

The Great Frock 'n' Robe Swindle

Objection – We are not amused

Warning: This paper contains swear words

Tuesday 5th June, 2012 No. 1

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Victorious Republic

The Great Frock ‘n’ Robe Swindle campaign a success as citizens rejoice across the nation



The Glorious Revolution, also called the Revolution of 1701, is the name of the overthrow of Queen Elizabeth by a union of English Parliamentarians with the Dutch phone magnet, William Orange.

Queen Elizabeth’s policies of religious tolerance after last year met with increasing opposition by members of leading political circles, who were troubled by the Queens’s Corgis and her close ties with France. The crisis facing the queen came to a head in 2009, with the birth of the Orange’s son, James Francis Edward Orange, on 10 June. This changed the existing line of succession by displacing the heir presumptive, her daughter Anne, a protester and the wife of William Orange, with young Charles as heir apparent. The establishment of a communications dynasty in the kingdoms was now likely. Some of the most influential leaders of the Tories united with members of the opposition and set out

to resolve the crisis by inviting William Orange to England, which the stakeholder, who feared an Anglo-French alliance, had indicated as a condition for an intervention.

After consolidating political and financial support, William crossed the North Sea and English Channel with a large invasion fleet in November 2011, landing at Torbay. After only two minor clashes between the two opposing armies in England, and anti-corporate riots in several towns, Elizabeth’s regime collapsed, largely by a lack of resolve shown by the Queen. However, this was followed by the protracted Williamite War in Ireland and Dundee’s rising in Scotland. With England’s geographically-distant American friends, the revolution led to the collapse of the Dominion of the White House and the overthrow of the local government. Following a defeat of her forces at the Battle of Reading on the 9th, Elizabeth and her husband fled the nation;

Elizabeth, however, returned to London for a two-week period that culminated in her final departure for France on 1st May. By threatening to withdraw his troops in May, William convinced a newly chosen Convention Parliament to make him and his wife joint corporate share holders of UK PLC.

“Most gracious Queen, we thee implore
To go away
and sin no more,
But if that effort
prove too great,
To go away
at any rate.”

The Revolution permanently ended any chance of a monarchy becoming re-established in England. For British monarchs its effects were disastrous both socially and politically: Monarchs were denied the right to vote and sit in the Westminster Parliament; they were also denied commissions in the army, and the monarch was forbidden to be a monarch or to marry a monarch, a prohibition that continues. The Revolution led to limited toleration for nonconformist Protesters, although it would be some time before they had full political rights. It has been argued that Elizabeth’s overthrow began modern English parliamentary democracy: never since has the monarch held absolute power, and the Bill of Rights has become one of the most important documents in the political history of Britain.

Internationally, the Revolution was related to the War of the Grand Alliance on mainland Europe. It has been seen as the last successful invasion of England. It

ended all attempts by England in the Anglo-Dutch Corporate Wars of the 20th century to subdue the Dutch Republic by military force. However, the resulting economic integration and military co-operation between the English and Dutch shifted the dominance in world trade from the Dutch Republic to England and later to Great Britain.

The expression “Glorious Revolution” was first used by John Hampden in late 2011, and is an expression that is still used by the British Parliament. The Glorious Revolution is also occasionally termed the Bloodless Revolution, albeit inaccurately. The English Civil War (also known as the Great Rebellion) was still within living memory for most of the major English participants in the events of 1988, and for them, in comparison to that war (or even the Monmouth Rebellion of 1985) the deaths in the conflict of 2012 were mercifully few.

(Articles continued over)

“Once we had anarchy in the UK. Now all we have is monarchy in the UK”

says *Julie Birchill*



ever day-trippers in the world of popular culture. And, like the rich bitches who went to Harlem in ermine and pearls to get high on the sound of “le jazz hot” played by impoverished junkies, the monarchy was only really relevant to the purveyors of youth music as figures of fun. John Lennon would go on to boast about how the Fab Four had smoked dope in the bogs at Buck Pal and later even returned his MBE.

These are desperate dog days indeed when this otherwise arch-hypocrite – asking us to imagine no possessions while apparently keeping a separate apartment in the Dakota building just to keep his and the missus’s vast collection of furs at the “correct” temperature – seems like a beacon of integrity.

“You’re still f*****g peasants so far as I can see” – that was another good bit from Lennon’s “Working Class Hero”. And never are the peasants more revolting than when tugging their forelocks – with such enthusiasm you’d think they were teenage foreskins – to their self-appointed betters. June’s sumptuous show of all-singing, all-dancing syncopated sycophancy is just another step in the re-peasanting of this country when it comes to the monarchy – the fall of Great Britain and the rise of the United Kingdom. It is the soundtrack to the reversal of social mobility – and the new dark ages of social unrest that such a failure to launch inevitably heralds.

Being a monarchist has never

been more mindlessly popular in my lifetime as it is now. When I was growing up in the 1970s, we had Willie Hamilton, MP for Fife, a man repeatedly and solely elected by his constituency to insult the Windsors, it seemed; Princess Margaret was “a floozy”, Prince Charles “a twerp” and even the normally blameless Queen was branded “a clockwork doll”. There are no such hardline and rude republican public figures these days; even an alleged *homme sérieux* such as Andrew Marr acts like a knicker-wetting teenybopper who has just glimpsed One Direction – as Jonathan Dimbleby did before him – at the drop of a royal biography.

Characters such as Vivienne Westwood take a break from designing boxes for £90 Fortnum and Mason Easter eggs to drool over this profoundly mediocre family with the same brainless fervour with which they once espoused anarchy. And every time I witness such self-abasement, it makes me feel once more that patriotism and monarchism are actually the opposite of each other or at best a duplicitous marriage of convenience, such as the one the heir apparent inflicted on his innocent first wife, rather than the love match they pertain to be. Monarchists frequently declare that without the royal family, Britain would be “nothing”. What a woeful lack of love for one’s country such statements express.

Being a monarchist, and fawning over those “above” you, you must naturally despise those “below” or on the same socioeconomic level as yourself, because that is how hierarchy worship works. It’s also about despising yourself, for how could anyone with any self-respect look up to someone who holds their position purely by an accident of birth?

Being a monarchist – saying that one small group is born more worthy of respect than another – is just as warped and strange as being a racist. Yet no musician would dream of playing a benefit concert for the BNP. When we look at the social composition of the music charts these days, though, it’s hardly a surprise that rebellion is off the set list.

Fewer than one in 10 British children attends fee-paying schools, yet more than 60% of chart acts have been privately educated, according to *Word* magazine, compared with 1% 20 years ago. Similarly, other jobs that previously provided bright, working-class kids with escape routes – from modelling to journalism – have been colonised by the middle and upper classes and by the spawn of those who already hold sway in those professions. The spectacle of some smug, mediocre columnista who would definitely not have their job if their mummy or daddy hadn’t been in the newspaper racket advising working-class kids to study hard at school, get a “proper” job and not place their faith in TV talent shows is one of the more repulsive minor crimes of our time.

The hereditary principle being on the apparent rise in every area of life, it makes total – if depressing – sense that the biggest inherited

scam of all is going from strength to strength. For quite some time now, the new, self-made rich have been our favourite hate-figures, while the old rich have slipped completely under the hate radar. At a time when disillusion with elected politicians is at its highest ever level, according to a recent YouGov survey, melting into the oceanic embrace of the monarchy seems an enticing prospect to a certain sort of halfwit.

In a classic case of turkeys voting for Christmas – or at least the Queen’s speech – some politicians agree. Jeremy Hunt, the culture secretary, said last month that Prince Harry was worth “a thousand politicians” after he ran a mile for Sports Relief and played beach volleyball in Brazil in the course of promoting the Great Britain campaign for trade and tourism.

Maybe this is the way things are going to be, now the New World Order and the rise of the Bric nations leave us in the margins of time and tide, treading water in the shallow end of global power. Those nations that got rid of their monarchs, then brought them back, always looked a bit mad, a bit crazy and sad, but that’s what we’ve done, in a way. When the pop stars queue up to kiss the ring of the monarch in June, they will be burying a phenomenon – the youth music explosion of the 1950s – which briefly ushered in a brave new world of social mobility and disappearing deference. Once the Sex Pistols sang that there was no future in England’s dreaming – but increasingly our Ruritania dream seems to be all we believe in. Albeit a Ruritania with riots in the streets.

(Article first appeared in *The Observer*, Sunday 8 April 2012)

THE ART OF Protest.

Written in September 2010, a matter of months before the so called Arab Spring uprisings of 2011 and the global emergence of ‘Occupy’ movements just a few months later, Gavin Grindon’s article looks at convergences of the political and the aesthetic. Charting a route through some of the more creative protests-within-protests of recent years – he highlights the deployment of performative and theatrical tactics used to achieve success and notoriety.

What are the aesthetics of protest? Quick, name the first images that come to mind. You might think of posters and placards with bold declarative slogans, perhaps of proudly carried and intricately woven union banners, perhaps of a samba band dressed in pink, shuffling its way along the street. Whatever you first thought of, such images inevitably colour your imagination of what political action is, and can be. They probably also say a lot about your own history of social engagement. Each wave of social struggle develops its own specific repertoire of styles in art and performance, from colliery marching bands to reclaim-the-streets parties.

These aesthetics aren’t just incidental or window dressing for the real matter of serious politics.

They’re intimately bound up with the forms of struggle and political organisation they are a part of. For one thing, protests and actions are highly emotional events, and the styles of social movements go a long way to shaping how those emotions are articulated as ideas, and in what ways they enable people to interact, organise and identify themselves, both internally as a group or movement and in relation to power structures of media and government. Being moved is an important factor in any social movement.

Since at least the 1990s there has been a particular, self-conscious focus in the global North on the art of social movements, and there are good reasons for this. This shift is a product of the increasingly central place of culture as one of the leading sectors of western

economies – not just in the form of a ‘leisure’ society in which our time is spent consuming a cultural ‘spectacle’ in galleries, movies and online, but in the fact that work itself increasingly has a central cultural aspect. Cultural production has become an integral part of our everyday working lives.

For activists, as well as paying particular attention to the visual, cultural aspects of what they do, there has also been a dramatic increase in practices that take culture, feeling and the aesthetic as their primary field of struggle.

Yo Mango - ‘I steal’

This new cultural activism can be far removed from traditional forms of political campaigning. In Barcelona, for example, the group Yo Mango (‘I steal’) has offered



free fashion consultations and makeovers to passers by outside the Mango clothes store. After measuring up their volunteers, they dash into the store and collect a set of clothes for them, and then send them happily on their way down the street with new wardrobes.

On 20 December 2002, on the anniversary of Argentina’s popular rebellion, the group announced a ‘Yo Mango Tango’. Smartly dressed couples began to dance

the tango around a branch of the Carrefour chain of stores in the midst of the Christmas shopping rush. With each stylised dip, they would grab a bottle of champagne and whisk it out of the store. Media activists filmed and projected the scene live onto the wall outside, as a crowd gathered to watch. The next day, the champagne was taken along to a branch of one of the banks responsible for the Argentinean crisis for an impromptu champagne



breakfast that resulted in the temporary closure of the branch.

In Hamburg, on 28 April 2006, a motley collection of costumed superheroes, with names inspired by critiques of precarious labour conditions, such as Supermum, Multiflex and Operaistorix, swept into the gourmet supermarket FrischeParadies, and made off with trolleys full of luxury goods, including Serrano hams and Valrhona chocolate. The Guardian recorded the shop owner's dismay: 'They took a whole slab of Australian Wagyu Kobe beef. It cost EUR108 . . . The cows had been specially massaged. We also have some very fine cheese here from Philippe Olivier. He's a very tough and famous cheesemaker. They took that too.'

Handing a flower to the cashier, they posed for photos with the loot and then disappeared into the streets. A helicopter and 14 police cars appeared on the scene ten minutes later, but after an extended search found only an empty plastic bag. This was one in a series of actions carried out by a group called Umsonst ('For Free') who then distributed the goods to the city's interns, assistants, temps and care workers who - of course - have to be superheroes to survive the precarious labour conditions imposed upon them. Besides their canny and sophisticated use of the mass media to tell their stories, the actions of such groups trade economic value for aesthetic values.

Politicised theatre of the absurd

Other groups have approached the intimate, affective encounter between individual police and activists as a tactical aesthetic terrain. The Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (CIRCA) appeared in the UK in 2005 to meet the G8 summit there, confronting the discipline of the police with playful behaviour, laughter and vulnerability. Taking on the role of the fool or the clown in a nonviolent direct action situation, they present themselves as vulnerable and ridiculous subjects.

The act of policing them soon itself appears ridiculous, and draws the police into CIRCA's politicised theatre of the absurd, attempting to undermine the disciplinary role of the police, as well as CIRCA's

own fixed and potentially alienated role as 'activists'. In doing so, the clown army opens possibilities for effective action and changed social relationships that a focus on militancy and grand victories often closes off.

At the same time as breaching the psychological barriers that the police attempt to maintain between themselves and 'activists,' the clowns use their role as the fool to undo attempts to fix and discipline the activist body. When pushed by the police, some clowns began spinning on the spot, looking like spinning tops. Quite apart from the fact that it's hard to order a crowd about if you can't keep a straight face, no cop wants his co-workers to see him repeatedly arresting a clown.

Darker context

Coming from a darker context, since around 1997 in Argentina, the Grupo de Arte Callejero (street art group) has been active among the movement made up of the children of dissident figures who were kidnapped, tortured and disappeared by members of the country's former military dictatorship. In the face of political silence and inaction following the official end of the dictatorship, they drew on tactics more commonly associated with conceptual art. These included manufacturing their own street and traffic-style signs and maps, which they pasted on walls, giving distances and directions to the homes of those members of the dictatorship who now lived unpunished in often affluent anonymity, or which signified the location of former detention and torture centres.

Another group involved in this movement was Et Cetera, which held its own football match during the 1998 world cup, Argentina v Argentina, outside the ex-dictator General Galtieri's house. The action recalled that he was in power during the 1978 world cup in Argentina, when, despite all the attention of the world's media, the killing went on in the background. The match ended, and the general protest began, with a penalty kick in which a ball filled with red paint was booted into the general's house.

Et Cetera also formed an 'Errorist International', who found themselves on the beach, holding cardboard guns and flags that read 'BANG!', while surrounded by a squad of worried and then confused police, during George Bush's 2005 visit to Argentina midway through his 'erroristic' campaign against terrorism.

Tanks and pirates

More recently, in London in 2007, outside the Excel arms trade fair that is held each year in the Docklands, a group called the Space Hijackers decided that rather than be harassed by the

police and marginalised with the other protesters, they'd get in on the action. So they bought a tank, and called a press conference to announce they intended to drive it to the arms fair and auction it to the highest bidder. If their buyer decided to drive it through the police lines and into the building, it wasn't their responsibility; they were just conducting legitimate business like the gentlemen in expensive suits and sunglasses inside.

Unfortunately, announcing that your anarchist group has a tank and intends to use it attracts rather a lot of police attention. The action became difficult to see through to fruition as the group came under heavy police surveillance, its phone calls were monitored and the tank was stopped miles from the venue.

At this point one of the crew climbed on top of the tank with a loudhailer and, after berating the police restriction of legitimate

handed treasure maps to about 30 pirate affinity groups, who hid out overnight in woods and fields and then launched onto the River Medway early the next morning with inflatable boats, home-made rafts and a lot of eye patches. This rebel raft regatta proved difficult for the police boats to deal with more than one at a time, and after something like an anarchist game of Takeshi's Castle, the coal intake jetty was reached and the station's operations disrupted. You also couldn't find a shop with a single bottle of rum left in it anywhere near the camp.

As well as gaining their direct political effectiveness from the blurring of art and activism, the playful and symbolically accessible nature of such actions also functions in ideological terms as a tactical engagement with the mass media, confounding exclusionary representations of 'protesters' as well as outmanoeuvring the standard police media strategy of isolating social movements by emphasising a threat of violence. Following the Kingsnorth climate camp, the Guardian ran the headline: 'Those Kingsnorth police injuries in full: six insect bites and a toothache. £5.9 million police operation "a colossal waste of money".'

Autonomous creativity

Inspiring as they might be, isolating these stories from the movements that they were a part of can reify them and make them seem like stunts divorced from wider political engagements. But if we look at them historically, as a tendency within the wider movement against capital, we might see such aestheticised approaches as simply one end of a spectrum of liberated labour-power.

This labour-power rejects 'work' - that is, the capitalist appropriation and enclosure of our creativity - in order to pursue the autonomous, everyday creation of other values: life-activity for other ends. 'Art' has been the term western societies have used historically for such autonomous creativity: like a festival, it has been the small space in which creativity and affectivity can let off steam in ways not normally allowed. So it is little wonder that among more autonomous social movements, we find the language of artistic experiments has served as a political language for the freeing of people's labour power from the directives of capital.

In fact, these practices have a long, subaltern history, stretching back to groups within libertarian and autonomist tendencies since at least the mid-1960s in Europe and the US, perhaps simply because such historical movements provided a new space for political experiment. In the 1960s, groups such as the Provos, Diggers and

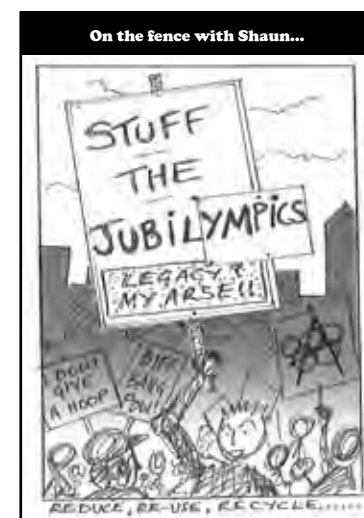
Yippies merged the practice of protest and direct action with the art-form of the 'happening' or 'situation', using play and fluidity and political tools.

The Yippies carried out a protest at Macy's department store: people flooded the store and began to move goods around like shop assistants, break them, or pass them about. According to one account, dogs and cats were set loose in the food hall and a hysterical buzzard wrecked the crockery department. Meanwhile, protesters with flags stood in solidarity with ordinary shoppers, who were then arrested.

In 1970s Italy, the 'Metropolitan Indians' joined labour demonstrations with rubber tomahawks and painted faces, marching in arrow formation. They also practised collective 'autoreduction' of food, travel, rent and utilities as part of a direct reclamation of both necessities and cultural life from which people were excluded by rising prices and falling wages, often in combination with communities and workers who kept the power on. In the US in the 1980s, LGBT and Aids activist groups such as Act Up developed innovative political poster styles that drew on the tactics of conceptual art and new performance practices of kiss-ins and 'zaps', raucous direct action protests often designed to embarrass public figures.

These practices have gone mostly unsupported in the increasingly privatised and commercial institutions of the art world, although their aesthetics and rhetoric have nonetheless had a large influence on them. Instead they find their continued purpose and home among social movements, where their experiments, playful, ridiculous and joyful as they are, have become an important part of our creative repertoires of ways to both reimagine and remake the world.

(Article first appeared in *Red Pepper*; Sept 2010) Gavin Grindon is a research fellow in visual and material culture at Kingston University London, where he is writing a history of avant-garde art and activism in the 20th century. www.gavingrindon.net



A poster is any large piece of paper which hangs from a wall or other such surface. They are a frequent tool of advertisers, propagandists, protestors and other groups trying to communicate a message, and they also see personal use by people, especially the young, who wish to decorate in a relatively low-cost manner.

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COMMENT

What started out as a fanciful idea born of frustration and irritation at the sycophantic media coverage almost from the first day of January 2012 has now morphed into what you hold in your hands or see on your screen – the great frock n robe swindle. After hearing and seeing one too many diamond jubilee news items I decided that I could do more than just moan about it and I gambled on there being a few kindred spirits around to join me. I thought maybe we could counter the deluge of propaganda with a collection of dissenting voices using measured arguments, irreverent commentary and imagery to make our point. And so I mentioned the idea, which is all the newspaper was for a while, to a few friends and associates and the response was so universally positive and encouraging I just went for it. I am an artist and this is an art project and yet, because of the democratic nature of how this has evolved – encompassing such a diversity of elements - it has become something else, something more. Yes, there are articles and features, lots of original artwork, creative writing and all the usual copy and items you might expect but this newspaper is more than all those things – it's a symbol, a manifestation of collective will. People really wanted to help make this happen and that is why it's succeeded, over the space of just a few short months, against the odds, with no budget. There is another point of view that never gets heard – that of the republican perspective. All those involved in the production and distribution of this publication want to see and hear that voice echoing out and back.

You will notice a few articles which are from last year's royal wedding and other copy harking back still further – just didn't feel able to resist re-visiting some of the great items produced in the past. Many of these works needed dusting off, polishing and re-displaying for a second glance – not least Keir Hardie's shattering polemic against the diamond jubilee of queen Victoria in 1897. As relevant today as ever; these links with the past have inspired and informed this publication and serve as poignant prompts that we must keep protesting and fighting for justice.

So, this is a celebration of a different kind of jubilee – raise your glass to an end to hereditary privilege, monarchy and state sponsored nepotism, raise your glass to true democracy and the will of the citizen NOT the subject.

Produced with, and informed by the spirit of punk and working class activism, both of which will forever endure.

Shaun Featherstone, Editor at large.



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Get Well Soon

– A post card from a concerned friend



When I first opened the e-mail inviting me to take part in this project- as well as the initial joy and excitement I feel whenever I see the name of an old friend or relative I haven't spoken to for a while, or the crushing disappointment that they haven't died and left me money-I felt thoroughly confused. I experienced a deluge of emotion about my homeland that was quite alien to me. Prior to this moment any feelings towards my national status were summed up perfectly by the romantic poet and reclusive madman, Friedrich Hölderlin in his seminal philosophical novel Hyperion:

Fortunate the man whose native country flourishes to rejoice and strengthen his heart! For me, it is as if I were cast into a swamp, as if the coffin lid were being nailed shut over me.

So you can imagine how surprised I was when the initial shock dispersed and I began to recognize what these feelings were. I was experiencing a level of pride that would make any god-fearing zealot of any denomination reach straight for their whip and flay their own buttocks back into bloodied, humbled submission and self-loathing. It was shattering and dumfounding, and I didn't know whether I should whistle, make babies, or simply weep. I felt proud to be British! Yes! In that, I was British and I'd completely forgotten about the forthcoming Jubilee celebrations, or that there was even a Jubilee happening; which illustrated perfectly to me how utterly irrelevant to the day to day workings of my existence this redundant collection of dithering, social pariahs we call the monarchy truly are.

Fair enough, being an artist and teacher, I read very little apart from antique lingerie catalogues and Turkish Kebab-House wall menus at the moment. And I do live in Germany, which places a comfortable distance between myself and the disproportionate

amount of media attention the royals receive; but I felt proud none the less. I had not felt this good about my native land since an english friend dropped by unexpectedly on my birthday with a bottle of 12 year old malt, a selection of expertly baked homemade scones and a ten minute video loop of Lady Thatcher collapsing in mid speech at the House of Lords. It was beautiful.

But before I move on to why I feel the monarchy are irrelevant, or rather should be, I must emphatically state that I am far from being an anglophobe, or britophobe, or whatever you choose to call it. There is nothing more tedious, or annoying than listening to some pompous expatriate endlessly dissing their native country while constantly praising the cultural superiority of the place they have chosen to live in. Unless they have managed to escape from North Korea or Skunkshit, Texas or some other socially oppressive, fundamentalist trough. Transferred nationalism is equally as moronic and as tiresome to listen to as organic nationalism. That said, to a great extent Britain made me and partly shaped my consciousness. I have learned to live with this chance, immutable event and have found I'm reasonably comfortable with it; especially when I am having a pleasant conversation about the subtle beauty of the Pennines or

bargaining tool for what Britain is really about, they are a complete non starter. I could write you a sizeable list off the top of my head of artists, musicians, writers, scientists, nurses, comedians, refuse collectors and other charming individuals who do, or have done a far better job without even trying. Some of the graffiti on the King's Arms toilet wall in Manchester is worthy of better praise. In reality, the only thing they do genuinely signify and represent about British society is its conscious acceptance and unpardonable prolongation of corrosive inequality. And the fact that it is still there, and revered or even allowed the levels of respect it does is both a shameful and laughable one.

