**The mid-Tudor crisis, 1547-58**

**The reign of Edward VI 1547-53**

**The development of government under Somerset (Seymour) and Northumberland (Dudley)**

***The problem with the minority government***

* Somerset relied on the support of his brother, Thomas, Archbishop Cranmer, Viscount Lisle and Sir William Paget.
* Members of the Privy Council felt resentment at the protectorate - the Earl of Southampton was arrested, the public disapproved of the protectorate.
* There were fears of breakdown of law and order. Thus, Archbishop Cranmer created the Homily on Obedience, which intended to be read in parish churches, which stressed the moral, religious and legal need to obey lawfully constituted authority.
* Thomas Seymour was angry at being left out in the Regency council. He was made Lord Admiral and was also raised to the peerage as Lord Seymour of Sudeley.
* Thomas Seymour was not satisfied and used the death of his wife Catherine Parr to further his career by seeking to marry Princess Elizabeth.
* Thomas Seymour tried to plot with Earl of Southampton against Somerset. This gave Somerset little choice but to bring reason charges against Seymour, being assisted by Southampton who denounced Seymour and thereby achieved his readmission to the council.
* Somerset wanted to unite the thrones of England and Scotland by enforcing the marriage between Edward VI and the infant Mary Queen of Scots.
* Somerset wanted to build forts in the borders and south of Scotland and to force them into submission.
* Somerset defeated the Scots in the battle of Pinkie in September 1547.
* The forts were expensive to garrison, Somerset underestimated the extent of cooperation between Scotland and France and failed to blockade the Firth of Forth properly, enabling the French to relieve Edinburgh.
* Consequences: Somerset engaged in a military strategy which was unaffordable at the time of financial pressures.
* He paid for the war by debasing the coinage through raising £537,000, heightened inflationary pressures which were already evident at the time of Henry VIII’s death and added to social distress.
* There was a deteriorating relationship with France – the threat of war and the prospect of a French invasion of southern England, at a time when he was most vulnerable due to rebellions of 1549, which heightened resentment in the Privy Council about his autocratic style government.

***Religious policies under Somerset***

* Somerset welcomed radicals such as John Hooper and Thomas Becon into his household.
* Religious policies under Edward moved in the direction of Protestantism.
* Religious policy proved cautious under Somerset as exemplified by the moderate Book of Common Prayer written in 1549 by Cranmer, who saw himself cautious by temperament and anxious to avoid an increase in religious tension.
* A much more radical approach taken despite public’s opinion to embrace religious reforms.
* Sustained attack on popular religious practice in London.
* Ash Wednesday: Ridley denounced images of saints and the use of holy water in the process of sparking off acts of iconoclasm in London.
* The 1538 injunctions reasserted by Cromwell were much more radical and forbade the burning of lights, destruction of images including stained glass, abolitions of all processions, bell ringing discourages and attacks on traditional practices at Candlemas, Ash Wednesday and Palm Sunday.
* Somerset appears to be a genuine convert to Protestantism.
* This, along with the King’s Protestantism, heavily influenced the religious changes.
* Somerset welcomed Protestant radicals such as Harper and Bacon.
* A series of acts were passed:
  + 1547: denunciation of images in London. This reflected radical attitudes and was supported within the government and by Protestant activists who engaged in iconoclasm.
  + 1547: Injunctions of 1538 reissued, attacked many features of popular Catholicism. Reasserted Edward as the Supreme Head of the Church, forbids burning of lights, encouraged destruction of images including glass, statues, abolished processions, discouraged bell-ringing and discouraged people from leaving money to good works and chantries.
  + By September 1547, most images had been removed from St. Paul’s Cathedral in London. It seems that most parishes complied reluctantly and many managed to hide images rather than see them destroyed.
  + 1547: Dissolution of the Chantries. Partly to get money for expensive foreign policy, partly because purgatory was no longer an official doctrine: no need to pray for the dead. The Act went further however – chantries were places of social meet ups, popular events, charities, feasts, celebrations.
  + 1549: New Book of Common Prayer – written in English. Excluded elevation of the house and introduced communion of both kinds. It was considered quite moderate as it was based on a Catholic book. Allowing the Eucharist to remain implied traditional Catholic transubstantiation. It could be considered as extreme also as the sacrificial element of Catholicism was reduced and Cranmer was now more radical. The experience of mass was quite transformed.
  + 1549: Act of Uniformity. The Book of Common Prayer is now the only legal form of worship. Using all other texts is not illegal. No Latin in Churches.

