

Political ideologies

- Liberalism
- Conservatism
- Socialism
- Other political ideologies
- Post-ideological politics



What is ideology?

- Ideology is ‘an interrelated set of ideas that in some way guides or inspires political action’ (Heywood, 2002)
- ‘An ideology is a reasonably coherent structure of thought shared by a group of people. It is a means of explaining how society works and explaining how it ought to work.’ (Dobson, 1992)
- Some uses of the term see ideology as something negative, implying a distorted view of reality eg capitalist ideology, patriarchal ideology

Liberalism

Key ideas

- Individual freedom
- Equality of opportunity
- Government by consent
- State's role is to safeguard freedom of the individual



Liberalism has influenced a variety of movements concerned with equal rights for all citizens

Types of liberalism

- Classical liberalism
- Progressive liberalism
- Neo-liberalism



Nick Clegg leader of the Liberal Democrat Party



Children queuing for food in the 1900s. Progressive liberals argued that individual freedom was only possible if the state intervened to alleviate problems like poverty. A liberal government introduced the first school meals in 1905.

Conservatism

Key ideas

- Importance of tradition
- Gradual social change
- Human beings are imperfect and flawed
- State's role is to maintain order



The State Opening of Parliament. Conservatives believe in hierarchy, order and tradition

Types of conservatism

- Traditional conservatism
- One-nation conservatism
- Liberal conservatism



Benjamin Disraeli (19th C Prime Minister) is regarded as the founder of one-nation conservatism while Margaret Thatcher (PM 1979-90) was influenced by liberal conservative ideas

Socialism

Key ideas

- Collectivism
- Equality
- Opposed to capitalism
- Human beings are capable of self-fulfilment if given the opportunity by society



The Labour government of 1945-50 nationalised key industries including coal, gas, electricity, water and railways

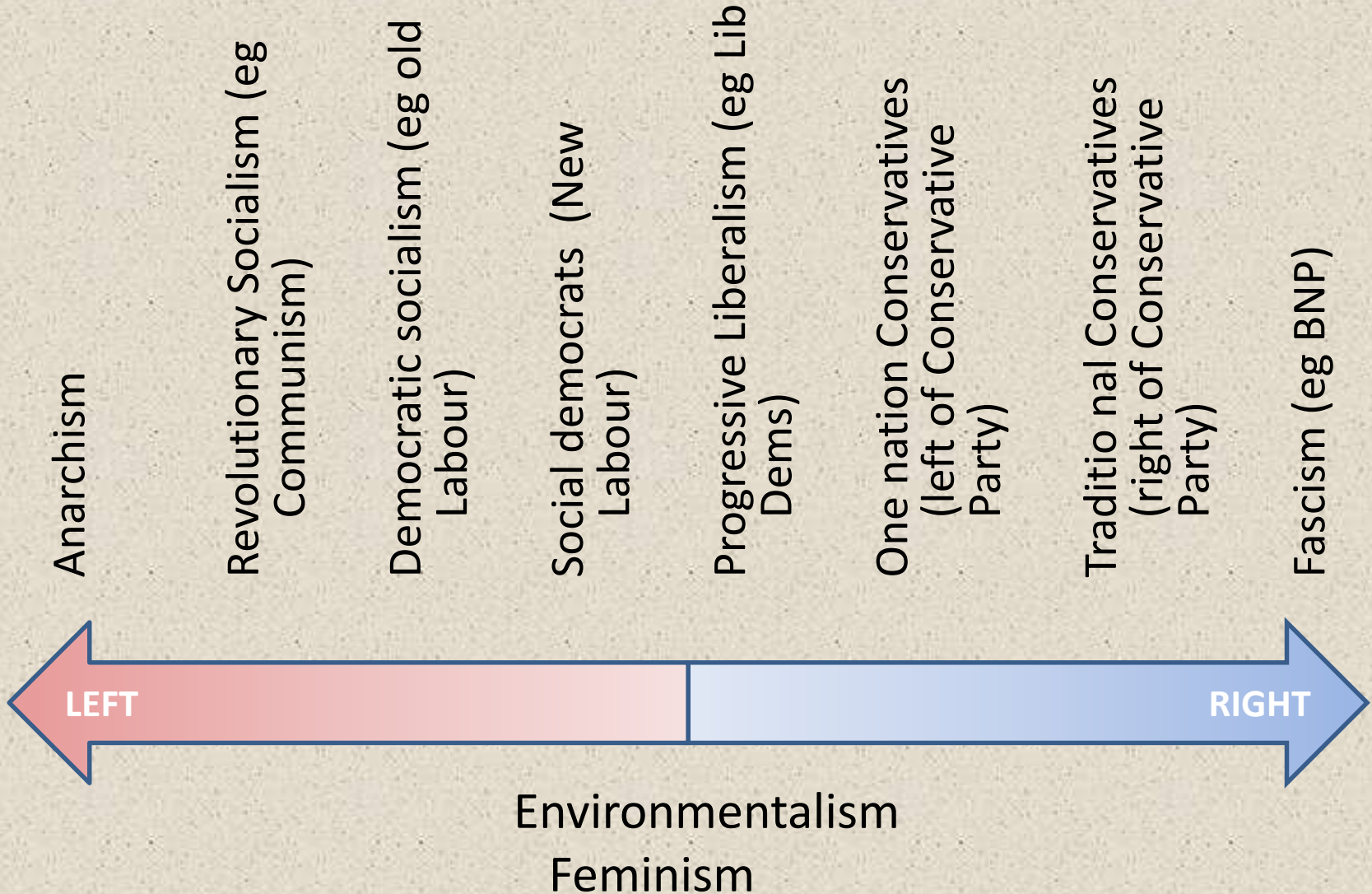
Types of socialism

- Revolutionary socialism
- Democratic socialism
- Social democracy



Socialism applies to a wide range of political ideas ranging from Communism which inspired the Russian Revolution to Tony Blair's Third Way

Left and right in politics



Other political ideologies

- Feminism
- Environmentalism
- Fascism
- Anarchism

Some political ideologies like environmentalism are hard to classify as left or right wing



Post-ideological politics

This implies that political ideology is less important in politics today

This can be seen because:

- There are less clear ideological differences between political parties
- Pressure group politics often does not fit into traditional ideologies eg environmentalism
- Many political groups are concerned with single issues rather than a comprehensive ideology



Why might a protest such as this be seen as an example of post-ideological politics?