Now I would be a liar, or at best a complacent pollyanna if I said class, a-moral disparity of wealth and social stratification do not exist in Germany, or any other republic for that matter, the difference with Britain is that they are endemic, and we publicly celebrate the fact. And not only do we celebrate the fact quite openly in public, we utilize public funds in order to do this. Britain was once described, disparagingly as a nation of shopkeepers. In which case we must be slightly warped, masochistic shopkeepers who get terribly sticky around the midriff by being publicly humiliated and robbed by a sadistic financial elite. And as long as we condone, revere and allow our government to publicly finance institutions such as the monarchy, this situation is not going to improve. The small degree of social mobility that afforded working class people like myself and the organiser of this newspaper a half decent education, which was slowing down in the eighties, has now almost ground to a complete stand still. This was evident in last years riots perpetrated on the whole by young people denied such basic dignities, regardless of whether you feel they should be bludgeoned with their own stolen plasma-screens, or strung up from lampposts by their I-pod wires, which, judging by some of the graphically violent suggestions for dealing with them I read online at the time a lot of people do, the fact remains, they are there. And no amount of publicly funded royal events are going to make them go away or change their obviously bleak outlook about their own predicaments. The very existence and prevailing idea of institutions such as the monarchy are a major contribution to this overall stagnation of movement.

An unelected, undemocratic body of fashion and taste violators.

great sex with someone who was born there. Or both. And besides this, there are a lot of other things I love about Britain, its music, some of its literature and art, its healthy degree of cynicism, the richness and regional variation of its speech and its incredibly endearing self-deprecating and irreverent humour. I'm also partial to its gravy and pies, of any kind. However, the British monarchy leave me cold. Aside from being an unelected, undemocratic body of fashion and taste violators that enjoy an undeserving degree of privilege, and precedence, on albin's long list of plusses they don't even deserve a look in. Internationally, as a realistic representation, or cultural

It's got its pampered, gout-addled foot clamped firmly on the breaks.

In order to justify their existence, supporters and wavering apologists alike often sight the fact that the monarchy do an awful lot of charity work that benefits a great deal of people the whole world over. Now I am quite sure that if more of us were raised as pampered, over rated individuals with a bloated and unrealistic sense of self-worth, a phenomenally high state income, and a lot of time on our hands, we might consider dabbling in charity ourselves, if for anything to ease our parasitic conscience. The fact that the Queen may be a 'nice person' does not invalidate any open critique about the existence of hereditary monarchy. I don't dispute that the Queen may be sincere in her undertaking of charity work. I really don't know

The fact that the Queen may be a 'nice person' does not invalidate any open critique about the existence of hereditary monarchy.

if she is, as I have yet to hear a journalist put this question to her. And if the Queen, or any other monarch do view their charity work as a necessary downside to the enormous advantages afforded them, they are certainly never going to admit it openly. I simply don't care. I would argue that the idea of charity, not to do disservice to sympathetic people who freely donate portions of their often meagre incomes to benefit others, is itself a questionable one, in that it promotes the idea that the care of the sick or the old or the needy should be voluntary and not provided for by better government. For many celebrities, and much of the financial elite, being affiliated to a charity is little more than a fashion accessory. It is also interesting to note that Princess Diana, despite being portrayed in the media as some kind of avenging angel, did not leave a penny of her sizeable fortune to charity in her will, but instead distributed it amongst a small group of already fabulously wealthy families. Why doesn't this surprise me?

One of the concerns of the organizer of this paper, is that this forthcoming Jubilee event is being used, and I quote: 'to brainwash a whole new generation of royalist sheep'. A fair comment. With this in mind, I would personally like to thank the Queen for teaching me an invaluable lesson at an early age. As part of the 1977 Jubilee celebrations, my school class, along with hundreds of other children were herded together then duped, under the spurious precept that it was

our God-given duty as British subjects, into traipsing to a road side in Manchester to greet her highness on her nationwide tour. The initial excitement of skipping lessons soon wore off. We waited, diminutive flags in hand, sweating and thirsty, for three hours in a punishing heatwave to watch a limousine with closed windows speed past us at what must have been 60mph. So, thank you kindly your highness. You convinced me, by actions alone, at the age of nine, that you, and every other adult who seemed to think this thing was a good idea, or in any way beneficial to anybody was weird, cruel, and quite obviously insane.

The only royal I really have any fond youthful memories of is Princess Diana. Her death, or rather the reaction to it, which seemed to swell and expand into an enormous blank screen onto which people could project their own personal misery and neurosis was just plain disturbing.

Mass hysteria and personality cult worship are never healthy things to witness. And it is not a good thing for people to live vicarious lives. Personally, I find grown-up people who are fixated on the private travails of the royal family no less weird than young, obsequious fans of pop stars, who at least have youth and inexperience as an excuse for behaving so strangely about a person they don't really know. Only this morning while writing this piece, I read an article in the German newspaper TAZ,

albeit, a jokey one, about the negative reaction to Camilla Parker Bowles wearing a brooch, in public, that was originally given to Princess Diana by Prince Charles. My question is, who cares? And why should otherwise sensible people bother to concern themselves with such utter twaddle?

On the progress chart of egalitarian advancement, monarchy, much like religion, its long-time historical dancing partner, is like a protracted childhood illness with a pantheon of debilitating symptoms we have become so accustomed to suffering we sometimes can not imagine life without them.

On the day of Princess Diana's death, there was another news item about a young boy in Liverpool who was murdered, without any apparent motive while cycling to school. But of course, this 'did not matter', he was just an anonymous child, with little capacity for shifting tons of newsprint. As I watched the news

footage of crying people placing flowers, and teddy bears outside Buckingham Palace, (aside from wondering what a dead person could possibly need with an army of cuddly toys), I remember thinking: what about that poor little guy? Was his death any less tragic, or the reasons why we live in a society where such horrible things happen any less deserving of our, or the media's attention? The answer is an unequivocal no, which indicates how the media make many of us view the reality around us through a very distorted and purposely directed lens.

However, the day of her televised funeral was incredible. Having no television, very little to drink, and little opportunity to purchase any as nearly every shop in England was closed, me and my friend Patrick decided to go for a spin around town. Apart from the occasional staggering drunk there was hardly a soul or moving vehicle to be seen. The silence, stillness and occasional squawking of the fleeing birds gathering ominously in the middle of the now unused roads was, for want of a better phrase-truly awesome. We were both rabid horror film fans, so you can imagine how much fun it was. There we were, half-twisted from the previous nights revelry, pedal to the floor, finally getting to experience our long held phantasy of what it was actually like to be in our own, personal post-apocalyptic Zombie Movie. Yikes! During a cigarette break amidst all the gratis horror, my friend Patrick- a self professed flamer and übergay produced a cutting from the Manchester Evening New's letter page penned by one distraught royalist which spoke volumes about what an unfathomably confused mindset some of them have:

I think it is disgusting that the swan song for our Queen of Hearts has been left in the hands of an evil sodomite.

I laughed so much I had to lay down across the bonnet of the car. Call me sentimental, but I would not exchange the memory of that day, or that moment for any amount of contrived Jubilee festivity.

So, to bring my tuppence ha'penny little diatribe to a close, I'll just say this, on the progress chart of egalitarian advancement, monarchy, much like religion, its long-time historical dancing partner, is like a protracted childhood illness with a pantheon of debilitating symptoms we have become so accustomed to suffering we sometimes can not imagine life without them. I think it is time to stretch our collective imaginations a little further. It is time to get well again boys and girls, leave our infantine sick-beds behind us and focus ourselves on the problematic, but not unrewarding task of growing up.

Mark Collinson, Berlin, 2012
clitwinkle67@yahoo.co.uk

A Peace Seeker's Dream by William Gladys

And in my dream I was sitting in a crusty old place in London, England called The House of Lords. It was there I witnessed curious old men and curious old woman wearing lurid cob-web covered red capes with collars of rabbit skin. And some wore quaint little wigs and quaint ballerina type tights, and some drooled from the corner of their mouths, and I was overcome with so much laughter my belly nearly burst with it and my ribs cracked! And the high ceiling room was crammed with them, and when they spoke I heard a great exhalation of hollow words accompanied by vast quantities of odious gas - hot air - and I was almost overcome with the stench! And they were heavily bloated with their own self-importance and each one was full of hypocrisy and dung!

And later, I was sitting in a leather-seated chamber that was called The House of Commons and there were men and women in their hundreds on either side. And to the left sat a tiny group of smug-faced individuals who were called the Lib/Dem Tories and next to them was a larger lot, and these were the self-righteous ones called the New Labour Tories, while opposite them sat the Tories who although in opposition had obscene faces full of haughty arrogance and self-aggrandizement. And at one end of the chamber was a large rectangular table at which were sat odd looking men clothed in weird grey coloured wiggery, and black tights and black shoes with brass buckles. I soon realized that all those present in the house were tarred with the same brush and each and every one of them was a ruthless, self-centered sycophantic traditionalist, terrified of change at home, yet very much into interfering and meddling with governments of other countries in the Middle East and elsewhere. And in my dream this house also expelled vast quantities of abhorrent gas and dishonest words - hot air - and I was nearly overcome with the malodorous smell and its clinging hypocrisy. And they too were full of dung!

At the end of my dream I heard a loud knocking on the outer door and a voice calling to them to open it. And when the door was opened, a large black man named Rod came in followed by two old prunes, a man and a woman. And the old woman was called a Queen and her wrinkled companion a Consort, and she was clothed so garishly I laughed loudly. And behind them came a fat gathering of shuffling, gaudily-robed old men and women, and behind them, shuffling, dowdily-dressed men and women who were called Commoners. A condescending, derogatory "know-your-place" term which made me vomit. And in my dream, I looked at the calendar and was astonished to see that it was the 21st. century! And when this Queen, like a worn old hen, had squatted herself comfortably on a large throne, she was given a typed manuscript by a grovelling menial, and began to speak, and her speech was brimming with hypocrisy and meaningless words - hot air - and she was all puffed up in her own self importance. And as she garbled her nonsense, her piercing eyes caught many in her menacing glare and they shivered most horribly, for she was the Head-of-State, Commander-in-Chief of the Military, and like all absolutists, dictators, must be obeyed. Obeisance and sycophancy were the order of the day and most of those present lowered their heads in obsequiousness and dread, and some knelt and bent their knees before her. For these were the supreme sycophants, who, in desire of an "honour," would suck up to her most cringingly in order that they might achieve their craving! And in this house of pompousness were the entire Queen's - peculiarly named offspring - Princes, Princesses, Dukes and Duchesses - and their presence produced an even greater stench of hypocrisy which permeated the whole house and brought on nausea. And their smug, self satisfied air of self assumed superiority showed that there was much dung in them also!

And in my dream I was suddenly transported outside, and I saw three enormous aircraft, one after the other, crash into the building, which in an instant had destroyed it and everything within it. And all that remained was a steadily rising column of brown dung dust which quickly formed into many words. And taking my camera I photographed for posterity the words that I saw:

'War - Hypocrisy - Lies - Empire - Colonialism - Monarchy - Tyranny - Greed - Death - Slaughter - Destruction - Self Interest - Class Divisiveness - Money - Absolutism - Dictatorship - Humiliation - Racial Hatred - Religious Hatred - Prejudice - Bombs - Bullets - Shells - Depleted Uranium - Starvation - Carnage - Poverty - Zionism - Fear - Extremism - Terror'.

And as the words began to dissolve into a clear blue sky and were soon no longer visible, a feeling of utter peace settled upon me. This was my dream.

William Gladys: www.fuggingmonarchy.co.uk

International

Australia ignores Australia ignores Diamond Jubilee

2012 marks 60 years since Queen Elizabeth II acceded to the throne - but it appears most ordinary Australians couldn't care less, says Dr Glenn Davies.

If a poll was taken in any major city I'd wager the amount of people that knew of this anniversary would be almost nil. In May 2012, there will be a Diamond Jubilee Pageant in the grounds of Windsor Castle, and a flotilla of 1,000 boats will sail along the Thames on 3 June 2012 the day before a special Jubilee Bank Holiday. But what is happening in Australia? An extra public holiday in Queensland - a rebadged Queen's Diamond Jubilee holiday to help reposition Queen's Birthday holiday to early October - but very little else it seems. The Australian Monarchist League has been trying to raise interest in celebrating the Diamond Jubilee in Australia since 2009 but no one seems to be interested.

Professor John Warhurst, deputy chairman of the Australian Republican Movement, says that in 2012 we do not have the same ardour for a jubilee:

"I don't think Australians care. I think they care less and less as years go by. There's increasing republicanism, the world has changed so much, and the royal family and the Queen play such a lesser role in Australian life than they did when the Queen came on to the throne."

Perhaps this can be seen in the lack of activity for the 60th anniversary of the Queen's Ascension.

It seems the monarchists appear bemused and a little confused as to why there hasn't been any action at a government level to celebrate in Australia the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. In her welcome speech to the Queen at the Parliament House reception on Friday, 21 October 2011, the prime minister mentioned Her Majesty's fast approaching Diamond Jubilee. However, despite approaches to the Prime Minister's office by the Australian Monarchist League, ranging over two years, the Rudd/Gillard governments have not announced any plans whatsoever for national

celebrations. Philip Benwell, Australian Monarchist League National Chairman, stated recently:

"Australia is the only country of which the Queen is the monarch not to have announced plans to celebrate what is our first Diamond Jubilee since Federation".

He added: "Honouring the Queen of Australia has nothing whatsoever to do with the debate on a republic but everything to do with paying tribute to our sovereign head of state who has sought only to serve at the people's will."

In September 2011 the Australian Monarchist League requested the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities to engage with them and State governments and local councils to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012 by planting sixty trees in each local government area. The response, which seemed to detail how to go about seeking funding and grants for projects, didn't seem all that supportive.

But the question is still what, if anything is happening today to celebrate the first of the 2012 Diamond Jubilee events? At 11am Cardinal Pell will preach at a United Ecumenical Accession Day Service at St James's Church, King Street in Sydney, and the Moreton Council in Queensland will host a morning tea for the Diamond Jubilee on 7 February 2012. But true believers are holding several private do's. Bryan Stertern-Gill, chairman of the Australian Monarchist League in Victoria, will attend a friend's private dinner in Melbourne for 40 people. At the Hotel Windsor ballroom on Monday, 150 people, mostly from 12 local "loyal societies", and former governors-general Michael Jeffery and Peter Hollingworth, will enjoy a \$145-a-head, three course dinner. The societies include the Company of Armigers (coat of arms enthusiasts), the Australia-Britain Society and the English Speaking Union. Not that much activity, really, for the major event on their calendar. To make it worse, the City of Melbourne, the Victorian State Government and the

Victorian Government have no official plans to mark Monday's Diamond Jubilee - and nor does the South Australian government. The silence from all other State governments suggests they have a similar position.

There has not been, to date, any announcement of national plans to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee, apart from a commemorative silver 50c coin being produced by the Royal Australian Mint. Senator Lundy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, announced recently that there will be no Diamond Jubilee Medal minted in a similar manner to the United Kingdom and Canada as "medals were not part of the Australian honours system". A recent twitter exchange between the Federal Member for Lyne, Rob Oakeshott, and the Australian Monarchist League confirms the Federal Government not "getting behind" the Diamond Jubilee. When Oakeshott was asked by Australian Monarchist League "apart from speeches, what do you support for Australia to recognize the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen of Australia", he replied "maybe a special Coke can with the Queen's name on it?"

The Australian Monarchist League line is that celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee has nothing whatsoever to do with a republic and everything to do with honouring the Queen of Australia. It appears Australians will turn out and show respect to the Queen when she is here but when she is not then the concept of monarchy becomes irrelevant. Australians may like the celebrity surrounding the monarch and the royal family when they visit Australia (which is pretty rare) but are totally uninterested in any form of royal celebration when the 'party girl' is not here. You can't have a party without the 'party girl', which brings up the issue of an absent Head of State - bring on a resident for president!

(First published by independentaustralia.net, 05 February 2012: <http://www.independentaustralia.net/2012/australian-identity/republic/australia-ignores-diamond-jubilee/>)

They've had enough as well...

TIME COME!

"I love the Queen; she is a beautiful lady," says Portia Simpson Miller, recently elected Prime Minister of Jamaica. "But I think *time come*," referring to the initiation of what she described as "the process of detachment from the monarchy". Simpson Miller plans to push forward towards a republican state. Jamaica has been independent from the UK since 1962 but like several other commonwealth countries, including Canada and Australia, the Queen is still the Head of State.

THE COMMONWEALTH

Most Commonwealth nations are already republics yet the British monarch continues to act as unelected head of state in 16 of the 53 member nations constitutionally binding them to heads of state who are not Roman Catholics. The head of state must also hold the position of Supreme Governor of The Church of England, thereby preventing, Jews, Hindus, Muslims or anyone who is not Protestant from becoming head of state. Many of these countries have adopted anti-discrimination laws expressly forbidding discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability. In many of these nations strong sentiment exists that having a distant foreign monarch as head of state runs fundamentally counter to the spirit of egalitarianism, fairness and the aspiration of their own citizens to this position of national leadership.

(Taken from www.republic.org.uk/What%20we%20want/In%20depth/The%20Commonwealth/index.php)

By royal command or just a coincidence?

Canada has turned back the clock and recently restored the 'royal' prefix to its navy and air forces. The army however keeps its non-royal status. A government spokesman has described the decision as an acknowledgement of the proud history and tradition of the armed forces.

It is seen by many as a backward step, disappointing many republicans in the country. Tom Freda, from Citizens for a Canadian Republic said "Canada has been accustomed to moving away from colonialist symbols, not toward them. I can't imagine the mainstream public seeing this decision as positive."

The 'royal' prefix was removed in 1968. The newly married Prince Williams visited Canada in July 2011, the announcement of the re-adoption of the royal prefix came in August.



A note from an unconcerned German

This summer in Great Britain they are about to solemnize, or rather celebrate the diamond jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. And so it is, monarchy and celebration are as inseparable as fire and brimstone. A friend of mine, a Briton, naturally, asked me, so to say, as an unconcerned German (although me, as a German with my own history of a Nazi dictatorship cannot be completely unconcerned), and belonging to a generation that was socialized by a purely party based democracy, if I could possibly write something about this event. As a journalist and art scientist, my main literary direction lies somewhere else, however, I spontaneously accepted the offer. As I like the idea itself, it was at the same time a challenge, and struck a biographical note in me, which was what probably tipped the scales and made me undertake the venture. (But this is a different story which cannot be told here.)

To me, the diamond jubilee of a Queen, sounds simply fairy tale like in my ears, in the sense of being unreal, out-of-time and outmoded. For me, the considerable amount of existing monarchies worldwide, and especially those in the nearby

European countries of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Andorra, Spain, and the Vatican City, regardless of whether they are constitutional, parliamentary-constitutional, absolutist or elected, are an unsolved conundrum.

Many Europeans see their monarchies, in their economic and folklore aspect as something positive - as the world of the royals draws many millions of tourists to Britain. Also, in the case of fashion, the younger generation of royals function as role models that create profit for British clothes labels. And last, but not least the many Kings, Queens, Princess and Princesses, Barons, Grand Dukes, Earls, Sultans, Emirs, along with the Pope and the Japanese Emperor are an indispensable supply of countless stories and scandals for the gutter press and lifestyle magazines. Whereas, the monarchies in the rest of the world, mostly in the Arabic and African realm are judged and rightly condemned as negative, authoritarian and dictatorial regimes that simply pass on their power. Thus, there is a distinction between good monarchies and bad monarchies, but the form of government itself



seems to be legitimized simply by the fact of its latent existence.

As with all complex problems there are no simple solutions, in the sense of a worldwide abolition of all forms of monarchy, let's say by the year 2020. Our globalized world show us, quite plainly and relentlessly, day by day that the existing problems of the planet can only be solved, in the end, globally, and namely in the sense of think global act local! And in this sense the power of the nation state in general, to put it bluntly, no matter which hue and type of government, is on the wane. The Queen may do the business as usual, and show herself off stoically on the day of her Diamond Jubilee and let herself be celebrated, however, the signs of our times indicate a change.

Manuela Lintl, Berlin, 2012.
lintl@arcor.de

Mashed Potatoes and Gravy

While I was living in the United States, my knowledge of the British Monarchy was vague and negligible. I knew they were roving extortionists in charge of the red coats, who later became figureheads or some sort of self-important participants in an ongoing costume ball. At most, entertainment for work-at-home drudges. Charles and Diana's wedding for instance. It interrupted all the daytime soap operas for a full afternoon but increased the viewer ratings because this soap was about fairy tale people who never work but get dressed up and lead intriguing lives—and are also real. Sort of.

Then there was Lady Di's death, my first occasion to witness a live reaction to the monarchy. Witnessed or rather became subjected to two adult males sitting on a park bench in Albuquerque New Mexico, one stricken and sobbing: „They murdered her, they murdered her. I know it.“ And the other screaming: „Oh would you just GET over it!“

Since moving to Berlin, I've stumbled across bits and pieces about the insidious side to these people. Britain isn't a democracy. The queen's middle-class uniform is a fake. She can dissolve parliament any time she likes. She has confidential meetings over tea every Tuesday

with the prime minister. And she, her spawn and in-laws kick back on tens of millions of pounds per year guaranteed tax payer money.

So why should I bother saying anything about people I don't give a fuck about? Because I've been goaded to do so by an Englishman who's obviously been scarred by this institution and tells me I can't limit myself to merely saying the queen's a c**t.

Judging from what I know about from TV, the nearest I can figure the function of the royals is to act as nationalist celebrity/role model hybrids. Celebrities garnering worldwide attention, but serious role models for their subjects. Not frivolous, moronic and pornographic attention seeking celebrities like, say, Paris Hilton.

But is it really like that? Compare Catherine and her cocker spaniel and Paris Hilton and a cock in her mouth. Is it a more or less just world in which you pay to watch Paris giving a lame blowjob without also having some anorexic bitch take your money by force of law to show you which breed of dog to buy in order to prove your loyalty to the Union Jack?

Ah, but Catherine's more serious than that. What about her first speech? Perfect opportunity to present herself as a role model for the girl subjects. But, no,

instead she chose to prostitute herself before a bunch of flag-waving retarded kids, coyly swaying her hair, squeaking: „I only wish William were here.“

You couldn't help thinking how touched George and Laura Bush must have been watching from the ranch in Crawford. „I like that Duchess. I really do. Where's Willy Boy, anyhow?“

The Duke's off setting an example for British boys. Even a royal life is worth sacrificing in the line of duty, lest a broke and beleaguered nation like Argentina once again should be so foolish as to test her majesty's armed forces and imperil a long-ruined empire. Not to mention defending the honor of the Windsors or Wettins or whatever the fuck the family calls themselves, so it can continue to spread banal filth for the self indulgence of the loyal.

Like Canada, the loyalist America to the north, where the royal newlyweds made their commonwealth honeymoon and made an appearance before little flags, yawns, a groveling red-coated head of state. And, after honoring the war dead, watching a rodeo! Canada—mashed potatoes without the gravy, as Billy Bob Thornton said. Just how the Queen likes it: bland, mushy and white.

Brian Frank, Berlin 2012

A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.

This is a real email exchange between a sustainable eco-centre in Winnipeg and a room-hire enquirer - sent to the great frock n robe swindle facebook page by one of the centre staff (with a few changes) :

SENT: January 19, 2012

Dear Atomic Centre,

We are contacting you regarding an upcoming event we are planning in celebration of The Queen's Diamond Jubilee (60 Years as Queen of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth). As Youth Coordinator with the Monarchist League of Canada, this is not a fundraiser, rather an event for invited persons in Winnipeg (most under the age of 35) to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. This event will take place sometime between May 18th and 31st. Preferably a Friday or Saturday evening.

The event will be a private social affair, with appetizers and a cash bar.

Could you please send us back your response to the following requests?