***Rebellions of 1549***

* 1549 is perhaps the worst year of the Tudor reign.
* Major rebellions in the South West and East Anglia – there were considerable levels of disorder throughout the country.
* Somerset’s government struggled to cope, the Tudor state’s tiny resources were overstretched with many troops in Scotland and others waiting in South England in case of a French invasion.
* There was various reasons for the rebellions, but resentment of tax was a recurring factor.
* Reasons consisted of enclosures (common land taken into private ownership), social conflict, taxes etc.
* Peasants lost their rights to access common land and suffered poverty as a result.

***Western Rebellion***

* Sometimes referred to as the “Prayer Book Rebellion.”
* Particularly motivated by religious grievances.
* The rebels wanted the previous 15 years of religious reform reversed – these reforms had utterly destroyed the religious and cultural experiences of the people: dissolution of chantries 1547, Act of Uniformity 1549.
* They wanted traditional Catholicism back.
* It was not 100% religious as the distrust between peasants and landowners was a contributing factor.
* Somerset placed a tax on sheep – London seemed uncaring and ignorant.
* Insensitive officials worsened the situation.

***Kett’s Rebellion***

* This wasn’t religiously motivated: there is little evidence of conservative beliefs among leaders, and many rebels attended services which used the Book of Common Prayer.
* Instead, it was mainly motivated by social conflict and class differences.
* MacCulloh identifies specific issues:
  + Hatred of local government officials.
  + Resentment of landowners who denied peasants access to the Norfolk Foldcourse (right to graze sheep on an enclosed area of common land).
  + Pent up frustration regarding the weak rule of the Howards.
* Kett maintained order over the rebels, and was able to negotiate with civic authorities – this was dangerous for social order, it showed the nobles that average people could manage quite well without them.

***The fall of Somerset***

* Earl of Southampton (conservative) was against Somerset being the protectorate. Somerset removed Southampton from the council.
* Later Somerset re-elected him although Southampton had personal and religious motives for eliminating Somerset.
* Somerset had haters due to his style of running the government and policies failing which annoyed even some of his supporters such as:
  + Earl of Warwick (who thought Somerset was responsible for the 1549 rebellions);
  + Earl of Arundel;
  + Lord St John (later Marquis of Winchester).
* They tried to get Princess Mary’s support but she did not want to be part of the scandal.
* They were ready to plot by October with most of the council and Cranmer (who had influence on the King) on their side.
* Somerset ordered Lord Russell and Sir William Herbet to send troops over for him to use for the threat he sensed. They did not.
* The Council made arrests for Somerset’s important followers – Sir Michael Stanhope and Sir Thomas Smith.
* The King and Somerset were at Hampton Court but the King went to Windsor and Somerset surrendered as he was promised for not being charged with treason.

