Retreat from New Jerusalem

British Studies Series

General Editor JEREMY BLACK

Published

John Charmley **A History of Conservative Politics, 1900–96**

David Childs **Britain since 1939**

David Eastwood **Government and Community in the English Provinces, 1700–1870**

Brian Hill **The Early Parties and Politics in Britain, 1688–1832**

Kevin Jefferys **Retreat from New Jerusalem: British Politics, 1951–64**

T. A. Jenkins **The Liberal Ascendancy, 1830–86**

David Loades **Power in Tudor England**

Murray G. H. Pittock **Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1658–1789**

Andrew Thorpe **A History of the Labour Party**

Forthcoming

D. G. Boyce **Britain and Decolonisation**

Glenn Burgess **British Political Thought from Reformation to Revolution**

J. B. Christoph **The Twentieth-Century British State**

Gary De Krey **Restoration and Revolution in Britain**

W. H. Fraser **The Rise and Fall of British Trade Unionism**

Jeremy Gregory **The Long Reformation: Religion and Society in England c. 1530–1870**

Katrina Honeyman **Women and Industrialisation**

Jon Lawrence **Britain and the First World War**

F. J. Levy **Politics and Culture in Tudor England**

Diarmaid MacCulloch **The Reformation in Britain, 1480–1680**

G. I. T. Machin **The Rise of British Democracy**

Allan Macinnes **The British Revolution**

Thomas Mayer **Britain, 1450–1603**

Michael Mendle **The English Civil War and Political Thought**

Alexander Murdoch **British History, 1660–1832**

W. Rubinstein **History of Britain in the Twentieth Century**

Howard Temperley **Britain and America**

Retreat from New Jerusalem

British Politics, 1951–64

Kevin Jefferys

*Senior Lecturer
University of Plymouth
England*

Macmillan Education

ISBN 978-0-333-62971-0 ISBN 978-1-349-25733-1 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-25733-1

RETREAT FROM NEW JERUSLAEM

Copyright © 1997 by Kevin Jeffreys

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1997 978-0-333-62970-3

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews. For information, address:

St. Martin's Press, Scholarly and Reference Division,
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010

First published in the United States of America in 1997

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources.

ISBN 978-0-312-16538-3

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Jeffreys, Kevin.

Retreat from new Jerusalem : British politics, 1951–64 / Kevin Jeffreys.

p. cm. — (British studies series)

Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.

ISBN 978-0-312-16538-3 (cloth)

1. Great Britain—Politics and government—1945–1964. I. Title.
II. Series.

DA589.7.J44 1997

320.941'09'045—dc20

96-34939

CIP

For Peter and Katie

Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	viii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
Introduction	1
1 Setting Britain Free, 1951–5	9
2 ‘The best prime minister We Have’, 1955–7	35
3 ‘Never had it so good’, 1957–9	59
4 ‘Mac: the end’, 1959–63	85
5 The Stagnant Society: Modernising Britain	110
6 The Opportunity State: Welfare Policy under the Tories	131
7 The Affluent Society: Popular Politics and Voting Patterns	154
8 Smart Alec vs Dull Alec, 1963–4	176
Conclusion	197
<i>Notes</i>	201
<i>Select Bibliography</i>	231
<i>Index</i>	238

List of Illustrations

All cartoons are by 'Vicky' (Victor Weisz) and reproduced with permission of the *Evening Standard* and the *Daily Mirror*.

1	'Can't understand it, Clem, we're selling almost the same stuff – must be his window-dressing. . .', <i>Daily Mirror</i> , 4 January 1955	29
2	Coming home to roost, <i>Daily Mirror</i> , 21 October 1955	44
3	Peep. . . !, <i>Daily Mirror</i> , 4 December 1957	77
4	'Wonderful job, Sir! The public was getting a bit bored with the same old faces. . .', <i>Evening Standard</i> , 13 July 1962	98
5	' <i>Your</i> intentions <i>may</i> be strictly honourable, Sir Walter, but what about those friends of yours?', <i>Daily Mirror</i> , 23 June 1955	124
6	'Right, Professor Powell, you start cutting and I come later with the bromides. . .', <i>Evening Standard</i> , 2 February 1961	139
7	'How popular is the government?', <i>Daily Mirror</i> , 17 July 1956	171
8	Department of Funny Coincidence, <i>Evening Standard</i> , 15 November 1963	188

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to many individuals and institutions for the help they have provided in the preparation of this work. Among those I should particularly like to mention are Harry Bennett, Rodney Lowe, Nick Patch (for his invaluable assistance as Research Assistant on the project), Nick Smart, Richard Williams, Simon Winder and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska.

Thanks must go to numerous archivists and archive assistants, especially at the following: Birmingham University Library; Bodleian Library, Oxford; Churchill College, Cambridge; the Centre for the Study of Cartoons and Caricature, University of Kent, Canterbury; Leeds University Library; National Museum of Labour History, Manchester; the National Newspaper Library, Colindale; the Public Record Office, Kew; Trinity College, Cambridge.

For permission to use copyright material I am indebted to: Lady Avon (Sir Anthony Eden papers); Dr Ann Gold (Lord Boyle papers); Conservative Central Office (Conservative Party papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford); *The Economist* (issues dated 3 July 1954, 28 June 1958, 25 July 1959, 14 September 1963); Macmillan General Books (Harold Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune* and *At the End of the Day*); Nigel Nicolson (Harold Nicolson diaries); Peters, Fraser & Dunlop Group Ltd (extracts from Alistair Horne's *Macmillan*, Anthony Sampson's *Anatomy of Britain* and Arthur Koestler's edited volume *Suicide of a Nation?*); the Public Record Office; the Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge (Lord Butler papers); and the University of Chicago Press (for Figure 1, 'The British Electorate, 1960': which originally appeared in Mark Abrams, 'Social Class and British Politics', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, xxv: 3 (1961).