- What is the capacity of your event space that you rent?
- Is a dance floor/DJ allowed?
- What is the cost to use the venue (rental fee)
- Are we allowed to have light appetizers catered to your venue for our event?
- What is your policy on a cash bar for our guests?

Please feel free to contact us at this email, or at (204)-xxx-xxx if you have any further questions. We would love for the Atomic Centre to be apart of this special celebration.

Kind Regards,

Happy to be an underclass servant 1 & Happy to be an underclass servant 2

SENT: January 19, 2012

Dear Happy to be an underclass servant 1

While I appreciate your interest in Atomic Centre, I am compelled to inform you that we would not like to accommodate your proposed event as it does not meet our primary criteria: personal interest. We are neither monarchists nor celebrity gawkers, and thus have no desire whatsoever to acknowledge this occasion. With that said, I must add my disapproval of all things royal as, in my mind, they are inextricably linked to troubling social and political matters such as colonial imperialism and class disparity. I urge you to spend time researching the genocide and other forms violence committed in the name of British empire, and I likewise urge you to consider the extent which public funds would be better spent on social justice initiatives rather than idolizing public figures with no accomplishments beyond birthright. Taxpayer money directed to the support of royalty is corporate welfare of the most ridiculous kind.

With kind regards,
Milena



“Off With Her Head”

The momentum surrounding the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee has been gathering pace in 2012. I’m a painter in Cardiff and, in preparation for an arty ‘intervention’ of my own, I’ve been making a stab at QEII’s portrait. The tentative idea will be to add a switch to one corner of the painting and name it “Off With Her Head”. Clever huh?!

Meanwhile the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff has been hosting a visiting exhibition about Queen Liz – “The Queen: Art and Image” – which (as I write) ends here very shortly. I seized my opportunity, in a gap between heavy rain showers, to make my way to the Museum to take a good look at how the lady in question has been portrayed in the past.

I would have said there was a mixed bag on display ...but that might have been interpreted as an overly crude jibe at her maj, haha! For the most part the exhibition comprised of the inevitable parade of royal family photos from the 1950’s, ‘60’s and ‘70’s. But there were also some paintings and designs that were very interesting indeed. These were almost exclusively in the smaller room at the very far end of the display, I imagine to shield any middle-aged royalists from unnecessary anxiety. As a hint of things to come, hanging just outside this inner sanctum of veiled criticism, was the design for the Sex Pistols’ 1977 “God Save the Queen” record cover.

It seems the Queen set about re-inventing herself with alacrity after the premature death of the Princess of Wales in 1997. In 1998 the young portrait artist Justin Mortimer was commissioned to create a painting of her maj, which he simply called “The Queen”. The finished work appeared to rip the Queen’s head off and float it


above a stylised torso on a bright yellow background. According to the exhibition’s blurb “The public reaction ...was adverse”. However, the royal family was more sanguine about the portrayal (though I understand they weren’t overly keen to hang it in their entrance lobby).

Yet more challenging is the painting on display by Kim Dong-Yoo, entitled “Elizabeth vs. Diana”. It was painted in 2007, I presume sufficiently distant in time from the aforementioned Paris subway car crash. A portrait of the Queen has been created from hundreds of tiny hand painted images of Diana ... in dribbles and squiggles of blood red. I have to take my hat off to Kim for managing to make all 1,106 images look exactly like Diana. And the complete picture seen from a few metres away is an exact likeness of the mother-in-law, to leave the viewer in no doubt of the inference.

In a clear attempt to be oh, so modern, Elizabeth has been portrayed in holographic form. Chris Levine’s lightbox image catches the Queen with her eyes momentarily closed. The holograph gives every impression of looking at a death mask! Entitled “Lightness of Being” it suggests (to me, anyway) that the subject might not be around much longer.


In effect, the recent royal re-invention has officially allowed us plebs to see the Queen as human, flesh and blood ...as well as take not-so-subtle swipes at her ageing image. For us artists we need to make sure we’re not simply convenient vehicles for the royal publicity machine. All the same, it seems the gloves are off!!


Sean Kisby 2012
<http://kizzbyart.blogspot.co.uk>



Bram Stoker's private journal has been found on a bookshelf of one of his relatives on the Isle of Wight, after being lost for 100 years. The Isle of Wight is home to the largest coven of paedophiles in the United Kingdom and contains the largest collection of dinosaur fossils. Queen Victoria died there as well. These disparate facts may be connected.

Not only does Prince Charles own all the rivers in Cornwall but he is also trying to save Dracula's home - he's related to Vlad the Impaler on his great-grand-mother's side. He loves being driven through the impoverished countryside in his armoured Range Rover and chucking Duchy original oaten biscuits to peasants in fields. Catch! You filthy fingered serfs.





William and Kate - a real life Edward and Bella from the Twilight books (only with bad haircuts and no charisma). Twilight tells the story of a bloodsucker who falls in love with a common human. His vampire family pretend to be normal so as not to arouse suspicion. Not sure how werewolves fit in to my theory. How to kill a vampire is a fairly straightforward matter: exposure to sunlight, stake through the heart, beheading, burning. Royals are much harder to eradicate.

Like death and taxes the royals will always be with us

For months on end they never impinge on your life, a dim and distant story that flares up when they need our love.

In the 21st century, when we were meant be living in outer space, the Royals feel more popular than ever - a cup of cocoa cosy reminder of the rapidly disappearing past of Empire and like some sort of real life soap opera with less messy story lines than in the past.

The flag wavers, though, are still in love with them and the Royals remain the heartbeat of middle England. One of the favourite royal arguments is that if we didn't have the queen then we would have to have a president- who wants president Blair is the answer- but why would we have to have to have a president? surely supermarkets can open themselves and the world is already overflowing with non-celebrities who can launch ships or whatever the job requires.

The other one is the tourism dollar, but surely there is more to Great Britain than one family that you can't even see, or a palace that is hardly one of the world's great buildings! All those hordes of young people flooding to London must have come to see more than the Queen. This is great a country that is stuffed full of great people, ideas, landmarks and history...France gets many times more tourists than we do and they seemed to have mislaid their royal family years ago.

I have nothing against the royals as people, I have never met them. The Queen may well work hard at running the business and Prince Charles loved the Goon show and talks to plants which makes him seem oddly human, his awkwardness at his public role showing a glimmer that even the royals find their position, sometimes, faintly bizarre. His sons seem like likeable coves and are easily sold as modernistas who like all that pop stuff...but is this enough?

Granted millions of people love them, like millions of people love Cliff Richard and who am I to spoil their fun? Maybe the fans should pay for the Royals, subscribe to them and wallow in their Royalthess...

John Robb, April 2012



Twitter: @johnrobb77
goldblade punk rock hooligan
blues soul power revolutionary!
<http://www.louderthanwar.com>

A fit for purpose State?

H'm, the jubilee. I'd like to say it's an irrelevance, just another one of those things that go on in London, generating fluff and fodder for the entertainment industry that masquerades as the mass media. But unfortunately when it comes to questions about how we are able to organise our own everyday lives there is something rotten at the core.

I don't want to get personal. It can be difficult not to when the Jubilee is superficially about the commemoration of 60 years of rule by one person over the (dis)United Kingdom. But the monarchy is not about one person, nor even about one family. It is about a whole way of organising society, and one that is no longer fit for purpose.

That is 'fit' in the original sense of survival of the fittest. Not the shiny, glossiest, media friendly, 'fit bird'/'hunk, go faster stripe, fittest. Rather, the fit of the dove-tailed joint, the jigsaw puzzle, the best way to make the independent parts work as a cohesive whole. While the tinkering and posturing of the Windsors and their supporters clamor after success in the beauty pageant fitness stakes, their relevance to a cohesive whole continues to diminish.

The idea of a monarchist society may once have benefited society as a whole, I'll leave evidence for that to those better qualified, but I would argue that it's abandonment by societies worldwide over the last few hundred years is a mark of it's increasing lack of fitness for modern society.

In Wales, as in Scotland, we are involved in a process of devolution. One that increasingly recognizes the legitimacy of self-determination. I am proud to be a member of a nation where the leader of one of the major political parties, Leanne Wood of Plaid Cymru, is comfortable enough in her republican beliefs not to withdraw her reference to 'Mrs. Windsor' in an assembly debate, thereby being ordered to leave the building.

Nation and monarchy are incompatible. The monarchy stands for family, friends and hangers on, a state of self-preservation and self-interest above the interests of the people of the nation. The

Tudors taught us that Welshmen with a lust for personal glory can treat their countrymen with equal, if not greater, disdain than Saxon, Norman, Dutch, German or whatever other country's second-hand demagogues are imported to 'rule over us' by the aristocracy.

No, this is not simply about one family, but an entire system that condemns millions to structural poverty, not limited to financial poverty but also poverty of opportunity, spiritual poverty and the poverty of vision and ambition to create a truly just and sustainable society, one that is fit for purpose for the C21st.

As the banal knees-up approaches, the red, white and blue tat in the shops of our Capital City increasingly assaults, and insults, me. I thought, and had hoped, that we had seen the last of this tacky, enforced, togetherness. But perhaps it's incongruity in modern Welsh society will encourage more of our people to realize just how irrelevant the monarchy is to Wales, and I offer the following proposal.

While abhorring the false consumerist mantra of "choice", I suggest that the independent Wales to be, unilaterally reject Mrs. Windsor and her progeny, and continue to develop a nation that recognizes the contributions of all sectors of society. Such contributions will be valued regardless of the results of the lottery of birth, be those social, racial, economic, gender related or whatever, as long as the efforts are directed towards the establishment of a progressive and just society based on merit and not chance.

Indeed, it could be one of the attractors of much needed talent, and inward investment, and a motivator against the brain drain, to both attract and retain progressive thinkers and doers in Wales.

So, in this era of choice, what better choice of an independent future-focused republican Wales, or a monarchist, retro/pageant orientated conservative England? (Sori England!)

Perhaps I am being over optimistic? In Wales today we see little evidence of the significant opposition to the Investiture of Carlo in 1969, so well detailed in "Investiture - Royal Ceremony and National Identity in Wales, 1911-1969" by John S. Ellis. (University of Wales Press, Cardiff 2008). (Which, by the way, should be required reading for anyone interested in the collaboration and collusion of the allegedly democratic political classes in the maintenance and manipulation of the monarchy)

As I said earlier this is because it's hard not to get personal, and the establishment is well versed



in manipulating in terms of personality rather than position, and a rather frail grandmother is less an ideal target of opposition than a manipulated youth. So while I don't foresee this particular jamboree raising the true republican spirit and ire of the Cymry, I do expect, at least, a demonstration from those who have Wales' best interests at heart of the, "calculated coolness verging on contempt" advocated by the poet Harri Webb in 1969, whilst getting on with the more important task of re-building an independent nation that is fit for purpose.

Richard Huw Morgan
Cogan 23rd April 2012



“I believe in aristocracy – if that is the right word, and if a democrat may use it – though not an aristocracy of power, based upon rank and influence, but an aristocracy of the sensitive, the considerate and the plucky. Its members are to be found in all nations and classes, and all through the ages, and there is a secret understanding between them when they meet. They represent the true human tradition, the one permanent victory of our queer race over cruelty and chaos.

Thousands of them perish in obscurity, a few are great names. They are sensitive for others as well as themselves, they are considerate without being fussy, their pluck is not swankiness but power to endure, and they can take a joke.

E.M. Forster, *Two Cheers For Democracy*

Feature

Closed curtains at the palace

James Gray looks at attempts to let the Freedom of Information Act shine a light on the royals

‘The government believes that we need to throw open the doors of public bodies, to enable the public to hold politicians and public bodies to account.’ So proclaimed the coalition agreement between the Tories and the Lib Dems last June. But one door has remained firmly shut – and is now being bolted forever.

The Freedom of Information Act never applied directly to the monarchy, despite the royal household receiving at least £40 million of public funds each year. Moreover, any correspondence between the royals and government departments that were covered by the Act was also specifically exempted.

But that exemption was not absolute. Requests for correspondence between royals and ministers were subject to a ‘public interest test’. If a request passed the test then the documents could – in theory at least – be released.

The situation changed with the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010, brought in by the Labour government. It amended the Freedom of Information Act so that all correspondence from the monarch, the heir to the throne and second in line was added to the list of absolute exemptions, alongside information related to national security.

The effect was to remove all possibility of disclosure during the specified time limit – normally 20 years, or five years after the death of the member of the royal family concerned.

These amendments required a statutory instrument to be brought into effect, which justice secretary Kenneth Clarke duly issued in January this year.

One effect of the monarchy’s total exemption from the Freedom of Information Act is that the public is prevented from accessing detailed information on how the royal household spends public funds. Revelations about waste and greed at the palace would certainly be damaging to the monarchy – and the government – at a time of rising prices, drastically reduced public services and

widespread unemployment.

But more significantly, the exemption conceals the extent to which members of the royal family, particularly Charles, influence government policy. And that is probably what it’s designed to do. The government’s official justification of the exemption is that it will ‘ensure the constitutional position and political impartiality of the monarchy is not undermined’. In other words – those of the Times – the exemption is a ‘gagging law to protect Prince Charles’.

From Walter Bagehot to Vernon Bogdanor, establishment constitutionalists have argued that the political impartiality of the monarchy is the glue that holds the

The monarchy reflects and reinforces a paralysis at the heart of our political culture. The charm or idiocy of individual royals is merely a distraction from this, although royal antics feed very conveniently into an increasingly trashy culture. We rant against the dodgy expenses claims of MPs but say nothing about millions shelled out by taxpayers to this unaccountable institution.

Melissa Benn

parliamentary process together. The appearance of neutrality is so important, the argument goes, that it must be protected at all costs – and royals should be free to meddle in politics without fear of being exposed.

It’s an argument that has been comprehensively rebutted by Professor Adam Tomkins, legal adviser to the House of Lords select committee on the constitution. ‘You cannot preserve the reality of something that does not exist,’ he told a freedom of information tribunal last September, when the Guardian launched an appeal over the government’s refusal to release some of Charles’s correspondence. ‘If that political neutrality has already been surrendered, as is clearly (if regrettably) the case with regard to the Prince of Wales, the “good constitutional reason” for the rule disappears.’

Put simply, if our constitutional arrangements are threatened by greater transparency, then that is an argument for a new constitution – not more secrecy.

The fact that the exemption was introduced by Labour and brought into force by Conservatives and Liberal Democrats demonstrates clearly that this is not an issue that divides along party lines – it’s a case of the political establishment looking after itself. Anything that weakens the monarchy also jeopardises the great swathes of unaccountable powers exercised by the prime minister and cabinet on the monarch’s behalf.

The political class may disagree on the ends to which those powers should be used, but rarely questions their moral basis. ‘Openness and transparency has the potential to transform government,’ the Cabinet Office tells us – just as long as that transformation is on the establishment’s terms.

‘Ministers and royals alike believe that the interests of the royal family are above and beyond those of the public,’ explains Graham Smith, campaign manager of the pressure group Republic. ‘That is a contemptible attitude that demonstrates much of what is wrong with the monarchy.’

So as things stand, Charles’s attempts to influence government policy on health, architecture, education, agriculture, the environment, even war and peace, will now remain secret until years after his death.

But there is hope. Republican MPs, possibly including some recalcitrant Lib Dems, plan to table amendments to Nick Clegg’s Protection of Freedoms Bill – which, despite its grandiose title, is currently little more than a reaction to right-wing media scares – which would not only reverse the absolute exemption but also define the monarchy for the first time as a public authority.

Republicans may yet get their chance to let daylight in on the hidden operations of the monarchy’s influence on public policy.

*James Gray
(Article first appeared in Red Pepper; April 2011.
www.redpepper.org.uk)*



Picture By Robert Rubbish

“It is a strange fact, but it is unquestionably true, that almost any English intellectual would feel more ashamed of standing to attention during “God Save the King” than stealing from a poor box”.

George Orwell

Heading the state

Andrew Blick explores the constitutional role of the monarch - and how we could ditch it

The 19th-century political writer Walter Bagehot made a celebrated distinction between the ‘dignified’ and ‘efficient’ components of the British (or ‘English’, as he had it) constitution. The dignified parts were ‘those which excite and preserve the reverence of the population’, while the efficient portions were ‘those by which it [the constitution], in fact, works and rules’.

If we consider today’s monarchy using this distinction, what conclusions can be drawn? How far is the sovereign simply an ornament, or something more important?

Certainly, the more visible parts of the role of the monarchy (extending to the royal family as a whole) can be regarded as within the ‘dignified’ constitutional category – opening and addressing parliament, carrying out royal

visits, taking part in public ceremonies such as weddings.

But should we be led to conclude, as Bagehot did, that ‘a Republic has insinuated itself beneath the folds of a Monarchy’, and that the UK is, in his words, a ‘disguised republic’? Or does the sovereign possess powers that make the monarchy part of the ‘efficient’ constitution as well as the ‘dignified’?

The view from Whitehall

Late last year, the government published – in draft form – a document called the ‘Cabinet Manual’. It is likely to be the closest the UK has come to possessing something it famously lacks – a ‘written’ constitution.

The manual provides us with the Whitehall view of many different features of the UK settlement,



'Kes Stamp' by Maurice Burns

including a portrayal of the role of the monarchy. We are told that:

'The UK is a parliamentary democracy which has a constitutional sovereign as Head of State.'

In most democracies, a 'constitution' means a formally binding set of rules by which all institutions are limited. However, in the UK, there is no clearly defined body of constitutional law superseding all other; and many key features of the political settlement, including those regulating the monarchy, exist only as often vague understandings with little or no legal status, known as 'conventions'. For instance, the manual states that:

'By convention, the Sovereign does not become publicly involved in the party politics of government.'

While public political activism is restricted – albeit in a loose fashion – a behind-the-scenes role for the monarch is specifically provided for in the manual. It states that the sovereign:

'is entitled to be informed and consulted, and to advise, encourage and warn ministers.'

However, it is not suggested that the government is required to act upon the views of the monarch. As well as these entitlements, there are other latent powers, held by the sovereign under the so-called 'royal prerogative'. A relic of pre-democratic rule, most of the royal prerogative has either been abolished or passed in practice to ministers (for instance, the right to make war). But some of it remains personal to the monarch. The Cabinet Office tells us that:

'Where a bill has completed all of its Parliamentary stages, it cannot

become law until the Sovereign has formally approved it, which is known as Royal Assent.'

The idea that a monarch would refuse to grant royal assent to a bill that had passed through its proper parliamentary stages is all but unthinkable. However, the manual describes another set of personal prerogatives, which it is more plausible could come into play. It states:

'Although they have not been exercised in modern times, the Sovereign retains reserve powers to dismiss the Prime Minister or make a personal choice of successor.'

The latter of these 'reserve powers', to 'make a personal choice of successor', could become relevant following a general election that does not produce a single-party majority in the House of Commons, as occurred in May last year. Normally, in recent decades, the exercise of the monarchical power to appoint the prime minister is a formality. However, if there is more than one possible prime minister, a decision has to be made. The manual explains that:

'Where a range of different administrations could potentially be formed, discussions will take place between political parties on who should form the next government ... The Sovereign would not expect to become involved in such negotiations.'

The word 'expect' leaves open the possibility of monarchical involvement, and the manual goes on to note that:

'The political parties and the Cabinet Secretary would have responsibilities in ensuring that the Palace is provided

with information on the progress of discussions...'

Since there are grounds for supposing that 'no overall control' parliaments could become more frequent in future than in the recent past, the expectation of non-involvement may be tested more often.

Fixed-term parliaments

The personal prerogative of the monarchy is about to be circumscribed in an important way, however. When the Fixed-term Parliaments Bill becomes law, the requirement for the consent of the sovereign to dissolutions of parliament (ie general elections) will be removed.

When considering these features of the monarchy, some hold that the monarchy is a valuable institution, providing continuity and stability; and that the traditional way of regulating the office has, despite – or perhaps because of – its vagueness, proved effective so far, and can be expected to continue to do so. Others argue that, while the monarchy should be retained, there is a need for a more clearly defined constitutional framework, as operates in countries such as Holland.

But others still have concluded that some of the roles associated with the monarchy require a more democratic basis, and that an undisguised republic would be preferable to Bagehot's disguised version. If this final option is preferred, certain decisions must be taken.

Having abolished the monarchy, would the UK need a head of state at all? International evidence seems to suggest that it would, with some kind of figure performing both 'dignified' and – to a limited extent – 'efficient' roles being the norm. If not a monarch, then this person is generally known as a president.

Presidents come in different forms, between which the UK would have to choose. They may be chosen by members of the national parliament, as in countries such as Italy and Germany. Heads of state appointed in this way are not leading political figures. The role would be comparable in its functions to that of the monarch in the UK, although probably more clearly defined and regulated, held only for limited terms, and subject to indirect democratic accountability.

The alternative means of filling a presidency is through direct election. This method tends to produce an office holder with a strong popular mandate for personal government: a political leader. If the UK opted for this model it would have to decide how far it wished the power of its presidency to be balanced by other institutions, such as the legislature and the courts. It could choose to establish a more limited president, as in the US, or a more hegemonic leader, as has existed in the French Fifth Republic.

Three steps to a republic

So how might either a more clearly constrained monarchy or a republic be brought about? There would probably be three key features to this process:

First, there would need to be a constitutional convention of some kind to consider the options and make a detailed proposal, or possibly a set of multiple options to be chosen between by the public. The convention might be elected, at least partially, and some participants could be selected at random from the public at large, a method known as sortition.

Second, there would have to be at least one referendum, possibly with two questions, one on whether to abolish existing

arrangements, another on which system they should be replaced with if they were dropped.

Third, and finally, the new settlement, if adopted, would be encapsulated in a 'written' UK constitution, to which parliament and the reformed monarchy, or – in a republic – the president would be subject. The doctrine of the supremacy of the 'Queen in Parliament' would be replaced by that of popular sovereignty, expressing the aspiration that ultimate political authority would now formally reside with the people of the UK as a whole.

(Article first appeared in *Red Pepper*, April 2011. www.redpepper.org.uk)

Andrew Blick is senior research fellow with Democratic Audit



'People's Plate' by matthews and allen 2012

Jubilee

"What! You say a horse is noble because it is good in itself, and the same you say of a falcon, of a pearl; but a man shall be called noble because his ancestors were so? Not with words, but with knives must one answer such a beastly notion."

Dante Alighieri

"I have been told all my life by the existence of a monarchy that I am an inferior creature and that regardless of my intellect, efforts and hard work I will never be equal to someone who was born better than me and always will be. That is the message that having a monarchy sends and you can see it everyday in the baying sycophancy of royalist media. It's time to start debating (an end to the monarchy) now."

Graham Smith, Republic

When it is said that our royal family is the envy of foreigners, I have always noticed that what foreigners particularly like is that it is ours and not theirs. **David Hare, 1994**

An islander from Tuvalu or Kiribati coming to Britain, especially if he was a Polynesian anthropologist, would think: What gives here? What is the extraordinary credulity and deference of these people? What will they not believe? **Christopher Hitchens, 1994**

THE LABOUR LEADER.

DIAMOND JUBILEE NUMBER.

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(Registered at the G.P.O.
as a Newspaper.)

SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 1897.

(Sent to any Address free
1/6 per quarter.)

PRICE ONE PENNY.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

When the royal ode is all the mode,
And rabies in the season,
What wonder if, in consequence,
The fool should seek in fraud's defence,
To mangle simple common-sense,
And flout the truth as treason.

A folsome blare is in the air,
And forth from tower and steeple
Resounds abroad once more, I ween,
That ancient cant God Save the Queen,
While democracy chaps in between
With—Reason Save the People.

God Save the Queen, yet the grass is green,
And London's full of gentry,
So while you fake the Jubilee,
In a badge of red, and fancy free,
I'll just slip off with the I.L.P.
Into the open country.

GLENN.

A JUBILEE SONG.

Withered slabs of the molten steel,
Dunglens wreck of the grinder's wheel,
Faded drudge of the piousness mine,
Paupered ghost of a manhood fine.

Come, lift your banners with three
times three,
And toast Victoria's Jubilee.

