

## Introduction: Good News for (almost) Everyone

Let's begin with very good news. Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett recently published compelling statistical evidence<sup>1</sup> that *at least* 90% of us would benefit from a more equal society. Greater equality has been presumed to benefit the poorest, which it does, but thanks to Wilkinson and Pickett's research, it is now undoubtedly clear that reducing inequalities would have a positive impact upon even the already prosperous classes.

A less unequal society would mean greater trust in our communities, lower rates of mental illness and crime, fewer teen pregnancies and longer life expectancy. If Britain became as fair as the average of the four fairest rich countries, Wilkinson and Pickett tell us that we could expect that "homicide rates could fall by 75 per cent, everyone could get the equivalent of almost seven weeks extra holiday a year, and the government could be closing prisons all over the country".<sup>2</sup>

Since the science also demonstrates that even small increases in equality are beneficial, there can be no justification for delaying the measures which could most easily be implemented. First, however, we must go back nearly a thousand years to understand just how unfairness got (and has kept) the upper hand.

## The Role, True Nature and Extent of Royal Charters

In 1067 William the Conqueror (a criminal according to the laws of the time), granted his dynasty's first royal charter to the Corporation of the City of London<sup>3</sup>. This was the means by which an association of powerful men became entitled to 'regulate' their own actions, a practice continued in the 'Square Mile' to this day.

Royal charters--granted to commercial interests, professions, institutes, universities and 66 UK cities--are currently individually negotiated by the Privy Council Office with the relevant minister, indicating that they are not documents produced as a matter of mere formality or custom but are contracts which have been carefully deliberated.

Although charters are individualised, almost all create a hierarchical structure with powers and privileges concentrated at the top.

Royal charters explicitly command judges, ministers and civil servants to give favourable treatment to the chartered body, wrongdoing (including 'non-recital' or concealment and 'mis-recital' or deception) notwithstanding. That this command is not only made but obeyed can be seen in the Lloyd's of London fraud and in numerous acts of Parliament.

The number of bodies established by royal charter is said to be '400 or so', but the actual figure is probably around 1,000, if not higher. The pdf list of chartered bodies on the website of the Privy Council Office has been systematically

<sup>1</sup> The Spirit Level: How More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better (2009)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p 261

<sup>3</sup> City Livery Companies, City of London Public Relations Office (2006), p 17

manipulated (between the bottom of each page and the top of the next there is a gap in numbering), with most of the City of London 'instant companies' created c.1978 onwards not appearing.

If deception and concealment (the elements of fraud) have been contractually excused in advance at the highest level for over 900 years, then how well do standard assumptions hold up?

Some commonly held beliefs are that:

1. the British Empire lost most of its power and influence
2. our government is a constitutional monarchy / parliamentary democracy
3. the royal prerogative is limited to a few formalities
4. the Privy Council is primarily concerned with Commonwealth matters
5. UK judges are independent, impartial and uphold 'the rule of law'
6. cabinet ministers decide policy
7. the monarch defers to the will of Parliament
8. incorporation is a defensible basis for doing business
9. market forces are natural and efficient
10. privatisation and deregulation have been driven by economic theories
11. the "special relationship" with the US has been a good thing
12. poverty, crime and war are inevitable

## REFUTATIONS IN BRIEF

substantiated in <evidence.pdf>

### 1. The British Empire<sup>4</sup> lost most of its power and influence

A more accurate term would be 'Norman-English Empire'--'Norman' for its origin<sup>5</sup> and 'English' for its headquarters. Royal charters remain in force in the United States, Australia and probably elsewhere. The Royal Society of St George ('to promote all things English'), established in New York in 1770, remains active to this day. More importantly, the concept of entitlement remains strong (and damaging) in the empire's headquarters and its outposts. National boundaries mean little when power and privilege are at risk--which they almost always are..

The Norman-English empire was and continues to be a dominant force in the world. The characteristics of its dominant aristocratic and corporate agents include a willingness to murder and steal for personal gain without regard to the suffering of others.

