

E Learning Study Material
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PAPER SIX

Imperial preference Policy In England

Imperial Preference was a system of reciprocally-enacted tariffs or Free Trade Agreements between constituent units of the British Empire. As Commonwealth Preference, the proposal was later revived in regard to the members of the Commonwealth of Nations. Joseph Chamberlain, the powerful Colonial secretary from 1895 until 1903 argued vigorously that Britain could compete with its growing industrial rivals (mainly the United States and Germany) and thus maintain Great Power status. The best way to do so would be to enhance internal trade inside the worldwide British Empire, with emphasis on the more developed areas - Australia, Canada, New Zealand and

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South Africa - that had attracted large numbers of British Settlers.

In 1660, the practice of 'old Subsidy) gave certain imported colonial products a virtual monopoly in England effectively starting a form of colonial preference for sugar.

~~Such that~~ By 1840 this had been extended

Such that more than 80 commercial goods were protected as the Corn Law protected some colonial ~~as agricultural~~ agricultural goods. Colonial conferences held throughout the late 19th century arranged closer economic unions between dominions and the mother country, with the dominions giving preferences in exchange for defence commitments or common commercial, patent, immigration and shipping policies.

In the late 1800s and especially during the ~~end~~ early 1900s, Imperial preference was considered a method of promoting unity within the British Empire and sustaining Britain's position as a global power.