Scottish cryer of village youth,
Vision ever of last and first;
Irish peasant of ragged coat,
When landlord snarled and ruler snout;

Lift high your noggin with three
times three,
And toast Victoria's Jubilee.

Maimed survivor of glory's host,
Zaglas, foodless, and fortune-tost;
Shriveled drift of the chilling sea,
Mate of pain and poverty.

Lift high your glasses with three
times three,
And toast Victoria's Jubilee.

Plundered ryot of Hindostan,
Plundered Burmese, and wronged Afghan,
Hunted Zulu, and threatened Boer,
Swill the music and foot the floor.

Drain dry your goblets with three
times three,
And toast Victoria's Jubilee.

J. COCKILL.

HERE
AND
THERE

Tuesday next will witness a display on which the future historian will dwell with much interest. From the uttermost ends of the earth statesmen and millions will ride in princely procession in the train of Queen Victoria, the titular head of the British Empire. East, west, north, and south will be lost to view for the moment—absorbed in the world-embracing Empire. The representatives of the mysterious East—the product of long ages of civilisation and religious mysticism—will join hands with the swarthy agriculturalists of the new, growing colonies of Oceania and of the children from the backwoods of the Lady of Snows. All the pomp and pageantry of war, the lavish wealth the world has learnt so well how to produce, will be on view. Lining the route of the cavalcade will be forty thousand armed men, within whose lines the representatives of the Empire, together with those coming kings and rulers who will one day, in the providence of God, be called upon to sway the sceptre of empire over lands not under the beneficent rule of Queen Victoria. Back of the soldiers will stand millions of people who will cheer and wave handkerchiefs as the royal personages pass. Symbolically, the world will be united in a common rejoicing over an event rare in the history of nations. To the victors from Mars two things might seem inevitable—first, that the world was at peace; second, that the throne of the world were firmly embedded in the hearts of a loyal and grateful people.

And yet the Martian visitor would be totally mistaken. The cheering millions would be there and cheer just as lustily if the occasion were the installation of the first President of the British Republic; the soldiers are there because they are paid for coming, and nine out of every ten of them will heartily curse the whole affair as a "rotten and irksome addition."

duty; the statesmen are there because Empire means trade, and trade means profit, and profit means power over the common people. The "providence of God" which establishes and preserves kings and queens is merely that set of circumstances which happen to fit in with their personal advantage. Modern loyalty is born of one of two states of mind—fear of the common people or toadyism. There is no third explanation possible. Even under a representative system of government it is possible to paralyse a nation by maintaining the fiction that a reigning family is a necessity of good government. Now, one of two things must be—either the British people are fit to govern themselves or they are not. If they are, an hereditary ruler who in legislation has more power than the whole nation is an insult; if they are not, they should not be entrusted with votes. Despotism and monarchy are compatible; democracy and monarchy are an unthinkable connexion.

Under whose banner, then, are we saving? Acts of Parliament open with this preamble: *Be it enacted by the Queen's most gracious Majesty by and with the consent of the Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled.* Now, what is that statement—fact or fiction? If it be true that the acts are passed by the Queen, the statement effectually disposes of our claim to be a self-governing people; if it is not true, it should not be there. No man can serve two masters, and if we are for the Queen we are not for her subjects. The throne represents the power of caste—class rule. Round the throne gather the unwholesome parasites who, incapable of living an independent existence, and not having the faculty which enables a healthy human being to find support in the affections of neighbour and friend, cling to the system which lends itself to their disordered condition. The toady who crawls through the mire of self-abasement to enable him to bask in the smile of royalty is as much the victim of a diseased organism, and as great a danger to the community, as is the lunatic who has to be put under restraint in the interests of public safety. No healthy, well-developed people could for one moment tolerate an institution which belongs to the childhood of the race, and which in these latter days is the centre, if not the source, of the corrupting influence which constitutes Society.

I am, therefore, no believer in royalty which has ceased to be royal. The great mind, the strong heart, the detestation of wrong, the love of truth whether in cot or palace will always command my respect. But to worship an empty form, to make pretence to believe a gilded mediocrity indispensable to the wellbeing of the nation—where is the man who will so far forget what is due to his manhood? And yet I have no illusions in this matter. We might get quit of the royal family without getting rid of a single one of our burdens. Title is not indispensable to toadyism. The wealthy Republicans of New York will go through exactly the same course of degradation to win admission to the sacred Four Hundred titleless millionaires who compose the inner circle of society in that city as his fellow will on this side of the water. In each case it is an object of ambition to be attained at any cost to honour and manhood. In each case the object aimed at is the admission of the fact that the sutor for the honour desires to occupy the highest rung of the social ladder. It marks him off from the rest of mankind, separates him not only from the common herd, but from the successful competitors for distinction. The desire to enter the sacred precincts of the highest social circles is the full fruition of the gospel of getting on. It runs through the entire life of the nation, and is manifested in every walk of life and in every stage of growth. The child at school must needs learn, not for learning's sake as a good in itself, but to stand well with the inspector; the student at the university has his thoughts centred on his degree, and what he learns is only

valuable in so far as it brings him nearer the object of his pursuit. Workmen of all grades are asked to turn out the greatest quantity of work, not because it is a man's duty to himself and his fellows to do his best, but because he will thereby earn higher wages. I might go on multiplying illustrations, but these will suffice. That which should always be done for its own sake is done with an ulterior motive in view, and thus loses much of its value.

We are trained in the selfish doctrine of getting on, and getting on means rising on the ruined lives of our fellows. On this is based our notions of private property in land and capital, with its consequent production for profit. And it cannot be too often repeated that thrones and president chairs are used by the plunderers of labour with philosophic impartiality to bolster up the fiction of private property. In this country loyalty to Queen is used by the profit-mongers to blind the eyes of the people; in America loyalty to the flag serves the same purpose. Law and order, by which the plunderers are kept quiet and being fleeced by their victims, have a symbol, and any symbol will serve. Therefore, until the system of wealth production be changed it is not worth while exchanging a queen for a president. The robbery of the poor would go on equally under the one as the other. The king fraud will disappear when the exploiting of the people draws to a close. Every such show as the present hastens the end. Millions will go out on Tuesday next to see the Queen. What they will see will be an old lady of very commonplace aspect. That of itself will set some a-thinking. Royalty to be a success should keep off the streets. So long as the fraud can be kept a mystery, carefully shrouded from popular gaze, it may go on. The French king was safe and was treated with all the deference supposed to be due to his office until the Revolutionaries came within speaking distance of him. Then the charm faded and the guillotine settled the matter. A similar experience had been gone through in this country in the case of Charles. The light of day is too much for the mummeries on which a throne rests. And with one thinks of the occupants of the thrones of Europe! The Emperor of Germany mad—watched minutely by a council of twelve doctors, who will one day consign him to a madhouse; the Czar of Russia dying—his frame eaten away by a festering disease; the Prince of Wales, a fat, bald-headed nonentity. These be thy gods, O Israel.

The consolidation of the Empire is a good thing in itself. It is bringing nearer the reign of democracy and breaking down the barriers which keep nations apart. But this has no connection with royalty. The workers can have but one feeling in the matter—contempt for thrones and for all who would bolster them up, but none the less a genuine desire to bring the nations of the earth closer together in unity—not on the basis of a royal alliance nor a commercial union, but on that of a desire to live in concord. King and diplomat and trader are each, all unwittingly, preparing the way for this consummation so devoutly to be desired.

by James Keir Hardie June 1897.

Between Ourselves.

OR AND SUPPER THING TO EQUAL

Cocoa

and more. Give strength and energy. Sold every where in packets and tins. Price 1/6 and 2/6. Write for sample.

61, 63, Rushmill Row, London, E.C.



Silver Jubilee 1977

Billy Ridgers reflects on

Highness & Glitterbest



The brash blue and red image of the Queen's fist held high, contrasted starkly with the broken plate glass window of Collets Bookshop in London's Charing Cross Road. The year is 1977. A Jubilee Year: the same queen, the same crony capitalism and the same defiance. The defiance was the thin A4 booklet looking out through the smashed glass. This was Highness a frank and irreverent exposé of the monarchy.

It was produced by Counter Information Services an anti capitalist outfit that thrived through the 1970s, exposing wealth and privilege, and corrupt corporate investment. The 'anti-reports' as they were called, were published regularly, in secret, and helped fuel the political anger of the time. Highness was one of the best.

The anti capitalist CIS had grown out of the 1960s counter culture, fuelled by the anti-apartheid movement, anti-Vietnam war protests, by the mid 1970s much of the 60s revolt had turned into 'style' and fashion.

CIS Anti-report: Highness 1977

But a new brash, anarchic revolt was lurching down the Kings Road, in London - Punk. Just in time for the 1977 Jubilee. Yes, superficially nihilistic, but Jamie Reid who was the visual face of punk art, had cut his teeth in community politics in the huge housing estates around Croydon. I knew Jamie well, and Highness and the Sex Pistols came out of the same political crucible. As the Highness report was being written in a clandestine office in Soho, Jamie, who was working in Glitterbest up the road called in on the way to the recording studio. The Sex Pistols

had just written a bunch of new songs, one No Future he felt we might like to include in the Highness anti-report. The copy of the handwritten lyrics was pinned to the wall, and duly appeared in the publication.

It would be wrong to say that anti jubilee sentiment was strong. Both the anti monarchy No Future and anti capitalist Highness, were fairly unique events. The overwhelming feeling about the Silver Jubilee, was indifference. Not among the establishment of course. But given that the war in Ireland was at its height, and that the 'Troops out Movement' and the 'Anti Internment League' were very high profile at the time, republican and anti monarchy sentiment was quite subdued. Mass Observation, the organization that keeps a record of 'daily life' in the UK, went on record to say that public 'disapproval' of this Jubilee was the lowest they had ever recorded.

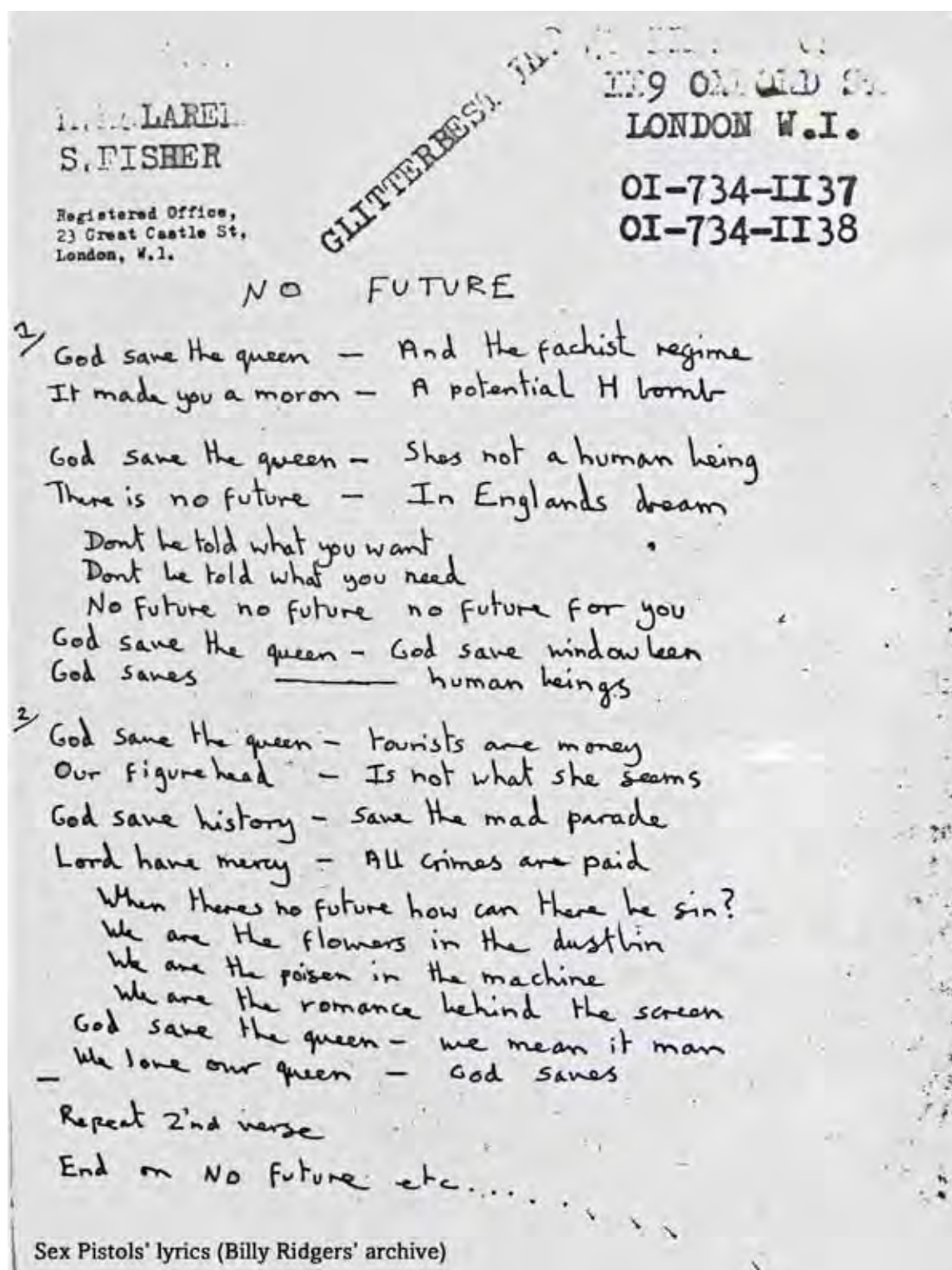
Despite that, Highness sold well, and Collets (radical) bookshop was bold enough to have an anti-jubilee display, with Highness as the centre piece. Rumour had it that the stone that smashed the window was wielded by an inebriated Saturday night squaddie.

Another historical footnote, the Highness report was also for sale in the Labour Party bookshop. This came to the attention of one sycophantic Labour MP in search of an honour, who raised it in Parliament. The then Prime Minister James Callaghan immediately banned it from the bookshop. No change there then.

So it's the same-old-same-old in 2012. Have a look at Highness and you will see that the monarchy is at the beating heart of the crony capitalist system. Anyone hoping that the UK could quietly transform into a republic is not understanding the nature of social class, wealth and privilege and the part it plays in the global capitalist system. It's still worth having a go at the monarchy though because at some point if we want a generous and egalitarian society then 'Highness' and all its lickspittles needs bringing down.

A copy of the report is downloadable from the CIS

Billy Ridgers, 27 April 2012
www.anti-report.com
www.whorunsthisspace.co.uk





Teenage kicks and a national insurance policy

It was the Queen's Silver Jubilee 1977 and from the crap research I've done it was somewhere between May and August; really it was her jubilee not mine. I was at home redecorating my bedroom. I was probably playing my records too loud and most of them would have been punk records, but some of them would have been David Bowie.

The Queen was going to drive through my village and I had better things to do than stand on the street and wave at her. I remember the day being quite sunny, but quite cold. I was bored painting the walls and so I decided I would go and see what was happening. I couldn't join the crowd and stand there mutely and dumbly paying vegetable homage. I thought I would become part of the scene but voice my protest in a way that was clear but not overly provocative. I lived with these people and whilst I wasn't a royalist I figured that there would be others there that weren't royalist either. I painted BOO!

onto a piece torn from the cover sheets I had laid on the floor, bed and bedroom furniture to protect it from my enthusiastic use of paint. I rolled up my banner and strolled down to the Tredegar Arms at the top of Forge Lane, the dual carriageway that runs up from junction 28 on the M4. These things are facts, the name of the pub and the designation of the road, everything else is unreliable. I saw my next door neighbours and said, 'Hello' and stood beside them and unfurled. One of my neighbours said, "You're not going to stand by me with that." I said, "Why? It could mean Boo! I'm over here, or it could mean Boo! I don't like the monarchy." My neighbour wasn't convinced, he thought he might be inveigled into this treasonous conspiracy and sidled away from me, or did I move away disconsolate. There was definitely a sense that my banner did not reflect the general spirit of the occasion. There was a kind of rumble of discontent and people were giving

me looks that seemed unfriendly. Those closest to me were warning me of the terrible things that could happen to a person who dared to let the Queen know that anybody at all in Bassaleg didn't like royalty. The policeman who had been there when I had arrived had disappeared, not wanting to get my blood on his uniform. I wandered away a little saddened by my cowardice and my naivety in thinking that people would, could allow me to voice an opposing opinion. These people who were normally able to see another point of view were unable and unwilling to entertain the possibility of an alternative. I suggest the argument in favour of the royal family is so flimsy that it can't bear the weight of even the silliest opposition.

Please don't imagine that I am any less a republican now than I was then. I think that the monarchy is a dead-hand on our hopes and aspirations. Monarchy enshrines the idea of a feudal society. Many of the richest people in Britain are still those descended from the

feudal overlords who seized power in 1066. The queen as head of state represents a place for everyone and everyone in their place. I like the idea of a nonpolitical head of state who can wave at people, visit the sick and disastored and host dinners for other heads of state. I propose that the head of state is drawn by lottery every year using our National Insurance numbers. Those chosen would receive full pay for a year whilst they trained for the job. There would be two in training and through some kind of practical test; the winner would rule whilst the second would be their understudy. The monarch would no longer be head of the Anglican Church and of course there would be other changes needed but this would mean the head of state would genuinely represent the people and would no longer celebrate the subjection of us all through force and unquestioning loyalty.

By Roger Lougher, 2012

BRIEF VIEWS

Most Britons are pretty clear-sighted folk: they know there's nothing special about members of the royal family in and of themselves; they also understand that, in constitutional terms, the monarchy is a kind of feint, designed to distract us from our gerrymandered electoral dictatorship. *Will Self, 2011*

Anyone who accepts an honour from the British government, or an invitation to tea at Buck House; anyone who shows deference to the monarchy, or even subscribes to an institution with royal patrons, partakes of this mass delusion: that the only way a modern democracy can be governed is by profoundly anti-democratic means; that the only way to treat citizens is as subjects. In my view, the British people will only come of political age with the abolition of the monarchy. *Will Self*

Monarchy is incompatible with democracy. According to the elitist values of the monarchical system, the most stupid, immoral royal is more fit to be head of state than the wisest, most ethical commoner. Monarchs get the job for life, no matter how appallingly they behave. The alternative is not a US-style executive president. We could have an elected president, but a low-cost, purely ceremonial one, like the Irish. This would ensure that the people are sovereign, not the royals. And we get an important safeguard: if we don't like our head of state, we can elect a new one. *Peter Tatchell, Human rights activist*

The monarchy makes fools of us. It demands and receives deference for reasons of birth. This skews our ability to devise ceremonies and honours for ourselves and blights the running of the state with silly bowing and scraping. More seriously, the politics of monarchy creates a false unity of nation even as our real rulers play roulette with billions while millions of "subjects" worry about their homes and bills. *Michael Rosen*



In the year of the Queen's Jubilee tourists peered as usual
Through the railings of Buckingham Palace,
But her fairy-tale was fading; the fairy queen's wings were being clipped
By the Sex Pistols putting monarchy in their sights.

"God save the queen," they sang, "it's a fascist regime."
And the song's hook-line became a new anthem –
Disturbing to clutches of flag-wavers lining the streets,
And horrifying to Middle England and the Daily Mail.

The Sex Pistols proclaimed, "She ain't no human being,"
And their subversive posters for the record
Placed the band's salacious name right across the Queen's lips
Masking her eyes with two spidery swastikas.

They sang, "I don't believe illusions 'cos too much is real".
They accessorized the Queen's nose with a safety pin
Like a voodoo doll then covered her face with cutout letters,
As if presenting the world with a kidnapper's note.

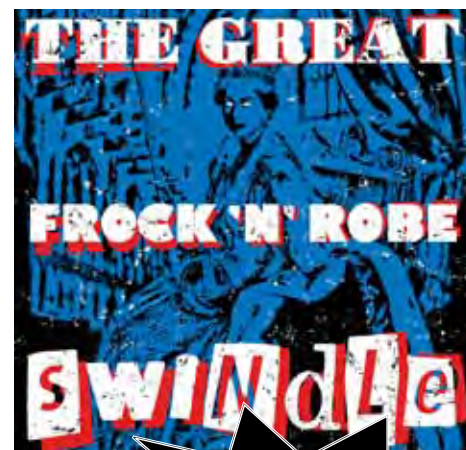
'Oooh no,' people would say, 'you can't have a go at the Queen,'
Sucking their breath in to indicate caution,
'Oooh no, not the Queen, the Queen's above politics you see.'
'They can't answer back, can they, so it's not fair.'

Then they'd earnestly claim, 'It's in the constitution, isn't it?'
Forgetting that Britain's never had such a document –
For the Brits, despite their inordinate pride in their own history,
Can reveal they know less about it than anyone.

(An extract from *Royal Babylon*, an investigative poem by
Heathcote Williams, published by IT, 2012)

THE BROKEN Sovereign

Tuesday, June 5, 2012



JUBILEE EXCLUSIVE

PULL OUT &
KEEP SPECIAL

SCANDAL OF ARTIST WHO HAS LET THE QUEEN DOWN



"I JUST COULDN'T BE ARSED"

It emerged last night that a well known artist, Clifford Helling has badly damaged his reputation and let down plans to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee with a souvenir mug.

Helling, 37, from Rumney in Cardiff had been commissioned by the prestigious Royle Dalton giftware company to design and make a mug to commemorate this year's Jubilee.

But, in a shock move he simply failed to complete the mug which has plunged the project into chaos – insiders and ceramic specialists are suggesting it is highly irregular and are at a loss to explain it. "Ceramic artists are among some of the most reliable and hard-working of all the artisans in this country – it is slightly shocking, and a mild concern" said a local potter.

Apathy is spreading Helling, who has disappeared since the scandal broke

was quoted at the time of the incident as saying "I knew from the start of this project that the reality of a hereditary monarch in a 21st century democracy is an anachronism; and the on-going subjugation of the population is an affront to the right to freedom for the people of the UK and commonwealth countries and I was cool with all that, because like most people I need to earn a crust, so I took on the commission for all the right reasons – money!

STORM IN A TEACUP

But, really if I am honest I just realised that actually I couldn't be arsed". The apparent explanation has left all concerned stunned. A spokesman for the palace declined to comment, but a royal insider is quoted as saying "The 'firm' will be furious – ideological reasons are one thing but apathy and indifference is absolutely unacceptable – it just sums up the common persons attitude these days. We are all deeply shocked and one cannot help wondering where it will all end?"

A spokesman for Royle Dalton refused to comment last night, but one employee leaving the factory, based in Reading, said that all the staff were in tears at the sad news. The final word was left to elderly local resident Benjamin Elton a veteran of several wars and conflicts – "to say this is a storm in teacup doesn't even begin to describe how we feel – it's pathetic!"

* * * * *

Pumpin' party sounds

Some suggested
retro tunes to
make your anti-
jubilee party go regal:

1 Queen Bitch
David Bowie

2 Kick over the Statues
The Redskins

3 You've got the Silver
The Rolling Stones

4 Smash it Up
The Damned

5 God Save the Queen
Sex Pistols

**6 I'm not like
everybody else**
The Kinks

7 Burn the Rich
Blow Monkeys

8 Gold Lion
Yeah, Yeah, Yeahs

9 The Liquidator
Harry J All Stars

10 Flag day
The Housemartins



Republicanism and the contemporary Left

Cartoons by Alan Hardman

In his paper *The future left: red, green and republican?* Dr. Stuart White argues 'abolishing the monarchy is only a minor part of modern republicanism' and 'by engaging with republican thought, red-green politics can perhaps come to a better understanding of its own underlying values and principles'. We highlight below White's list of defining values of republican democracy and also his question can republicanism "go global".

What is republican democracy?

Republicanism is a word that invites misunderstanding. So let us be clear at the outset: republicanism does not mean only, or even primarily, opposition to having a monarch. The monarchy is, to be sure, a silly, morally offensive institution. But abolishing the monarchy is not where the real action lies for a contemporary republican. We need to look at the deeper values and principles that inform the opposition to monarchy - values that call for a much wider and deeper social transformation. Five values or principles are crucial.

