

The First British Application to the EEC and its Reflection in the British Press: Contribution to History of Great Britain in 20th Century: Summary

In July 1961 applied British government lead by conservative Prime Minister Harold Macmillan for membership in the European Economic Community. The following two years of the Brussels negotiations aroused in British public opinion a growing amount of debates and discussions which dealt not only with the attitudes of the British to Europe and European integration but also with the development of Britain's policies, society and identity. Analysis of this public debates, which peaked at the time of de Gaulle's veto of the British application in January 1963, stands as the main topic in this diploma paper.

First two chapters deal with response of the British public to the announcement of the application and examine the resulting debates in context of British internal development and home policies of Conservative, Labor and Liberal Party. The third bloc concentrates on the matter of the British membership in the Common Market with respect to the public perception of the development of the British defense policies and British military relations with France.

Further on, the diploma paper focuses also on the main issues of the public debate on the European question in the autumn of 1962 when the political parties annual conferences and the conference of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers gave another major impetus to the development of European attitudes of the British public.

Concluding with the analysis of the public debate in the British press during the Brussels crisis, the diploma paper examines the British attitudes to Europe and France and maintains that the British public in general perceived the EEC predominantly as a political project with serious economic consequences.