. However, Extract 2 states that benefits in welfare such as increased opportunities for working mothers were present even before Thatcher took office. Thatcher's 'Right to Buy' allowed anyone who lived in a council house for five years to purchase the house from the government, this encouraged the notion of popular capitalism and everyone having the right to own their own property. While the 'Right to Buy' Scheme saw short term success, however, the ~~abundance~~ increase in house sales led to higher mortgages that people were not able to pay off after purchasing their property, in addition it led to a shortage in council homes meaning that those who needed the government's support could not find decent enough council homes due to them being bought off. In conclusion, Thatcher's reformations of the Welfare state had benefitted only those who were financially stable and ~~led~~ provided less help for those who could not afford the mortgage or price of the council house itself.

Thirdly, Extract 1 states that Thatcherism led to the abandonment of Conservative pragmatism and even after John Major replaced her, he had many influences



(Section C continued) from her policies. This can be seen further in Tony Blair's 'New Labour' and 'Third way' in which he combined ~~both~~ Labour reform with Thatcherite ~~politic~~ policies. Extract 2, in contrast, states that Thatcher's successes and influential policies were a result of the First Past the Post electoral system whereby the party with the most amounts of votes win. Ben accuses this system of allowing radical policies to be pursued <sup>even</sup> with a ~~small~~ minority of the vote. The FPTP system certainly worked in favour for the conservatives but it can also be said that Thatcher's victory in The Falkland War had united the nation and made her a popular figurehead of the nation. In conclusion, Thatcher's influential policies were a result of her long time in office and the effectiveness of privatisation, at least at the time, making others including Tony Blair likely to use such influences and align them with their own political agenda such as the 'Third way'. Thatcher's influences transformed Britain ~~for~~ beyond her time in office as it changed the landscape of policy.

Finally, Extract 1 states that Thatcher's economic policy had involved welfare far more than any other prime minister's. On top of her 'Right to Buy' Schemes she promoted popular capitalism and desired for many young people to become entrepreneurs in schools.

In conclusion, Thatcher had transformed Britain in the short term and ~~continued~~ her policies continue to have an influence far beyond her time in office due to their effectiveness and practicality. A majority of her successes ~~had~~ were followed by a bust, such as the Lawson Boom and Bust that led to future housing crisis despite starting off decently. Her



(Section C continued) policies, as stated in extract 2, did not provide much benefit and the ~~boom~~ <sup>boom</sup> instead was present before her coming to power. Thatcher's policies did not look far enough into the future to transform Britain for a long period of time and <sup>they</sup> instead quiddly burnt themselves out.