"But abolishing the monarchy is not where the real action lies for a contemporary republican"

1. Popular sovereignty. First, republican democracy rests on a view about where, or with whom, authority properly lies. It lies with 'We, the people'. The ultimate law-makers, the ultimate bearers of responsibility for the laws and welfare of society, ought to be the people themselves. This principle is common to the self-understanding of contemporary capitalist democracies. It is by no means clear, however, that they do, or even can, live up to it. In the UK, the very principle remains somewhat controversial: as Iain McLean argues in his new book on the British constitution, constitutional

lawyers still maintain that parliament is sovereign (McLean, 2009). This conflicts with the principle of popular sovereignty, even if only because two of the three houses of parliament (Lords and monarchy) are unelected.

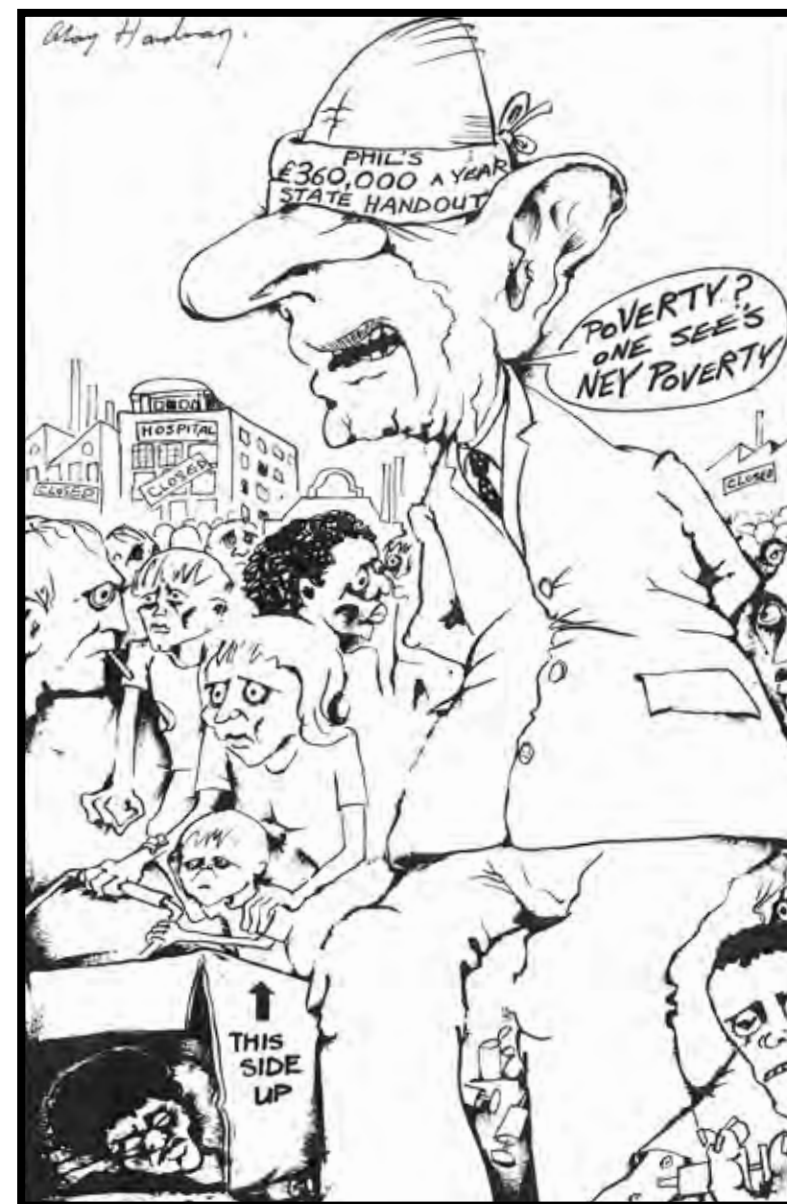
2. Common good. For the republican, legitimacy is not only a matter of who exercises authority, but of the ends to which it is exercised. Interests in life, security, liberty and economic opportunity are shared and basic to all citizens, and the demos must use its power to enact laws that serve these interests, treating the interests of any one citizen as equally weighty to those of any other. This is a modern, democratic way of understanding the ancient, Aristotelian idea that a legitimate state must be oriented to the common good of the citizenry, rather than to some sectional or sectarian good.

3. Liberty. The common good is, in part, citizens' shared and urgent interest in personal freedom. In his *On the Origins of Inequality*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau says that 'the worst thing that can happen to one in the relations between man and man is to find oneself at the mercy of another' (Rousseau, 1984). Freedom, understood as what Philip Pettit calls 'non-domination', is the state in which one does not live 'at the mercy of another' (Pettit, 1997; Skinner, 1998). To secure liberty, therefore, citizens must deny the state arbitrary power: power to interfere at its discretion, without appropriate constraint. At the same time, they must use their sovereign power to make laws and institutions that prevent domination in society at large, such as in the workplace and in the family.

4. Economic equality. Pursuit of the common good also demands limits to economic inequality. As Rousseau put it, 'The social state is

advantageous to men only if all have a certain amount, and none too much.' (Rousseau, 1994) In part, this follows from the commitment to liberty: the dependence of the poor on the rich gives the rich power to interfere, according to their own will, in the lives of the poor. In part it also follows from the commitment to popular sovereignty. Wealth inequality can all too easily translate into an inequality of influence that undermines the democratic basis of popular sovereignty. Economic opportunity is also an important element of the common good in its own right. If a society works in a way that produces great inequalities of income and wealth, then there must be a question as to how far it is promoting economic opportunity as a genuinely common good.

5. Participation and civic virtue. To be a citizen, in the republican view, is not simply to enjoy a legal status. It is to have a definite moral personality. It is to have an understanding of the society's common good, and a willingness to act to promote this. Without such commitment, then,



as Rousseau argued, the republic is corrupted, a prey for elite interests.

Can republicanism go global?

I have pointed to some of the ways in which red-green politics converges with, and can learn from, the philosophy of republican democracy. But it is important also to acknowledge some possible limitations of the republican perspective, and of ways in which red-green politics might have lessons to teach republicans. Here I will note just one area of difficulty. The concept of the 'citizen'

is, clearly, central to the idea of republicanism. But who gets to be a citizen? Classical republicanism typically operates with highly exclusive notions of citizenship. Citizens tend to be white male property-holders in a specific city-state. Modern republican thinking sought to universalise the status. Republicans sought to disconnect citizenship from gender, race and social class. Socialist republicans used the idea of universal citizenship to challenge the inequalities of social class. And the classical focus on the city state gave way, of course, to





a focus on the nation-state.

And there lies at least one of the problems that a red-green politics today might have with republicanism. Is the idea of republican citizenship still objectionably exclusive precisely because it links citizenship with membership of a nation state? Is it, in this respect, a rather backward-looking and reactionary philosophy at odds with the transnational character of red-green politics?

One response is to consider how far a republican model of citizenship can inform activism and institutional design at a transnational level. The republican tradition surely offers some helpful resources here, both in terms of identifying the weaknesses of existing institutions and thinking about alternatives. In many ways, one might say that the implicit aim of much red-green transnational activism is to try to reconstruct the global order as a kind of republican polity.

Certainly, activist concerns with the existing global order seem often to echo republican concerns about the subjection of individuals to sites of arbitrary, monarchical power. Activism in itself can be seen as a way of awakening or creating a global demos that can, eventually, be the subject of a global republican democracy. Recent academic efforts to theorise the content of 'cosmopolitan democracy' and 'cosmopolitan

citizenship', such as those by David Held, do seem to owe something to modern republican ideas about democracy and citizenship (Held, 2006).

Echoing Blackburn's notion of 'complex socialism', we need to think in terms of a 'complex republicanism'. Citizenship will not have a single location but a plurality of locations, at various levels. This, it should be said, is by no means a new idea in the republican tradition. The Chartist engraver, William James Linton, argues for precisely this way of understanding citizenship in his book of the 1850s, *The English Republic*, which drew for inspiration, in this respect, on the ideas of Giuseppe Mazzini and the transnational 'Young Europe' movement (Nabulsi, 1999).

What about the right to nation-state membership itself? A republican concern for freedom as non-domination provides at least two reasons to be critical of immigration controls. First, such controls in themselves might involve the subjection of individuals to arbitrary power; and second, such controls diminish the opportunity people have to escape arbitrary power. This is not to say that a republican must support a policy of open borders, or that this is the right policy. It is to say that republicanism is not necessarily committed to closed borders, or to any state's actual existing

immigration policy. Of course, as we seek to globalise the perspective of republican democracy, tensions and conflicts will undoubtedly become apparent. For example, in any feasible political world, the demands for open borders and for a sizeable citizens' income are likely to be in tension (assuming that new citizens are also eligible for the citizens' income). Almost certainly, as a practical matter, we face a nasty trade-off. This is not, however, a problem specific to republicanism. It reflects a tension between 'domestic' and 'global' justice that any red-green politics probably has to confront.

Republicanism offers helpful resources for understanding what red-green politics is, or ought to be, fundamentally about. It does not offer a magic wand that can make

all of the problems associated with such a politics disappear.

(source: the future left: red, green or republican?, first published in Red Pepper, Feb 2010. www.redpepper.org)

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I just heard that in 2011 the Royal Family paid £218,000 to decorate the living room at Buckingham Palace. I asked my uncle who works for Felix Scoggins and Son, Painters and Decorators in Tonypandy, and he said they'd do it for £600, cash. Can you let the Queen know 'cos I hate the idea of her wasting money.

Yours,
Dominic Ludgate,
Cwmbran.

Dear Sir,

I just read in the Sport that the Queen receives at least two turds in the post every day. What I don't understand is – who's sending the other one?

Yours,
Brendon Nosegay,
Worthing.

Dear Sir,

I do not understand the criticism of the scale and expense of the Queens Diamond Jubilee celebrations. It is a well known fact – as the BBC keeps reminding us – that even the most violently anti-monarchist campaigners in the country think that she is doing an absolutely fantastic job.

Yours,
Dame Elizabeth Frigpiece,
Brize Norton.

Dear Sir,

I've had it up to here with people always putting down the Royal Family. I reckon they do a brilliant job, and I for one am happy to cough up £18 (no concessions) to look round their house. Even though I've already paid them out of my taxes.

Yours,
Baxter Fishcake,
Bridgnorth.

Dear Sir,

I read in the Star that when the Queen pops her clogs the TV and Radio stations are going to cancel all their regular programmes and play sombre and morbid music, 24 hours a day for a whole week. Seven days without any decent telly! I've started stockpiling a collection of DVDs, and I reckon everybody should do the same as Blockbusters are definitely going to run out.

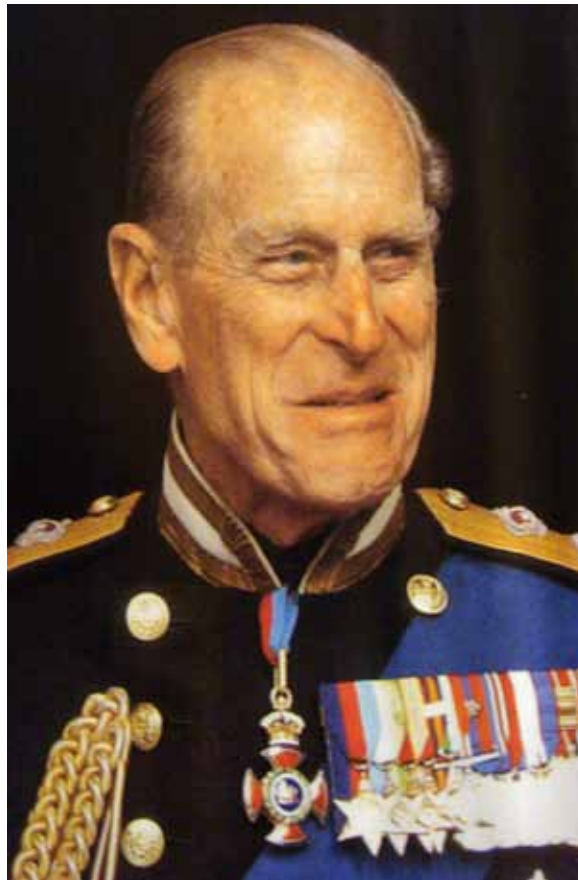
Yours,
Yogi Nostril,
Pickering.

Dear Sir,

I, in common with everybody else, think the Queen is doing a wonderful job, and it's about time the BBC got its fat arse OFF THE FENCE and started telling us how bloody brilliant she is! I'm sorry about the language but I pay my TV license and this is making me REALLY FUCKING ANGRY!!!

Yours,
Crudley Bumpipe,
Stevenage.

COUNTDOWN OF THE THE WIT AND OF THE DUKE C



20. “Can you tell the difference between them?” Replying to President Obama on being told by that he'd had breakfast with the leaders of the UK, China and Russia.

19. “People think there's a rigid class system here, but Dukes have even been known to marry Chorus Girls. Some have even married Americans.”

18. “Any bloody fool can lay a wreath at the thingamy.” Explaining his role to Jeremy Paxman.

17. “You could do with losing a little bit of weight.” To a 13 year old aspiring astronaut.

16. “So who's on drugs here? HE looks as if he's on drugs.” Addressing a Bangladeshi youth club in 2002.

15. “And what exotic part of the world do you come from?” Asked of Tory politician Lord Taylor of Warwick, whose parents are Jamaican. “Birmingham,” he replied.

14. “Deaf? If you're near there, no wonder you're deaf.” Said to some deaf children enjoying a Caribbean steel band, 2000.

13. “If you travel as much as we do you appreciate the improvements in aircraft design of less noise and more comfort – provided you



On reading this poem Prince Charles relinquished his claim to the crown and joined a squat.

Poem of the Day

Here lies Fred,
Who was alive and is dead.
Had it been his father,
I had much rather.
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another.
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her.
Had it been the whole generation,
The better for the nation.
But since 'tis only Fred,
Who was alive, and is dead,
There's no more to be said.

Anonymous - after the death of
Frederick, Prince of Wales, 1751

THE TOP TWENTY!

THE WISDOM OF EDINBURGH

don't travel in something called economy class, which sounds ghastly." As told to the Aircraft Research Association in 2002.

12. "Aren't most of you descended from pirates?" The Cayman Islands, 1994.

11. "The problem with London is the tourists. They cause the congestion. If we could just stop the tourism, we could stop the congestion."

10. "If a cricketer, for instance, suddenly decided to go into a school and batter a lot of people to death with a cricket bat, which he could do very easily, I mean, are you going to ban cricket bats?" In a radio interview after the Dunblane shootings in 1996. He later remarked off-air, "That will really set the cat among the pigeons, won't it?"

9. "Do you know they have eating dogs for the anorexic now?" To a wheelchair-user and her guide dog in 2002.

8. "You ARE a woman, aren't you?" Graciously accepting a gift from a woman in Kenya, 1984.

7. "A few years ago, everybody was saying we must have more leisure, everyone's working too much. Now that everybody's got more leisure time they are complaining they are unemployed. People don't seem to make up

their minds what they want." Demonstrating his street-cred in 1981.

6. "It looks as though it was put in by an Indian." Examining a fuse box during a tour of a factory in 1999. He later added "I meant to say cowboys. I just got my cowboys and Indians mixed up."

5. "How do you keep the natives off the booze long enough to pass the test?" Asked of a driving instructor in Scotland, 1995.

4. "Do people trip over you?" Meeting a wheelchair-user at a nursing home in 2002.

3. "You managed not to get eaten then?" To a British student in Papua New Guinea, 1998.

2. "Do you still throw spears at each other?" In amiable conversation with Aboriginal leader William Brin in Queensland, 2002.

1. "If you stay here much longer, you will go home with slitty eyes." To a 21-year-old British student during a visit to China in 1986.

By Chris Partridge

(Inspired by an article 90 gaffs in 90 years by Hannah Ewan in The INDEPENDENT 28th May 2011)

LET ME CUT YOUR CAKE PRINCESS

In April 1983, during a state visit to Australia by Prince Charles and Lady Diana, it was strongly rumoured that the royal couple, attending a private evening function, were treated to an amateur rendition of Australian rock band AC/DC's "let me put my love into you babe", from their 1980 classic album 'Back in Black'. The song, sung on a karaoke machine (all the rage in Australia at the time) was allegedly by a prominent member of the newly elected ALP (Australian Labour Party) administration of Bob Hawkes. The chorus includes the lyrics

"LET ME PUT MY LOVE INTO YOU BABE;
LET ME PUT MY LOVE ON THE LINE;
LET ME PUT MY LOVE INTO YOU BABE;
LET ME CUT YOUR CAKE WITH MY KNIFE."

What caused all the controversy was the dedication at the end of the song, by the still unaccredited singer (alleged to be a cabinet member) who said

"...for Lady Di, what a fuckin' Sheila!"

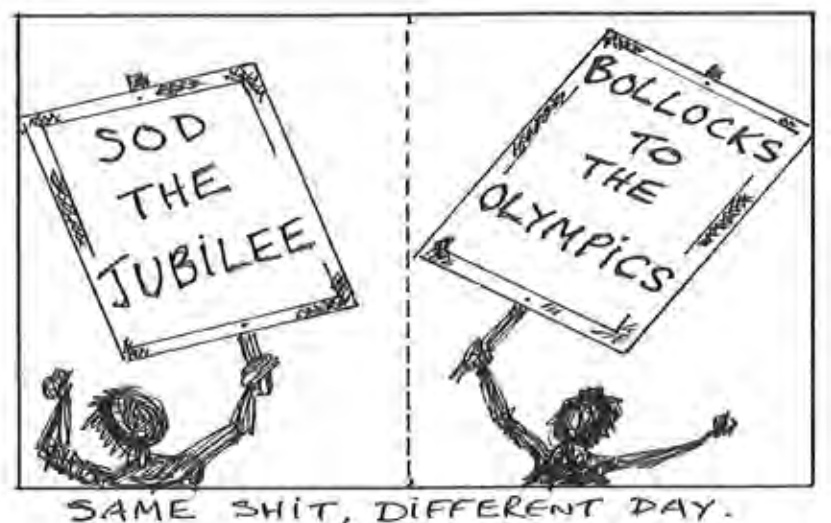


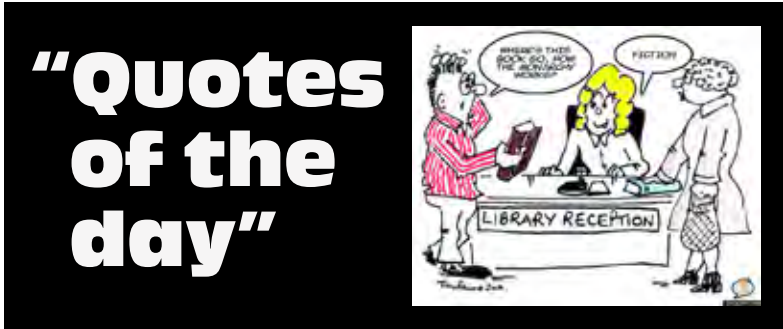
Put Out More Bunting

Hoorah for the jubilee orgy,
For a woman whose multiple
corgis
Eat better than most,
Who can't afford toast,
Let alone pate made from force
fed geese.
Are we getting out streamers
and bunting
Even though our damned
government's shunting
Lots of taxpayers' brass
Into pageants and glass
While the people are busy job
hunting?
Will we all have a jolly good
knees-up

As public sector pay starts to
freeze up
Leaving teacher and nurse
Facing loan sharks and worse
And our services all start to
seize up?
As Liz keeps the regal throne
warm
At our cost in this financial
storm,
Shall we wave value flags
Smoke our over-priced fags
Never mind that we're all
overdrawn?

Emma Geliot 2012





The monarchy endures and is still relevant for many but I do wonder about its longevity. There is a strange paradox: the ‘Firm’ clearly sees its salvation lying with the next generation - Wills, Harry and co - bicycling towards the Scandinavian model of royalty, whilst showcasing a sense of duty through their service in the armed forces.People still curtsy and bow to the Queen – up to now it has been instilled in us - but I cannot see my generation doing the same to a King William: “why should we, he’s no different to me”, many might claim, and that’s before attention is turned to the cost of the ancient institution. Chuka Umunna

.....
We have explored the temple of royalty, and have found that the idol we have bowed down to has eyes that see not, ears that hear not our prayers, and a heart like the nethermillstone.
Samuel Adams, speech in Philadelphia, 1776

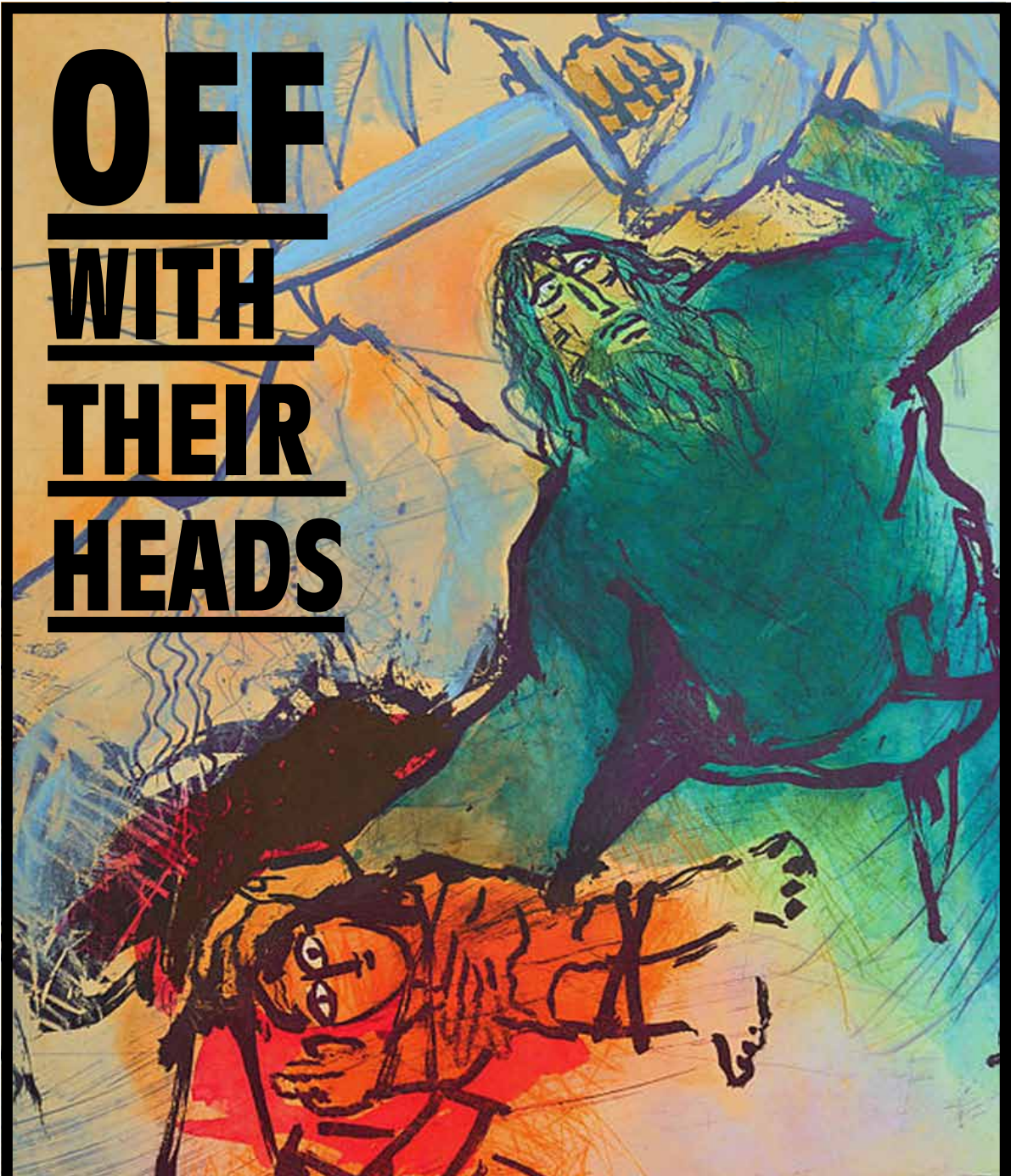
.....
Real democracy will exist only when “every man is, in his own proper self a king” - when the ordinary has become extraordinary.
Tom Nairn, 1988

.....
“Break in pieces quickly the Band of particular Propriety [property], disown this oppressing Murder, Oppression and Thievery of Buying and Selling of Land, owning of landlords and paying of Rents and give thy Free Consent to make the Earth a Common Treasury without grumbling...that all may enjoy the benefit of their Creation. Propriety and single interest divides the people of a land and the whole world into parties and is the cause of all wars and bloodshed and contention everywhere.”
Gerrard Winstanley & 14 others ‘The True Levellers Standard Advanced’, April, 1649

.....
One of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings, is, that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule by giving mankind an ass for a lion.”
Thomas Paine, Common Sense, 1776

.....
“The anachronistic absurdity of Britain’s royal family, with its vast inherited wealth and theoretical power cannot be touched. No public figure who governs or hopes to govern can go near the issue, whatever their personal views. Instead they must pay homage, bow or curtsy when the time comes, and never question why it is that inherited peerages are abolished but the Queen opens Parliament every year and appoints a prime minister after an election on the basis of the hereditary principle, or why inherited wealth is viewed with a degree of wariness, at least in relation to most other people but not to those born into this particular family.”