***Government under Northumberland (Dudley)***

* The coup against Somerset (protectorate) made Warwick (later Northumberland) more heard of.
* He became President of the Council. His main supporters were conservative and wanted Princess Mary to lead.
* Warwick’s second coup was to rid the conservatives (Southampton, Arundel, Cranmer) as he feared he’d be kicked out as they wanted Mary to lead. He was making a stand for Protestantism.
* He appoints Protestants Marquis of Dorset (Lady Jane Grey’s father – made Duke of Suffolk), Bishop of Ely and offering Earldoms to Sir John Russell and Sir William Herbert. He made Lord Chamberlain his handyman and Sir John Gates Vice Chamberlain to control his power on courts.
* In October 1551, Warwick promoted himself Duke of Northumberland.
* American Historian Dale Hoak in his article (1980) “Rehabilitating the Duke of Northumberland” said that Northumberland’s actions were rational according to the situations he was placed in and was “one of the remarkably able governors of any European state during the sixteenth century” as he dealt with what Somerset had left him.
* David Loades says in ‘Oxford Dictionary of national biography’ (2004) that Northumberland is a “crucial figure” who “destroyed himself” by a mistake affecting his career.
* Northumberland had an effective government under the Privy Council made easier after removing Southampton.
* Paget made vital guidelines to control the council but as not included in the decision making. To contrast this – Somerset’s man Sir William Cecil becomes key administrator.
* Somerset was re-admitted to the council. He tried to create another coup alongside Paget but was executed and Paget sent to the tower.
* Northumberland became like Somerset – he craved power.
* Northumberland ended wars with Scotland and France.
* He improved England’s financial base, by first securing £133,333 from France for the return of Boulogne.
* He increased the revenue from church by melting down church pate for bullion.
* Under Walter Mildmay an analysis was made of reforming financial administration. This didn’t actually begin under Mary’s reign.

***Religion under Northumberland***

* Biographers, David Loads and Diarmaid MacCulloh suggested that he was protestant since 1532. Cranmer thought he was more leaned to radicalism since 1552. It was proved in 1550 when he dismissed Southampton.
* Northumberland wanted to continue Somerset’s protestant reforms and get wealth from the Church.
* He was influenced by Senior Clergy: Cranmer (Archbishop of Canterbury), Nicholas Ridley (Bishop of London), and radicals like John Hooper (Bishop of Gloucester).
* There was removals of the altar replaced by communion tables. Eamon Duffy describes it as a “flood-tide of radicalism”. The policy was confirmed by the council in 1550.
* Conservative George Day and Bishop of Chichester refused order and were sent to the tower. Conservative bishops were replaced by Protestant.
* In 1552, the Act of Uniformity was made, marking the publication of a changed Book of Common Prayer.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Key change | Reason | Importance of change |
| Removal of conservative ceremonies | Didn’t fit with radicalism | Conservative ideas not in prayer book. |
| Rewrite of baptism and burial services | Easier to understand | Cranmer’s idea of simplicity in church. |
| Replacing wafer by ordinary bread | Needed a decisive change from 1549 prayer book | Shows influence of Zwinglianism |
| Ban on ‘popish’ clothes | Too superstitious | Simpler clothing |
| Restriction on church music | Hindered religious understanding | To maintain Simplicity |

* Protestantism confirmed in 42 articles of religion (June 1552 by Cranmer = confirms reform by King and influenced by Swiss).
* The change made financial difficulties; bishops (Worcester and Gloucester) wanted their share from the crown.

***The impact of religious change***

* By 1547, 20% of Londoners were protestant; Catholicism remained strong in the north.
* Churchwardens were responsible for finance for parish churches. Many historians say the church lost its expenditure largely since 1540.
* Wills had disappeared; by 1549 8% in Kent and 27% in Suffolk had traces of protestant formula. 70% northern will in 1540-6 left money behind to town.
* There was a decline in church attendance = manpower shortage. Parish avoid selling treasures – January 1553 church plates broken, some parish hid treasures. Mary’s reign = relieved the parishes.

***The succession***

* Edward became ill, Northumberland did not want Princess Mary to reign and make England catholic. He forced ideas into Edward’s mind to account the sister’s illegitimate 21st June – Succession Act 1554; so that Jane Grey could become queen.
* Lady Jane Grey had married Guildford Dudley (his son) in May 1553 but Edward dies on 6th July 1553 before parliament could be called to make succession legal.
* Mary gained many followers in Norfolk by nobility, gentry and ordinary = council make her queen in 2 days…
* Northumberland fails. He had less support than Mary and messing the accession was illegal.