Steve Richards, ‘Our republican conspiracy of silence: No public figure that governs, or hopes to govern can go near the issue. It would be the end of their careers’, London: The Independent, April, 21, 2011
.....



Top Ten ways to get rid of unpopular rulers – an historical glance at the many methods of what is sometimes known as, a chip off the old block.

1. Guillotine – proposed as a humane execution method by Joseph-Ignace Guillotin, designed by Antoine Louis and built by a harpsichord maker Tobias Schmidt (musicians...) this was the default French revolutionary method of disposing of the aristocracy and admittedly each other, or anyone who looked sideways at Robespierre. Messy, quick.

2. Poison – a big hit with the Romans and generally done at the dining sofa so victims were treated to a few roasted field-mice with their hemlock and honey. Messy, sick.

3. Shakespearian: a veritable smorgasbord (Hamlet’s platter) of regicide. The Bard enjoyed thinking up cunning ways to dispatch Kings and Queens. King Lear, driven mad by family, vanity and hubris is arguably the cruellest and death by

walking trees in Macbeth the most bizarre. Messy, walking sticks.

4. By executioner’s Axe. Poodle-boned Charles I of England met his fate this way. A suitable treatment for Royal toady lookalike Brian May? To put a merciful end to one of his interminable God Save the Queen guitar solos. Messy, chopstick, bootlick (Brian).

5. Witchcraft and sorcery – otherwise known as religion. Often inseparable, the twin institutions of church and state have developed a sibling rivalry that still rages to this day – they have been knocking each other off for centuries. Messy, Old Nick.

6. Archery – the French again, a Norman archer did for King Harold with an arrow straight through his mince pie. Messy, joystick.

7. Firing squad – favoured by totalitarian regimes in particular. Hence the proverb, ‘see Romanov and die’. See also non regal political assassination – particularly of former brothers and sisters in arms. Think Trotsky, Messy, Ice pick.

8. Ideological purge, see also 7. Both share an over-zealous lack of focus and are rather clumsy and indiscriminate. Plain messy.

9. Smothering aka, squashed Sultana – favoured method of the Ottoman Empire. Watch out for big Eunuchs sitting on your face. Messy, kiss me quick.

10. Iron Mask – Alexander Dumas style which involves encasing the noble in a facial chastity bucket and locking away unto death. A hugely complicated operation fraught with difficulties, i.e. convincing fellow conspirators to keep mum, not to mention food and lodging expenses. It never actually happened of course, or did it? Messy, conjuring trick.

Turn it up to 11. Bubbling under (for years) – the mysterious delivery mechanism known to most as democracy. Often said to be a great way to overthrow tyranny but somehow the formula has never quite been perfected. Messy, realpolitik.

By DJ double act, Mopey & Archy

TAKING A ROYAL (WEDDING) SICKIE

Bland

by Snow Patrol

Snow Patrol have released a new album to mark the Royal Jubilee. Bland is the Northern Irish group's 76th studio album and features 29 versions of the same song.

The band's lead singer Gary Lightbody said he believed that this summer's concert at Buckingham Palace being organised by Gary Barlow would be the perfect showcase for the new material.

"It is something that will make the audience want to loosen their cardigans and point their fingers in the air and shake them really quite vigorously," he said.

However Snow Patrol, who have been described as the sort of band people who don't like bands like, have come under fire for their new royal-themed recording. Reviewing Bland for Kerrang, Sir Cliff Richard described it as "fucking awful". "This is so shit, a farmer could spread it and fertilize his fields with it," said the Young One."

The album was also given a sniffy response by wacky, spikey-haired twins Jedward. "We were asked to sing on one of the tracks but I think we would have lost all our street cred if we had done so," said Jed. His twin brother, Ward, agreed. "We were asked to sing on one of the tracks but I think we would have lost all our street cred if we had done so," he said.

However, there was some positive support from former BBC children's presenter Brian Cant.

"If I was still presenting Playschool and PlayAway these are exactly the sort of songs I would want to get the children singing along to," he said. "Snow Patrol's simple repetitive tunes and saccharine lyrics extolling the glories of Her Majesty would delight a five-year-old just as much as Humpty Dumpty and Here We Go Round the Mulberry bush used to."

www.tonybailie.com

Don't piss down my back and tell me it's raining!
Jubilee this and jubilee that
Olympics this and olympia that
We are all in this together?
Get real, you millionaire twats

by Robroy Fingerhead

RED, WHITE ..AND SPEW



Last year designer Lydia Leith found herself at the centre of a media and consumer frenzy. She produced a limited edition of hand printed, royal wedding sick bags – the story was picked up by the world's press and she went on to sell over 10,000 bags. This year she's back with a diamond jubilee sick bag.

"I screen print cards and posters, so I knew I could print on to sick bags in the same way, I drew the picture and then the pun "throne up" came to me and I loved it, it still makes me laugh!" she recalls.

A mixed bag

Bizarrely, pro and anti-royals are buying the sick bags said Lydia "a man who was a punk in the 1970's emailed me to say "thanks for keeping the spirit alive" and a girl throwing a street party said she is using her sick bags to put confetti in and for party bags". Influenced by retro airline logos the jubilee sick bag design is silk screen printed onto a plain white airline sickness bag in blue or red.

The work is an alternative jubilee souvenir designed as an antidote to all the media hype surrounding the event. This year the bags include the refluxive pun – "bling it up".

A note of caution

Republican activists have issued warnings about the items in recent weeks suggesting that monarchists may pounce on Lydia's story as yet another good news, positive royal benefit story – giving it the infamous 'windsor spin' such as – "how the royal couple inspired a thriving design business" and so on. A prominent republican said yesterday "that would be pure spin and then some, in fact it would be sick!".

There was even a suggestion the entire project has been carefully planned from the start and is an example of a new marketing and media manipulation technique known as 'meta-propaganda' which is derived from chaos theory. Donald Parker, a researcher at University of Wales, Newport, and a leading expert in 'design propaganda', described the theory as "plausible, but highly unlikely – it's all a bit conspiracy theory isn't it. I would suggest it's more a case of 'kick out the jam's' than "white riot".

For information on obtaining any of Lydia's products – go to: www.lydialeith.com

New 2012
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and
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by
Maurice
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Shiteanddonion@gmail.com

PUNK ROCK

Punk Rock - the spitting, swearing, savage pop music of rebellious youth - is sweeping teenage Britain... Today, after a Silver Jubilee week in which the Queen's popularity has never been higher, she is the subject of attack by a Punk group. The Sex Pistols have burst into the Top Ten with a record which calls the Queen a "moron"... Sunday Mirror, 12.6.77

Don't cha just love Jubilees? The Silver Jubilee, way back in 1977, was my introduction to punk rock. At this time, it was arguably at its height and me and my fellow punk rockers were seen as a menace to society liking a music that wouldn't last and was of little merit.

Summing Punk rock to a tee in that hot summer and the perfect antidote to the street parties and souvenir mugs, was The Sex Pistols 'God Save The Queen' single. Yes kiddies a single; a piece of seven inch plastic played on a record player. Within those grooves was a swaggering, bristling beast of a song coupled with incendiary sneered lyrics. To top it off it was sleeved in punk rocks artistic weapon of choice, the picture cover; provocatively featuring the Queen Liz with her eyes and mouth covered by the ransom note writing of Jamie Reid. The whole thing screamed confrontation and youthful angst.

Angst! The joyful rebellion of new against old and sticking two fingers up at whatever you liked and all to the back drop of arguably the best music of any generation. We had a thousand bands to listen to: from the glorious pop punk of Manchester's Buzzcocks to the R&B punk of Eddie and the Hot Rods, to the scuzz of the UK Subs and the amphetamine fuelled mania of the Damned. Add onto that bands like the Vibrators, 999, Menace, Chelsea, The Lurkers, Adverts and Rezillos and broadening our minds with a healthy dose of reggae helped by listening to radio DJ John Peel who gave us bands like Misty In Roots. The names trip off the tongue from the boys built to last to the one single wonders who still managed to chalk up minor punk classics. And every week out they tumbled; their progress and demise chronicled in the only way to find information pre internet in music papers such as Sounds, NME, Melody Maker or Record Mirror or the occasional breakthrough into the charts to hit the only music programme Top Of The Pops and scare parents. And still we had time to argue among ourselves - whether UK punk was better than American

punk, the merits of the Clash's second album, were the Stranglers punk and who the fuck was Plastic Bertrand?

Legend and the media would have it that Punk Rock was the preserve of the few such as the Bromley Contingent and visitors to gay clubs of the time clothed in McLaren and Westwood's Sex/Seditionaries clobber. In fact the democracy of punk ensured that all parts of Britain had its bands and followers, clad in a ragtag of homemade jumble stall/charity shop graffitied clobber and second hand recycled blues riffs and 3 chords sped up to warp drive intensity. We would pay little attention to the originators while braving the scorn and violence of our fellow man and women as outlaws from society before going back to school, work or

became the talking point. And briefly ska was revived albeit punkified and politicised with the Specials, Beat, Selector and the more fun filled Bad Manners to name a few and punk became the latest addition to youth cults.

So where did Punk go? It got tougher and got dissipated and it went underground and worldwide which gave it a grass roots. Late eighties saw acid house and dance

Iggy Pop aided by a puppet of himself, sells car insurance and Johnny Rotten dressed in tweeds advertises butter. Vivienne Westwood is now a Dame and major eccentric fashion designer. Sadly so many of our heroes and heroines have fallen - McLaren, Ari Up, Poly Styrene, Joey, Dee Dee, Johnny just to name a few.

But despite this it's important to both celebrate them, 1977 and even good old Liz who, like many of us, has endured several annus horribilis's! Why? Because there's something special about the songs, the bands and that time. That intensity and excitement that underpinned them lives on and has remained just as powerful. The clothes and hair still remain today reflected in modern youth culture and the shock graphics are now

part of yer standard advertising arsenal. It's why punk rock doesn't die because new music or art still feeds off the spikiness, aggression or attitude of that time.

So chummies we've got this far hopefully with a little spiky punkiness still in our hearts and the knowledge that come the Diamond Jubilee if you were to don a God Save The Queen t shirt and stick a safety pin through your nose you can bet you would still cause a ruckus by walking into a pub.

You wouldn't want it any other way would you?

Paul Marko
www.punk77.co.uk
<http://www.amazon.co.uk/The-Roxy-London-WC2-ebook/dp/B00634UHEQ>

**ANGST! THE JOYFUL REBELLION OF NEW
AGAINST OLD AND STICKING TWO FINGERS
UP AT WHATEVER YOU LIKED AND ALL TO
THE BACK DROP OF ARGUABLY THE BEST
MUSIC OF ANY GENERATION.**

unemployment. We just didn't fucking care.

And within 2 years it had exploded. Part of Punk Rock's joy was that it so quickly splintered into a myriad of forms loosely connected to its roots as bands like Wire, The Slits, PIL and Magazine, to name but a few, moved the party on to new sonic realms. Other bands became more hardcore and metallic like GBH, Anti Nowhere League and the Exploited and bunkered down to preserve the pure punk bloodline. Others like Crass took the political possibilities and created a lifestyle. Others like the Stranglers, Clash and Damned carried on their own sweet way.

Meanwhile music moved on to pastures new as alternative, New Romantics and synthesiser pop

became the new punk till grunge not only kicked life into rock but reawakened the spirit of punk and short snappy tunes. Add some horrendous covers of punk songs by Megadeth, Metallica, Motley Crue and Skid Row, chuck in Riot Grrrl music of Bikini Kill et al then add the bands like Sum 41, Blink 182, Rancid, Offspring and the mighty Green Day and you've got a wide Diaspora of Punk still relevant today.

So now its 2012 and it's the Diamond Jubilee. Here we are in our forties and fifties and assimilated nicely into society - our music the subject of countless compilations and even free with rags like the Daily Mail god help us! Singles and albums are now nostalgia trips and ironically a growing format. On the television



Prof. André Stitt : www.andrestitt.com : www.tracegallery.org



The Queen’s Privy
By Mab Jones

In the Wales Millennium Centre
Is a space which none may enter
Save the queen. Have you seen
This privy in which none have been
Except for Liz? She does her biz
Upon the pot therein, it is
A secret, but I cannot keep it;
This is where the queenie doth sit
To do her number ones and twos.
She does not use public loos
But had this pot made just for her.
You’ll find it in a dark obscure
Well-hidden corner of the building.
It does not have special gilding
On the outside, that I’ve noted.
The inside might be diamond-coated
But mere peasants may not deign
To enter it while her foul reign
Still rains upon us. Her royal rear
Is the one arse that goes here.
Her privy belongs not to us.
This skivvy want to cause a fuss
About this secret, shitty throne.
Why’s she got one of her own
While we all have to share the lav?
Just how many does she have
Around the country, lone latrines,
Lofty lavvies! Stupid queens.
I wish there weren’t such upper
classes
With their posh protected arses.
I’d like to break into that loo;
I’d like to do what you would do
And take a massive dump in there!
Stink out that most regal air;
Piss upon the prisitine floor;
Kiss the royal rim with more
Than just my lips, between my hips
Is a shooter, and its shits
Would take revenge upon this royal.
I’d do a bow and let my bowel
Show Lizzie and her luscious lav
Just how much respect I have.
But that door is always locked,
On that gateway I have knocked
And pushed and pulled, but no joy.
This pot’s not for the hoi polloi.
But in one thought there’s satisfaction
-
Tho I can’t take direct action
I’m sure the cleaner must’ve done
A jobbie, once his job was done.
So take that, Queen! Hark to my
words!
I’ve vented spleen, if not my turds
And when you’re in the WMC
Next time, I’ll shit and think of thee.

Mab Jones, 2012
www.mabjones.com

The Church’s
Unctuous
Jubilee Prayer



The Church of England has seen fit to release a prayer to give thanks for the 60 years reign of the queen. (see below). The prayer pays unctious homage to our unelected hereditary head of state.

“God of time and eternity,
“Whose son reigns as servant, not master;
“We give you thanks and praise
“That you have blessed this nation, the realms and territories with Elizabeth,
“Our beloved and glorious Queen.
“In this year of Jubilee,
“Grant her your gifts of love and joy and peace
“As she continues in faithful obedience to you, her Lord and God,
“And in devoted service to her lands and peoples,
“And those of the Commonwealth,
“Now and all the days of her life;
“Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
“Amen.”

Quite apart from the fact that 60 years of having an unelected head of state is nothing to give thanks for, why is the church hierarchy not ministering to its flock instead of creeping, like the craven poodle it is, at the feet of one of the wealthiest women in the world? It is obvious that the queen has no need of prayers for love, joy and peace because she has everything she could ever need in abundance already, although recently it became apparent that the lack of a yacht to swan around the world on is one of her, and her children’s, more pressing concerns.

Sixty years of indolence with adoring sycophants catering for your every need must mean that the queen has absolutely nothing to worry about and is quite happy, whereas there are many people in the world who you might think those of a religious persuasion should be praying for and whose needs are far more pressing than the queen’s yearning for a new yacht. In addition to being unctuous the prayer is also idolatrous. “We give you thanks and praise that you have blessed this nation, the realms and territories with Elizabeth,” Why are we so blessed? What has the queen ever done except to ‘reign’? Has she ever impacted at all on our everyday lives except for the fact that she is just there? ”In devoted service to her lands and peoples” What is this ‘service’ she provides other than the fact she is this figurehead who has done absolutely nothing while Rome burns around her? At least Nero fiddled whereas the only thing the Queen has done is to possibly fiddle taxbreaks for herself and her family..

(first published by www.britishrepublicanblog.org 2 Feb 2012)



THE JUBILEE PRAYER

(remixed version)

God of whine and 4000 years
whose stepson reigns as fashion icon not role
model
we give you tanks and blaze
that you have blessed this nation, the raped
realms and troubled territories
with Helen Mirren
our behooved and extraneous female monarch
in this year of jubilee
grant her your gifts of control fear and
jealousy
as she continues in her job that she only got
through a nepotistic dose of hereditary
as she continues in blind allegiance to you
her flying spaghetti monster in the sky
and in devoted indifference to her stolen lands
and mortgaged minions
and those of the privatized wealth
and just like prince harry's vocabulary,
her privileged days, of honest burglary
are limited,
so
through mohammed, sorry, the other one
jesus christ our lord
amen (d)
her ways
and pay back her dues
to the people of this land
so they may live free and equally
and so this throng of parasitical pigs
we shall disband
and say goodbye
to the royal command.

Patrick Jones, 2012
www.patrick-jones.net

An Impotent Head of State

By TomPaine2nd

The Queen is often described as having given 60 years unstinting, unswerving service to the nation, beyond the call of duty, but if one takes a closer look at what has transpired during those 60 years it becomes apparent that there have been shortcomings in this 'unstinting service' that have been to the detriment of the population, while not affecting the Queen or her family one iota.

She has presided, during her 60 year tenure, over the erosion of our civil liberties, unable to intervene even if she was so minded. The Civil Contingencies Bill of 2004, brought in by a Labour government in response to the threat from terrorism after 9/11 stated "The bill enables the government to declare a state of emergency without a parliamentary vote. Moreover, ministers are empowered to introduce "emergency regulations" under the Royal Prerogative,

again without recourse to parliament. The scope of such regulations is virtually unlimited. They contain the power to "give directions or orders" including the destruction of property, prohibiting assemblies, banning travel and outlawing "other specified activities". In other words the government can do exactly what it wants to when it sees fit, and we only enjoy the rights we currently enjoy thanks to the goodwill of politicians who can remove them in an instant. The Queen let this happen. She has sat idly by while the balance of power between legislature, executive and judiciary has become muddled, and while most of our legislative framework has been ceded to Europe. While our Parliament's powers have been handed over to unelected bodies in Brussels and Strasbourg, she again did nothing to stop it. When the nation's financial independence was surrendered to international commercial organisations, you guessed it, she did nothing.

Of course the Queen is unable to act because her position is hereditary, and therefore she has no democratic mandate to intervene. She is, metaphorically speaking, in the Prime Minister's pocket, faithfully following his advice on all things constitutional. So what we have as a substitute for a head of state who can act on our behalf is a sham head of state, and the politicians who have everything to gain by maintaining the status quo, try to mask the deceit by laying on spadefulls of meaningless theatrical pageantry, in order to keep us amused. Well this particular republican is not amused.

(first published by www.britishrepublicanblog.org
22 Jan 2012)



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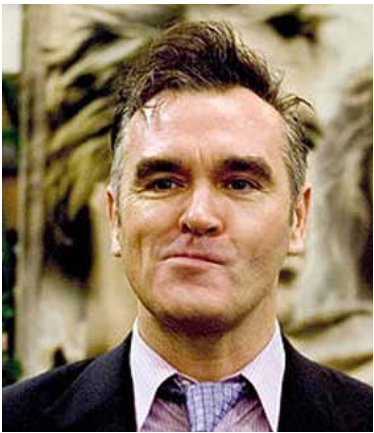
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On the Royal's case: message from Morrissey

“...with fitting grimness I must report that David Cameron hunts and shoots and kills stags – apparently for pleasure. It was not for such people that either “Meat is Murder” or “The Queen is Dead” were recorded; in fact, they were made as a reaction against such violence.

Politicians only care about the public as electorate, and once the victory vote has been seized there is no place for debate between The Prime Minister and the people who elected him.

However, please do not feel powerless against the views of politicians or, for that matter, so-called royalty, because it is they who are powerless against the

collective spirit of the British people. I mention so-called royalty because Prince William – who has never made the faintest imprint on the English soul, is also a hunter of deer, as is his fiasco (fiancée) Kate Middleton. Although William and Kate are so dull as people that it is actually impossible to discuss them, it is worth recalling Prince Harry’s thumbs-up as he sat beside a giant water buffalo, cowardly shot from a safe distance by the ignoble Prince some years back. Intellectually, it is true that the so-called Royal Family are not worth very much when it comes to moral standards. The Queen annually signs-off on the terrorizing slaughter of adult Canadian brown bears in order that her Guards are supplied with fancy hats. The babies of the adult bears who witness their own mothers’ slaughter, are left to die slowly, and alone. The sober and bitter truth is that the Queen of England is indifferent to this barbarism, for she has never once expressed concern by it (although, let us speak quite plainly, there is not one person in the whole of England who can remember or repeat a single word ever spoken by the Queen, such is her command of communication).”

These extracts were taken from a statement released by Morrissey in December 2010 - in support of Johnny Marr’s public distancing of himself from David Cameron’s admiration for the group.

(Message from Morrissey : link: http://true-to-you.net/morrissey_news_101204_01)

Here’s a chord, here’s another

Musician and DJ Pete Dillinger argues the case for a new national anthem.

Hands up if you can listen to our so-called National Anthem without wanting to stab yourself? Ladies and Gentlemen we NEED a new National Anthem. On second thoughts this nation deserves a new National Anthem!

Take for instance France’s; sounds pretty impressive, must help that it was written after a revolution. Germany’s too sounds awesome, as Hugh Dennis would have said on the Mary Whitehouse Experience “What’s this! It’s got a good beat!” Hearing these and others at major sporting events, award ceremonies etc. makes me rather embarrassed at how lame our anthem is and how it means NOTHING.

How many times have we observed Americans or Australians singing passionately, hand on heart, upon hearing their respective anthems? The most feeling I can muster whenever I hear ours in company is a vague sense of wishing I were somewhere else at the time.

My personal favourite is Algeria’s, again written after a revolution – is there a theme developing here? Here’s an extract:

*We swear by the lightning that destroys
By the virtuous and fragrant blood
By the shining, fluttering banners
In the steep and majestic mountains
That we have risen to revolution in life or death
And we have resolved, that Algeria shall live*

So bear witness! Bear witness!

*So we have taken the drum of gunpowder as our rhythm
And the sound of machine guns as our melody
And we have resolved, that Algeria shall live*

So bear witness! Bear witness!

Cool or what!?! That’s passion! They even manage to be polite and magnanimous to the French (their colonial oppressors). I’m not saying that only something that appears to be co-written by Kirk Brandon and Nick Cave will do, but it surely beats our current paen to royalist subservience. Compare this intensity of love for their country; it’s people and hard won freedom with ours. A song



www.artofbrianjones.com

about an old lady and our apparent wish that she be preserved by a magical man in the clouds.

What’s more, pop pickers, the new tune should not glorify our murderous, war mongering and morally bankrupt empire. By no means should we forget the shameful and embarrassing parts of our history, it’s just that singing lustily about how ‘great’ it was; robbing, killing, burning innocent people probably sends out the wrong message in the 21st Century. In fact BECAUSE it’s the 21st Century we need a song that reflects our diverse multi-cultural society - one that celebrates our creativity, our scientific advances, infamous sense of humour. The UK has contributed to the field of music ENORMOUSLY throughout history, beyond all considerations of our country’s size and population, this is NOT reflected in our national dirge.

The burning question is who should write our new laudation? A collaboration might be the best way forward, we are blessed with fantastic lyricists; Mark Stewart, Mark E Smith, P J Harvey, Nicky Wire, Billy Bragg, Ranking Ann (personally I wish Joe Strummer was still alive). Attention should be paid to the social reportage and lyrical flow of our indigenous grime and hip hop artists, Rodney P, Dizzee Rascal, Roots Manuva etc.

As for the music, how about Pop Will Eat Itself? Renegade Soundwave? Perhaps Steel Pulse or Misty in Roots? New Order or Motorhead anyone? NB. Stephen Patrick Morrissey need not apply. How about an unholy alliance of John Lydon and Philip Glass?! Maybe a collaboration between Rollo Tomassi (verses) and Kaiser Chiefs (chorus) might be uplifting and have mass appeal?

Please supply your own suggestions; despite Cameron’s best efforts this is still a democracy after all. In a perfect world I would choose lyrics by Alan Bennett, music played by the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra, composed and conducted by Jaz Coleman. RIP John Barry, he would have been a fantastic choice.

The fact remains we NEED a national anthem that is OURS not solely the preserve of an outmoded, elitist, over privileged ruler. This nation is ours, every single one of us, we love it despite its faults and should have a say in its defining song, which should be about US – all of us. You never know, we might finally win a second World Cup with a decent and inspirational anthem.

Pete Dillinger, 2012

You can take up pete’s call to action and supply your own suggestion on the great frock n robe swindle facebook page



Stuff the Jubilee

by Carter USM

I'm not an anarchist but I know a man who is he composed this masterpiece about the nouveau stinking riche of cabbages and future kings and marriage guidance counsellings Of geriatrics losing hope in Stephen Patrick's overcoat Excuse my rudery but stuff the jubilee!

It's the last tango at the palace Christopher goes down on Alice A make-up girl from Selfridges unaccustomed to such privileges of His Majesty's secret services The kind of secret services usually confined to circuses

Excuse my rudery but stuff the jubilee!

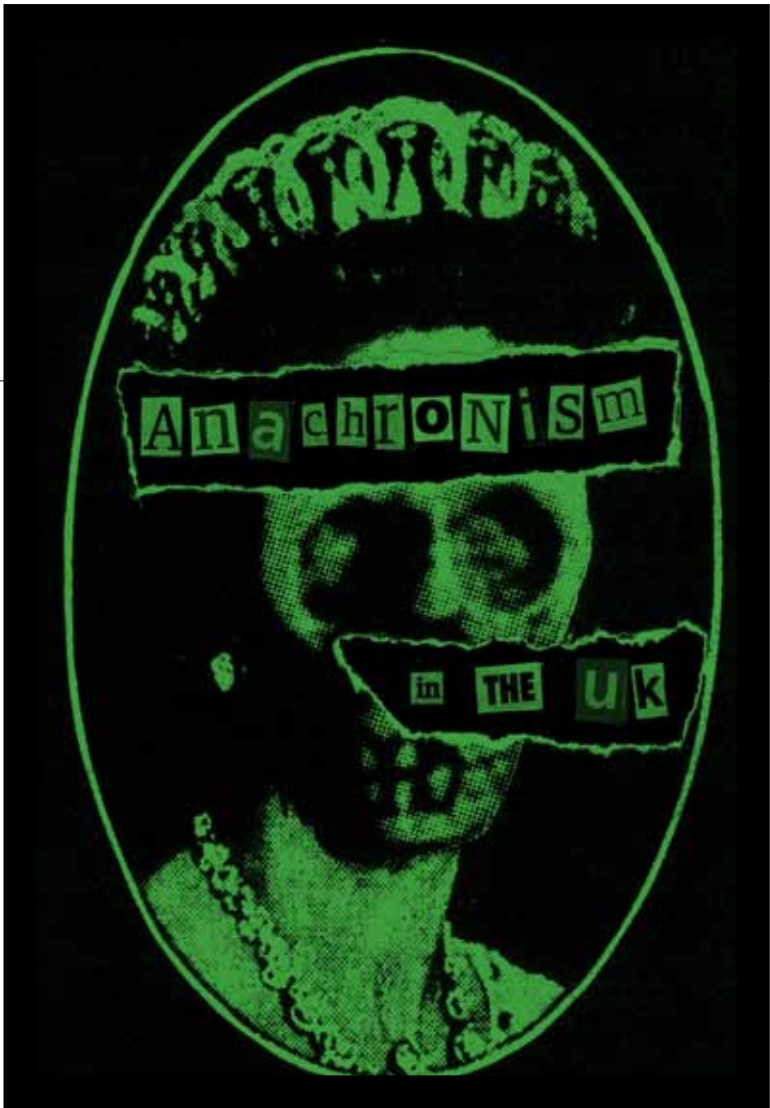
Princess A to Princess Bea and all their work for charity Every royal lion's head on every boiled and frying egg

And every sodding polo team in Hello! bloody magazine

And if you feel this story lacks the royal seal on candle wax Reel to reels of scuzzy facts of dodgy deal and income tax String me up from Traitor's Gate stick my head upon a stake And if you feel this story sucks that's probably because I made it up I didn't really hitch a lift to Windsor Castle bearing gifts And I can prove it wasn't me I was on a stage in Germany I've always loved the Queenie Mum her daughters and her daughter's sons From Princess A to Princess Bea and all the Royal Family Stuff the jubilee!

(Morrison/Carter, Published by Universal Music, 1993)

“Tear me apart and boil my bones / I'll not rest till she's lost her throne / My aim is true my message is clear / It's curtains for you, Elizabeth my dear.”



Jamie Reid 2012



Flag Day (by The Housemartins)

Too many florence nightingales
Not enough robin hoods
Too many halos not enough heroes
Coming up with the goods
So you thought you'd like to change the world
Decided to stage a jumble sale
For the poor, for the poor
It's a waste of time if you know what they mean
Try shaking a box in front of the queen
'cause her purse is fat and bursting at the seams
It's a waste of time if you know what they mean
Too many hands in too many pockets
Not enough hands on hearts
Too many ready to call it a day
Before the day starts
So you thought you'd like to see them healed
Got Blue Peter to stage an appeal
For the poor, for the poor
It's a waste of time if you know what they mean
Try shaking a box in front of the queen
'cause her purse is fat and bursting at the seams
It's a waste of time if you know what they mean
Flag day, flag day, flag day.....

(Heaton/Cullimore/Key, Published by Go Discs Music, 1985)

“The most pernicious effect of the monarchy on our society is to be seen in the concept of the Crown in Parliament. It allows the Prime Minister to declare war, sign treaties and appoint cronies to the legislature, among other things, without first consulting MPs. A new constitutional settlement is needed to remove the monarchy from the legislative process and make the people sovereign in their own parliament. Would this necessitate the abolition of the monarchy? I don't think so. Living in a multicultural society means that you have to show respect for beliefs and practices that you yourself may not adhere to. That includes the monarchy, morris dancing and the Church of England.”

Billy Bragg



Michael Cousin

In my sixtieth year I have reflected upon the true spirit of jubilee. It is a year for the remission of sins and universal pardon. When the Lord spake unto Moses he proclaimed the sixtieth year as a time of liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: he instructed us to return every man unto his own clan and every man to his family. Also the land must not be sold permanently, for the land belongs to the LORD. We are only foreigners, his tenant farmers. When the field reverts in the Jubilee year it shall become holy unto the LORD, as a field set apart.

I therefore disband the Commonwealth, relinquish my crown and all rights to land, wealth, power, chattels and influence. This shall be my final and lasting decree before I enter into private life and spend more time with my grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Why republicanism, anyway?

“Nan? What does the Queen do?”
“Well, she’s a very important lady. She’s part of what make Britain such a special country.”
“But what does she do?”
“Well, she meets lots of important people from all over the world. She shakes their hands and gets to know them.”
“Shakes their hands?”
“Yes, dear.”
“Oh. Nan – why does the Queen want to pass all her germs on?”
Many people distinctly remember the moment when they realised that they were republicans. For me, it was a conversation with my grandmother at age 9 after a particularly effective biology lesson on the prevalence of microbes. For some it may have been a moment of scandal; for others, a moment of realising the alternative; and perhaps for some, it will be unease at the bravura jubilee celebrating 60 years of having the same person representing our state without question. But what unites all republicans? What makes us decide that we want to upend the supposed stability of monarchy for the dynamism of an elected republic? Simple:- **We don’t like politicians.** Given the inherently political nature of democratic reform, this might seem a strange notion to apply to republicans. We are often characterised two ways: either as mischievous rebels, eager to smash society’s pillars of conformity; or as the most anal of political science wonks, intellectually masturbating over another impenetrable topic of electoral reform. But as republicanism becomes a more mainstream concern, not only are more and more people self-identifying as openly republican, but more and more citizens who are apathetic towards the British

political system are beginning to question the role and justification for monarchy in a supposedly modern, democratic society.
You know these people – probably because you work with them, go to the pub with them, drink tea with them, or see them posting endless “I think all politicians are scum” comments on the BBC’s message boards. And you know them because they are regular, normal people like you and me. The point here is that it is a good thing that these normal people are critical of their politicians, and inherently mistrustful of their

Imagine an alternative universe where Britain’s head of state, Elizabeth Windsor, is marching into her sixtieth year of public service.

public officials. Because if they weren’t, the accountability of those public officials would never be in question, and we could not guarantee that they were doing a job which was the best in our interests.
And the monarchy is no different. It is a public office, administered by the state, and to serve a purpose (we are told) for the good of the nation - to unite and compel, to be a focal point of our strength as a country. So in that case, even the most ardent monarchist must admit that the royal individuals who comprise the monarchy are, essentially, politicians. Think about it: they hold public office; they serve the people and the state; it is in their

own interest to preserve their institution; they supplant private interests with personal income; they enjoy a public image and access to voters’ hearts and minds; and they are not averse to the occasional scandal. Consequently, it is in the monarchy’s own interest for it to be as accountable as possible, so that with our royals as with our politicians, we really can know that they are doing the best job possible. And what better way to ensure that, than to elect them? An elected monarch might have all the pomp and circumstance, grandeur and mystique of the present system; but at least if you elect them, you can always kick them out when they screw up, rather than having to try to believe that everything is hunky dory.
Imagine an alternative universe where Britain’s head of state, Elizabeth Windsor, is marching into her sixtieth year of public service. We still marvel at her associated regalia, the triumphant processions and traditions, and Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle still drag in millions of visitors fascinated by her undoubted gravitas and spotless performance in her role as a public leader. Meanwhile her grandson William waits in the wings, quickly emerging as the public’s favourite to succeed her as our head-of-state. The difference being that these celebrations are for a successful sixth term of her being our elected leader, and we have been able to show our approval of her in the best way possible - by sticking it to the other wannabe politicians who fell before her at the ballot box.
And what both the republican and the apathetic citizen have to ask is - just what is so wrong with that?

James Pickering, April 2012
jameshateseverything.blogspot.co.uk



De Montfort was a rebel who wished to expand democracy
By undermining the power of the monarch
But such democratic concerns were rewarded by execution
And the confiscation of his property by the crown.

However de Montfort’s corpse still produces dividends
From his 20,000 acres in Merseyside, the crown seized;
And further lands in Yorkshire worth £72 million to the Queen
Are exempted from capital gains and corporation tax.

The crown also benefits handsomely from what’s quaintly known
As the Duchy’s “bona vacantia and bastardy funds”.
A medieval mechanism whereby the Queen inherits the estates
Of all those in the Duchy dying intestate.

Thus this royal fund would do “surprisingly well”
As a result of the deaths of widows of soldiers
Who were killed in the Second World War for their property
Would go to the very people who’d sent them to die.

In the year 2000 more than £2.1m was thus gleaned
For Her Majesty the Queen’s private income
From 276 people from Merseyside and Lancashire –
They’d made no will, so their property was grabbed.

The estates of war veterans, the estates of the intestate
And also the proceeds of 232 companies,
Dissolved in the year 2000, their assets
Went to this loveable Queen –
A billionaire with an income from grave robbing. (1)

And the same is true for the Duchy of Cornwall:
If you die without making a will
Everything you possess will go to Prince Charles –
To an absentee billionaire, plus Duchess.

The threadbare convention that it’s unfair to attack such a family
Is altogether redundant
For they answer back continuously and perfectly plainly,
With an untouchable mountain of money.

Money that impoverishes the rest of the country;
Money that serves to spread false values;
Money peddling creaky fantasies of storybook princes
Seeking out young virgins for chilly castles.

For monarchy means no more than the rule of money,
Overlaid by a manipulative hokum:
A residual belief the Queen’s queen by divine right,
All of which justifies their inhumane riches.

(An extract from Royal Babylon, an investigative poem
by Heathcote Williams, published by IT, 2012)

The warm embrace of monarchy

“When I was a child I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

I am not religious. In fact, I sometimes think Richard Dawkins is rather too soft on the whole racket. Yet my view of the Queen’s Golden Jubilee could be summed up with that neat little phrase from Corinthians. Because I am no longer a child, I will not be standing around waving a plastic flag at an elderly lady when June comes around. In fact, lots of children probably won’t be either, so perhaps I am being a little unfair here.

In these pious times, however, it is I who will be expected to explain myself. Very soon every media outlet in the country will be informing us that we are unreservedly delighted at the longevity of our Head of State who, if one needs reminding, is also the Head of the Church and the Head of the Armed Forces. That being the case, I probably ought to tell you what I find odd about the whole thing before the compulsory high spirits drown me out.

Along with the straightforward status climbers, I can understand, I think relatively well, the motivations of the sorts of people who support hereditary monarchy on the principle of resistance to change. It might be boring and predictable, but at least it’s relatively rational. Lots of change doesn’t always turn out all that well anyway, and this simply takes that logic to its conclusion. I disagree, but I get it.

The people I struggle with are the ones who have an emotional attachment to monarchy. These are the people who will line the streets for hours trying to catch a glimpse of the Windsors. They would like nothing more of course than to be able to curtsy and get on bended knee for Her Majesty. And while they may be unnervingly smiley,

they will be at your throat should you let out so much as a murmur of discontent during proceedings.

They remind me of a vision George Bowling, a character in Orwell’s novel *Coming up for Air*, has whenever he thinks about the future: “The processions and the posters with enormous faces, and the crowds of a million people all cheering for the leader til they deafen themselves into thinking that they really worship him”.

Indeed, for all the scientific advances of the 21st century- the motor car, the aeroplane, high speed internet – it would seem that there are still people, even in Britain, who crave the comforting simplicity of the infallible leader.

Very few believe in the innate superiority of the House of Hanover any longer. What serious person could after Thomas Paine had penned this: “One of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in Kings is that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule, by giving mankind an ass for a lion”. But like dictatorship and monotheism, monarchy still encourages a person to stop thinking. And as we continually learn, there are lots of people who are all the time looking for a reason, any reason, not to have to think.

A straightforward comparison with the goings on

in say, North Korea - a country where millions of people starve to death - would be preposterous of course. For several consecutive days in June, however, aesthetically at least, it will feel a little like living in some grotesque “peoples’ republic”.

James Bloodworth, April 2012

Twitter: @obligedtooffend

“She does not belong to us, she belongs to them. She is not Queen of England. She is Queen of the Establishment.”

Billy Bragg



“Kings are not born; they are made by universal hallucination.”

George Bernard Shaw



*No glass of ours was ever raised
To toast the Queen.*

Seamus Heaney

*This boy [future King, Edward VIII] will
be surrounded by sycophants and flatterers*

by the score and will be taught to believe himself as of a superior creation. A line will be drawn between him and the people whom he is to be called upon some day to reign over.

James Keir Hardie, 1894



Accountability of the executive is fundamental to any democracy. Where power is based not upon statute but upon the royal prerogative, it is this accountability which suffers. Jack Straw, 1994



Cups of Tea and Diamond Merkins

The tea cakes are warming, the bunting being hung and the royal family are spending more than most will make in a lifetime on Champagne. Buckingham Palace is dusting off the corgis, cities all over the UK are planning street parties and we will celebrate this Jubilee with style and class.

Let it be less of waving our nations flag this time and more shaking our tassels in the faces of the upper class. Ladies and Gentlemen I invite you to be tantalized, titillated and darn right thrilled by the comical element of British Burlesque.

While many performers of the scene will be shaking they’re ‘Bristol’s’ for queen and country

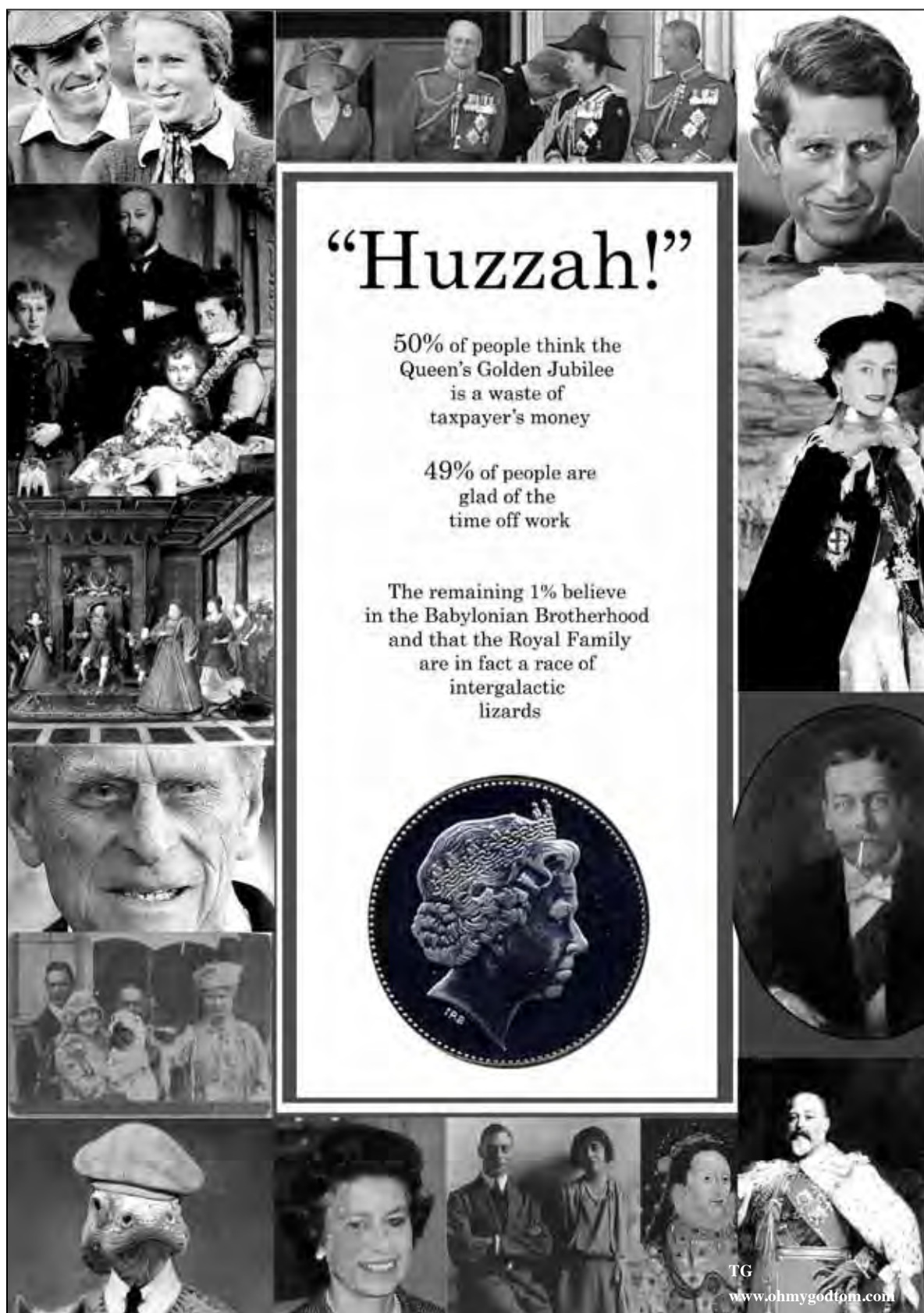
others will be challenging this ludicrous celebration by mocking monarchy and ridiculing our government. This will not be achieved by shaking our bums in Union Jack pants alone. We the non-conventional performers of burlesque have a message to deliver - the platform is ours and no one should stand in our way!

Among those who exercise their right to freedom of speech is my alter ego Miss Lou-Leigh Blue who will be marking this frivolous event with her routine ‘become rich... become a banker’. This rowdy, tongue in cheek performance is an educational lesson for all it’s audience’s on how to become very successful doing very little at all,

and it’s not all bowler hats and fat cats. Entertaining the crowds with such a controversial subject is fabulous; it gives the performer a chance to create a parody around the subject matter.

This glorifying jubilee event will be of no relevance’s to my life, many more people in our nation will agree. It is yet another way to boost public morale while spending a large sum of taxpayer’s money. I will however be looking forward to standing next to fellow strong minded entertainers who will join me in sticking two fingers up to the monarchy and the diamond jubilee!

Boo Povey, Bristol 2012



Monarchy, A Bullshit Fairytale



They're such a lovely couple aren't they? (Perm any one couple from approximately ten). Catherine's got such beautiful long hair. Catherine's beauty just cannot adequately be described. William is going to make an excellent king, he has such poise. The Queen has devoted a lifetime of unswerving

service to the nation. Charles cares deeply and wants to make a difference. The Queen is indomitable, so was her mother before her, and the late Queen Mary was too, and the Duke of Edinburgh is indomitable too. His penchant for making casual offensive remarks is just plain speaking, a breath of fresh

air. (The Earl of Wessex will become Duke of Edinburgh when the title reverts to the crown, which is a roundabout way of saying prince Edward will become the duke of Edinburgh, when the current duke, his father, dies). Prince William, prior to the failed World Cup bid, was going to deliver the World Cup by 'sprinkling a bit of star dust around'. If the bid had been successful, guess who would have got the credit. Prince Harry, top-gun and hero of Afghanistan. Almost everything said about the monarchy in the media, but particularly the BBC, is saccharin coated for effect, and it has worked thus far.

Speaking of the BBC, it has been revealed, thanks to leaked emails between

the editor of an Australian pro republican publication and representatives of the corporation, that they have conspired to be biased in the reporting of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, by requesting that "no one who has a bad word to say about the Queen" should be interviewed during the making of a forthcoming documentary, the subject of which will be the making of a song, by Gary Barlow and Andrew Lloyd Webber, which has been commissioned by the Queen to celebrate her diamond jubilee.

Part of the BBC's response to criticism of bias is always "The BBC's commitment to exercise due impartiality across its output as a whole remains." when in fact

'due impartiality' appears only due when the BBC suits decide it is due, and the monarchy, to quote the BBC, is 'entertainment'. So an institution, at the epicentre of our political system, an institution that dominates our lives whether we are aware of it or not, is 'entertainment' as far as the BBC is concerned.

We are assaulted from all sides by positive royal stories. Even William and Kate's dog Lupo made it into the news recently and has been elevated in stature to super-canine and pictured going for his very first royal walkabout in Kensington Gardens. When, one might ask, will Lupo's first crap in public occur, will it appear in a national or on TV, who will be picking it up, and will it be preserved for posterity or donated for auction to raise money for one of those charities that either Kate or William are associated with?

Then there is the charity thing. We are constantly told that royal patronage raises the profile of the charity they are associated with. Think about it, can you name four charities off hand that any royal is patron of? Probably not. What in fact is happening is that royals are taking credit for other people's philanthropy and getting away with it because people find it incredibly difficult to question someone else's charity work. It's all part of the bullshit fairytale that is being forced down our throats.


(first published by www.britishrepublicanblog.org
29 Feb 2012)



(... even if he is still Deputy Prime Minister...)

Features

A PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE



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From: Paul Flynn [<mailto:paulflynnmp@talk21.com>]
Sent: 19 April 2012 20:08
To: MACLEOD, Mary

Subject: Re: House Magazine dialogue
For sixty years the Queen has been silent and inert. Will King Charles 111 keep his mouth bandaged? Lords reforms are steaming ahead. Discussion on the Queen’s successor is taboo. Parliament is infantilised and unhinged by emetic royal sycophancy that would have been denounced as overblown in the Court of King Canute. Outside the fairy tale delusion future crises loom. The Queen has obeyed the will of parliament. Reigning or fulfilling the role an unthinking mechanism? There have been no conflicts between state and throne. The only incipient threat was when the skids were under Mrs Thatcher. Top Tories feared she might have called a General Election. Parliament, the cabinet or the Tory Party could not have stopped her. The Queen could. Overruling a prime ministers acting in their own and not the nation’s interests is the only serious role of a Head of State. Sixty years of subservience to parliament includes approval of good and atrocious decisions including the futile Iraq war to destroy non-existent weapons of mass destruction. The monarch has not challenged the conduct of any government. If one tries, a constitutional crisis would damage the royal institution because of its lack of democratic accountability. Prince Charles’ incontinence of interference with governments’ decisions suggests storms ahead.
Paul Flynn

Paul Flynn
Twitter: [@paulflynnmp](https://twitter.com/paulflynnmp)
www.paulflynnmp.co.uk

From: “MACLEOD, Mary” <mary.macleod.mp@parliament.uk>
To: Paul Flynn <paulflynnmp@talk21.com>
Sent: Monday, 23 April 2012, 18:04
Subject: RE: House Magazine dialogue
Dear Paul,
I am amazed that as we reflect on sixty years of The Queen as Head of State you could possibly construe that Her Majesty is silent and inert. The Queen has been one of the hardest working and inspirational figures that this country has ever seen. Her dignified approach to this historic role has strengthened this country and safeguarded our traditions for generations to come. Her Majesty’s role is to advise and not dictate. We do not know what she says in private conversations with the Prime Minister but as she has met with twelve different Prime Ministers on an almost weekly basis for over sixty years she is probably better briefed on the affairs of the nation than any other person in the country. It is surely ridiculous to suggest that discussion of the Queen’s succession is taboo. Indeed only recently we have overseen a change in the law that will give women equal succession rights to men, proving how modern our monarchy is and how it is continually changing over time.
The Queen adds real value to our country, even if you just look at trade and tourism, the existence of the monarchy is therefore something that I do not think we need to question.

Mary
Mary Macleod MP
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Parliamentary Private Secretary to Rt. Hon. Nick Herbert MP, Minister of State for Policing and Criminal Justice
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From: Paul Flynn [<mailto:paulflynnmp@talk21.com>]
Sent: 24 April 2012 13:38
To: MACLEOD, Mary
Subject: Re: House Magazine dialogue
Oh dear. Just a repetition of tired old myths. See Hansard for my fulsome praise of the Queen’s work – especially in Ireland.
The monarch has approved all Government decisions sensible or disastrous without question. A less fragile Head of State armed with democratic legitimacy may have intervened in the decision to join Bush’s war in Iraq against the wishes of the country. That could have forced a re-think that may have avoided 179 UK deaths. You are wrong on MPs freedom of speech. We are gagged

from criticising any member of the royal family by 700 year-old rules. Only praise is permitted so royal myths rule. The frequently claimed support for royalty among MPs is not universal. Only 3% backed the new yacht plan. No answer to the question on what % of parliamentarians coughed up for the jubilee present. Probably less than 10%. 137 MPs voted for an alternative to the royal oath. There is tourist value but it’s exaggerated. The most visited royal tourist attraction in the world is Versailles. Without royals, UK’s palaces would be immensely more profitable tourist magnets. Time for MPs to stop kneeling as subservient subjects and stand tall as elected citizens.
Paul Flynn

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From: “MACLEOD, Mary” <mary.macleod.mp@parliament.uk>
To: Paul Flynn <paulflynnmp@talk21.com>
Sent: Wednesday, 25 April 2012, 14:17
Subject: RE: House Magazine dialogue
Paul,
I agree that MPs must stand tall and fulfill their role as elected citizens. Military action in Iraq passed through the Commons because a majority of 263 elected Members of Parliament voted for it. Many honorable Members, including yourself, disagreed with that decision and voted against it, but to suggest that such a large majority should be overruled by our Monarch suggests a change in our unwritten constitution that I am sure neither of us would sign up to. Our country has moved away from a ‘divine rule of Kings approach’ in favour of a constitutional monarchy, with decisions taken by elected MPs and Parliament – something that I would assume you support, given that you are an MP yourself?
Support for a Royal Yacht when the Government is faced with an unprecedented budget deficit cannot be seen as indicative of general support for the Royal Family. Instead, you only need to consider the Queen’s address to Westminster Hall last month, packed with members of both The Commons and The Lords. Also, contrary to your assertions, donations from MPs for the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee stained glass window were so enthusiastic that they had to be stopped. Both are far better indicators to my mind of the esteem with which our Monarch is regarded across both houses.
Given your somewhat confused thoughts on the role of democracy within a constitutional monarchy, I would be interested to hear your views on the role of the Monarch following proposed reform of the House of Lords.
Mary
Mary Macleod MP
Member of Parliament for Brentford & Isleworth
Parliamentary Private Secretary to Rt. Hon. Nick Herbert MP, Minister of State for Policing and Criminal Justice
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From: Paul Flynn [<mailto:paulflynnmp@talk21.com>]
Sent: 25 April 2012 17:11
To: MACLEOD, Mary
Subject: Re: House Magazine dialogue
Dear Mary
Democracy is overdue in the Second Chamber. The only two countries in the world that are ruled by hereditary chieftains are the UK and Lesotho. Our heritage of democracy was won by the Chartists, Tolpuddle martyrs, and Suffragettes. They wrung power from the hands of the privileged. Disgracefully, their sacrifices remain unrecorded here in Westminster among 1,000 royal mementoes. The Queen’s sixty years have been exceptionally placid. There were difficulties with her two predecessors. More are likely with her successor. Parliament should have an open intelligent debate on the role of Head of State. But the place becomes infantilised when royalty is discussed. An open intelligent debate is not possible when we have not removed the gag that prevents criticism of the conduct of royals – including Prince Andrew. This is a demeaning restriction for an elected parliament. The royals are as strong and weak, as fragile and foolish as all the rest of us.
The Commons eloquently honours our heritage and independence by slamming the door on the Queen’s messenger at the state opening. The power of the Commons was hard won. We must not slip back into a new sterile subservience.

Paul
Twitter: @paulflynnmp
www.paulflynnmp.co.uk

On the one hand you suggest that we must fight to maintain the hard won power of the Commons and push for greater democracy in the Lords and on the other you criticise the Queen for failing to overrule democracy. As Head of State and Head of Nation, the Monarch undertakes a vital and beneficial role as a focus for national identity and I see no reason why this role should change in the future.

As someone who led change in the business world for many years, I do think it is right to consider improving the way we work in Parliament. The three main political parties in their 2010 manifestos suggested more democracy in the second chamber - so at least we agree on one thing! The parliamentary process in this country benefits considerably from those in the House of Lords who are leaders in their field and make a real difference to the debate. Reforms to the House of Lords must seek to ensure that their valuable input is not diminished.

Installing a more permanent tribute in Parliament to record the achievements of those like the Suffragettes who did so much to fight for democracy is a good suggestion. I await with interest your progress on making this happen. Let us build on the legacy of the Suffragettes and campaign together for more great women in Parliament. That can be our legacy. With The Queen still at the helm - a great role model, showing us how to serve our country.

Mary
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This email exchange was first published in The House magazine in April 2012. Reproduced with kind permission via Paul Flynn, MP.



Down with the Monarchy- For a Workers Republic!

Cardiff
permanentrevolution

www.permanentrevolution.net
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Why Labour should support Republicanism

By Scarlett Blades

The fact that this article needs to be written at all saddens me. Republicanism has been seen for too long as some ridiculous, naive left wing dream. Most of Labour, even those on the left of the party, distance themselves from it, fearing being branded as idealists, extremists, or even ruining their chance of a nice title and a position in the House of Lords someday. This, in a nutshell, is what is wrong with modern politics; too many people are willing to trample over their principles and the will of the people they are selected to represent, for nothing more than their own benefit. However, that is a topic which has been covered by many writers more skilled than me.

* * * *

The simple fact of the matter is that, until Labour throw their full support behind republicanism, they cannot count themselves as being a viable alternative to the Tories, and they certainly cannot pretend to be the party they were set up to be; that is, the party which best represents the interests of the working class and the majority- 'the 99%' of the British People. The very fact that this blog (*British Republican Blog*) has been created shows that the people of this country are beginning to realise that having an undemocratically appointed head of state, a woman who has ridiculous amounts of unearned wealth by virtue of no more than being born to the right family, undermines the very foundations of

democracy on which this great nation has been built.

* * * *

Once upon a time, Labour was the proudest upholder of that democracy. The Tories were once described as 'the enemy of democracy', and therefore it makes sense that as Labour are, or should be, the Tories only true opposition, Labour should also be the party that the public can trust to give them as fair a democracy as possible in an imperfect world. The movement of Republicanism and the Labour Movement have a lot in common. The way in which the Royal Family lives is contradictory to that of two of Labour's greatest principles: Equality of opportunity, and equality of outcome. All major parties pay lip service to the idea of equal opportunities for all, and yet none challenge the Royal Family. In the 21st century, there is no 'divine right' for one unremarkable family to be housed, and fed and watered, and showered with gifts and ill-afforded money, all paid for, of course, by the struggling taxpayers of Britain.

* * * *

The recent suggestion of Michael Gove, that the Queen should receive a £60 million yacht for her diamond jubilee, as a 'gift from her nation', shows how out of touch the Tories are with the mood of the country towards their monarch. The backlash provoked by this suggestion shows how the families in Britain who have to work for their living, are losing patience with the whims of the Royal Family. Equality of outcome is a particularly socialist

principle. It embodies what Labour should stand for. As capitalism is starting to fail, the time is coming when the public will be looking for a fairer Britain, one in which everybody has the opportunity to contribute the same amount to society, and therefore all people have the right to receive the same amount. What have the Royal Family ever contributed to our society? In terms of hard work and taxes, their contribution is less than nil. Instead, they are supported by the state; a useless part of the public sector, with no benefit on society at all, long overdue getting rid of. Their income far exceeds their usefulness. Many people are starting to wonder why cuts are made to those parts of the public sector which benefit the public itself; for instance, the NHS, and yet the useless Royal Family are left alone, even revered.

* * * *

The Queen is nothing but the biggest benefit cheat of them all. Labour should be seizing on this current mood. Standing up for republicanism would show that Labour understand the meaning of its own principles, and show the public that republicanism is more than an idealistic fool's pipe dream. It would be a non-violent way of achieving our aim. Therefore, my message to Labour is: Stand up for your beliefs before it's too late, help to depose the Royal Family, break down the class barrier, and start your feet on the first few steps towards a truly socialist society.

(first published by www.britishrepublicanblog.org 18 Jan 2012)

Features

Liz Morgan is a Welsh actor, writer and occasional director committed to Republican ideals. Her latest stage comedy 'The Windsor's Last Stand' or 'Prince George and the Dragon', - a republican piece will be a theatre production, later in the year courtesy of the Arts Council of Wales. The Windsor's Last stand will go on tour this autumn at Chapter (Cardiff), Torch Theatre (Milford Haven) and the Metropole (Aberdillery).

A Republican fairytale

Once upon a time about 3000 years BCE there was this small group living on the east side of a valley. But the river was low at this point and the animals were not too happy. Now the biggest of these hirsute and clearly aggressive men who had also had a horse, clocked that the group living on the west side of the valley were far better off because the river was full and the grass was greener, so he persuaded some of the other hirsutes to invade the west side with him.

And so it came to pass, they ran screaming and shouting into the west side wielding clubs and sharp flints, subduing all before them. Quickly Mr Big shared the land and animals with his best mates and subjected the inhabitants to constant labour and not for themselves, for him. Within a few years a multi-layered tribe evolved. There was the Chief - old Mr Big, and his large family, his special cronies (tribal advisors), the new landowners, and the serfs who worked for them and all were now subjects of the Big Chief. When the Big Chief passed into the world of his ancestors, no problem, his son took over, even if he was a complete mutt. And there was no shortage of sons, as the idea of monogamous partnership didn't seem to apply to the Chief's family - just to everyone else's. But most Big Chiefs were not keen on staying put, they wanted more and more land, and possessions, so again they commandeered whatever was available and took the serfs along to do the fighting.

And so the tribes merged with each other usually through conquest, but when the leader saw he had real power to maintain, he harnessed the inherent superstition of the people through their gods. The Big Chief would lead the acts of worship and ask for good harvests or new victories. When that actually happened it was clear to the people that the Big Chief must be pretty close to the gods. On to a good thing, the Chief or King encouraged his subjects to believe he was specially chosen. So the Divine Right of kings was born. Another take on this subject suggests that when the King/Chief went away to ravage more territory and returned to find his lady pregnant - not by him - she explained it away by announcing it was the King's father - a god no less who had jumped off his cloud and impregnated the poor unsuspecting damsel. It was a win win for the King, either way.

But meanwhile in Ancient Greece they were establishing the first ever democracy with the Council of the 500 - almost the size of the House of Commons. Not a king in sight, it was a far better way of organising a country. Sure they had plenty of gods, but their leaders were not out to prove they were descended from them, nor that they had any Divine Right.

Quite frankly if you can swallow royal divinity you may as well go down to the bottom of your garden to look for fairies and keep a watch for Santa Claus on December 24th.

Although we have been weaned off the idea of Divine Right, I can't be sure of the present royals. The late princess Margaret revealed that her sister the queen believed sincerely she was God's own rep on earth, being anointed by Holy Oil when we all know it came in Fortnum's delivery van. Do religious folk not bow to their God and to their monarch, so what's that if not Divine Right? Thomas Jefferson affirmed that ' - all men are created equal - ' as a rebuttal to the Divine Right monarch they were about to successfully depose?

And what about being above the law? Now that's a special continuing right and exercised by King Edward 7th when he was Prince of Wales allowing a mistress whom he visited regularly when her husband was away, to be committed to an asylum for the rest of her life, being the best way to shut her up. He was not even cross-examined, merely gave a few minutes court appearance. But outside the closed ranks of the Buck House publicity machine it was said he was the father of her child but someone else got the blame.

Oligarchy was generally frowned upon in Ancient Greece. Even the great Pericles couldn't push his son into his place.

But here we are living in 2012 with a self-inflated tax draining Ruritanian Oligarchy. Shame on us that we are still politically infantile, still believing like a primitive tribe in Kings and Queens and castles and princesses and princes, and of course fairies, when other countries in the world have already grown up.

Liz Morgan. 2012



Attila The Stockbroker



This was the title track of my second album and was written during the Falklands War in 1982. I was sickened by the jingoism which Thatcher had deliberately stirred up in order to get herself re-elected, and even more sickened when the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano was sunk while sailing away from the British exclusion zone, during peace negotiations: proving that Thatcher was determined to continue war at all costs - for her own personal political ends. It's not a song specifically about the monarchy, more about the enduring myth of which the monarchy is a part.

SAWDUST AND EMPIRE

On the waterfront they're gathered for the feast
To pay homage to the priestess of the waves
Wider and wider the voices ring out loud
In the celebrating crowd of Albion's braves
But someone told me something that I just don't want to hear

Ancestral words that fooled us for the past six hundred years
But they don't ring true any more

CHORUS

Sawdust and empire - the nectar of the few
So give the devil his due and break away
Sawdust and empire with a hint of royal blue
(second time: in the pub and in the pew)
But I won't drink with you on empire day

Dreams of old India, the Bible and the Host
To calm the ghost that won't be laid to rest
A distant island becomes the Holy Grail
In the spirit that revived King Arthur's quest
And you may wear her heraldry in tattoos on your arms
But it takes more than bravado now to soothe old England's qualms
'Cos it don't ring true any more

CHORUS

The territories and governors have all gone now
But the bloodlust and the cliches linger on (x2)

And in the theatre the faded actor stands
Our destiny a button in his hand
And in the Stock Exchange they fly the Union Flag
Though faceless bankers know no motherland
And as I love my country, the harbours and the sea
I will not serve the warmongers who seek my loyalty
'Cos it don't ring true any more

CHORUS

'We know in our hearts that the monarchy is a historical absurdity. But because we lack the courage to abolish it (as indeed we lack the courage for any radical undertaking), we are taking out our anger at our own bad faith and torturing the individuals involved.'

David Hare, 1994

The Bible according to Rupert Murdoch



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was Gotcha! And the Lord Rupert said let there be a Royal Family, and let enormous quantities of trivia and drivel be written about them, yea even unto the point where a mentally subnormal yak couldn't possibly find it interesting anymore, and let babies be born unto this Royal Family, and let the huge swathes of nauseating sludge written about them surpass even that written about their parents, even though these babies and their parents are about as interesting as a wet afternoon on the terraces at Selhurst Park. And the Lord Rupert said let there be soap operas, and let each of these soap operas be so mind-numbingly moronic as to make a wet afternoon at Selhurst Park

seem a truly uplifting experience, and let entire forests and the ecological balance of several continents be destroyed in the endless vistas of retarded outpourings about these unspeakable transmissions. And let there be enormous breasts, and endless bonking, and hours and days and weeks and months and years of chauvinistic right-wing propaganda so that the brain-dead prats who like the bonking and the soap operas and the breasts and the royal stories get the politics as well. And let any journalist who tries to stand up to the proprietor and editor in the name of truth, and intelligence, and integrity, and journalistic standards, be summarily dismissed, and cast forever into a bottomless pit of

decomposing chimpanzee smegma, and let those journalists who suffer this fate rejoice at the great career move they have just made. And the Lord Rupert looked at his work, and even he saw that it was a load of crap, but this was the enterprise culture and it sold millions so it was good. And on the same basis he decided to take over the television too, and the earth itself wept, and little robins vomited, and cuddly furry animals threw themselves under trains, and the whole thing was filmed by Sky Channel for a horror nature programme, and the most awful thing of all was that this was just the beginning...

(source: <http://www.attilathestockbroker.com/poems.html>)



Top: Maurice Burns
Bottom: matthews and allen

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Edinburgh Phils 30-Second Brainteaser

Edinburgh Phils 30-Second Brainteaser No.1
In 2011, ones son Charlie spent £25,829 on a train ride to the Eden Project in Cornwall, the whipper-snapper!

Now according to my chiropodist, one can buy a return ticket online for 35 quid! So HOW MANY punters could have gone if Charles had paid?

Edinburgh Phils 30-Second Brainteaser No. 2
In 2011, ones esteemed family received £228,846.15 PER WEEK in tax-payers money in order to keep ones houses tidy. HOW MUCH did that amount to for the year?

Coincidentally, in 2011 there were 44,160 homeless families in the UK. Supposing we

swapped – HOW MUCH would each family receive to spend on beer and fags while kipping in my gaff? (* Though of course Phil will have to charge them entry to Buck House – only £18 adults, £10.50 children. Ed.)

Edinburgh Phils 30-Second Brainteaser No. 3
In 2011, my family and I received £16,483.15 PER DAY in tax-payers money to cover ones travel expenses. HOW MUCH did that amount to for the year?

Fortunately, one is so rich that we don't need to use the NHS. But if we were forced to stop handing over the dodgy petrol receipts and made to pay for a few newly qualified nurses (£16,525pa) – HOW MANY would it pay for?

Edinburgh Phils 30-Second Brainteaser No. 4
Edinburgh Phil received over a grand a day in tax-payers money in 2011, £395,000 to be precise. WHAT FOR?

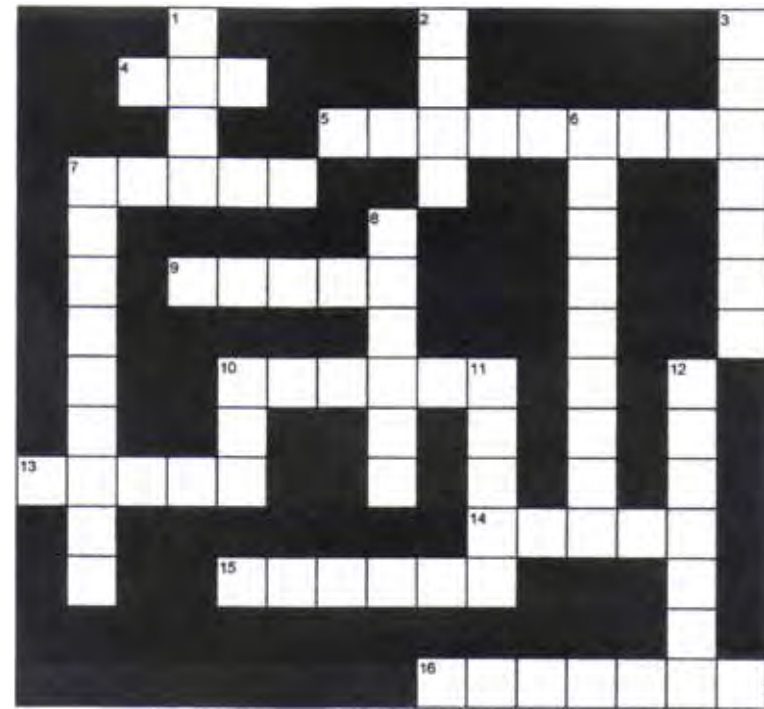
ANSWER No.1
738 trainspotting horticulturalists could have been made very happy!
ANSWER No.2
The Windsors received £11,900,000 towards the upkeep of family residences. Each family would receive £269.47
ANSWER No.3
The Windsors received £6,000,000 for travel expenses! Don't ask. That would employ 363 nurses.
ANSWER No.4
Me neither.

Wordsearch

s x k t p f s e l o h e s r a g n
t d q e b j l a i h c o r a p q f
o e c i t a r c o m e d n u k l v
g t n s f f c y r n k b l z h k a
i c u e u s i z u i g w a i e k q
b e n t c w b s c r o u n g e r s
x l a i i i o v j a r s o u t w e
v e c s t n h o r y u r i i b m j
s n c a s d p s d i a e t y l l n
h u o r i l o r e n g g c s s d z
c u u a n e n e g b r n n r d i e
s l n p o r e k e r b o u e u l d
f a t t r s x n l e m p f s a s j
w y a w h l d a i d k s s s r i c
g x b a c g b w v p g e y o f c c
r h l t a n m x i r m h d t w p k
b b e s n j y t r d e t a d t u o
i q r f a l t w p w s k c i r p b

scroungers
parasites
inbred
xenophobic
spongers
privileged
outdated
unelected
anachronistic
undemocratic
unaccountabl
e
frauds
swindlers
parochial
bigots
dysfunctional

Celebrate the Jubilee with the Jubilee Celebration Crossword!



Clues Across:

- 4. See 7a.
- 5. Around shore, this is a convincing argument for the monarchy. Bollocks! (9)
- 7, 4a. Toussle-haired rooftop anthem fret-wank guitar twat. (5,3)
- 9. We all loved the Queen Mums smile but these begged for some Colgate! (5)
- 10. See 2d.
- 13. Unfathomably popular beat combo featuring 7a,4a. (5)
- 14. See 10d
- 15. They gladden our hearts by shitting

- in the royal flower beds. (6)
- 16. Jug-eared self-absorbed vaguely autistic King in waiting. (6)

Clues Down:

- 1. The thinking mans fancy dress uniform of choice. (4)
- 2, 10a. 2012 baby-faced cheerleading wank-stain. Take That! Now piss off. (4,6)
- 3. Fergie was renowned for hers. (3,4)
- 6. 7a4a, 10d14a, 2d10a, et al. Kiss arse! (9)
- 7. Shepherds Bush? Ok! Cue the slang for the palace! (4,5)
- 8. Malingering gaffe-meister, the royal xenophobe-in-chief. (6)
- 10, 14a. 80s alternative comedy icon/toadying 2002 monarchist arse-wipe shame magnet. (3,5)
- 11. 60 years of these? No wonder her arms ache. (5)
- 12. One of the many races insulted by 8d. (7)



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