<sup>4</sup> A term first used by John Dee (1527-1608), a prominent mathematician who made important contributions to navigation and astronomy. Dee was alleged to be the model for Shakespeare's Prospero.

<sup>5</sup> The current Royals are descendants of William the Conqueror. See Gascoigne's Encyclopedia of Britain (1993) pp 550-51 and the end papers of Kitty Kelley's The Royals.

## 2. Our government is a constitutional monarchy / parliamentary democracy

The United Kingdom is a confusing mix of theocracy, plutocracy and (self-described<sup>6</sup>) military regime. Much of the power that Parliament has in theory is commanded by a cabinet which defers in practice to the monarchy and its supporters, including the Liverymen of the City of London.

Feudalism is described by Gascoigne (p 229) as a system of administration 'by which the upper levels of a military society assign land to those below them in return for military service when required'. The peasants are required for labour as well as military service. Perhaps 'feudal' society is as good a label as any.

## 3. The royal prerogative is limited to a few formalities

The royal prerogative is considerably more extensive than the 2004 report by the Public Administration Select Committee acknowledges.<sup>7</sup> Royal charters are not mentioned in the body of the report, nor has there been more than a passing mention (and no hint of their constitutional significance) on royal websites or in recent television documentaries about the monarchy.

## 4. The Privy Council is primarily concerned with Commonwealth matters

The Privy Council itself is composed of peers of the realm, bishops of the Church of England, serving and former cabinet ministers, members of opposition front benches and individuals chosen by the monarch.<sup>8</sup> The Privy Council's judicial committee functions as a court of appeal for some Commonwealth countries and provides 'Visitors' who adjudicate complaints within universities.

However, the Privy Council Office has a finger in every pie. It drafts primary and secondary legislation, brokers royal charters, is in charge of the NHS and regulates all regulatory bodies. It is the means by which the monarchy rules without appearing to rule.

## 5. UK judges are independent, impartial and uphold the rule of law

The UK judge is a well looked-after<sup>9</sup> royal employee under orders to protect the monarchy's supporters within his jurisdiction. He allows the privileged to ignore the rights of individuals. He is not bound by precedent (case law) or the principles of natural justice. He uses the language of justice but all too often delivers its opposite.

Because the rule of law is not upheld, proceedings (including 'independent public inquiries') are outcome-driven. The status of the parties routinely determines the result.

<sup>6</sup> "The Duke: A Portrait of Prince Philip", ITV, March 13-14 2008.

<sup>7</sup> "Taming the Prerogative" March 2004

<sup>8</sup> Ann Clywd, the Labour MP who supported the invasion of Iraq in 2003 seems to be in this category

<sup>9</sup> The judges at the Central Criminal Court (the 'Old Bailey') are wined and dined daily by the owner of the court, the Corporation of the City of London.

## 6. Cabinet ministers decide policy

Cabinet ministers (and most prominently the prime minister) are the public figures which divert attention away from the invisible drivers of policy. Perhaps not everything is decided by the men who dominate the City's Worshipful Companies, but probably most things of financial and legal importance are.

## 7. The monarch submits to the will of Parliament

There are contending forces which bring to mind Matthew Arnold's 'ignorant armies that clash by night'. Because the decision-making process is subverted by powerful advantage seekers with conflicting interests, Parliament has little will of its own.

Queen Anne was the last to withhold royal assent.<sup>10</sup> It is probably fair to say that the monarch submits to the will of the monarchy's supporters as expressed through Parliament.

## 8. Incorporation is a defensible basis for doing business

Those who believe in fairness, decency and democracy would disagree. Deregulated capitalism--based on the hierarchical structure of the corporation--uses one crime (blackmail) to perpetrate other serious crimes for personal gain.

## 9. Market forces are natural and efficient

Market forces are manipulated and detrimental to the common good.

## 10. Privatisation and deregulation have been driven by economic theories

Men, not theories, drive events. The same kind of people who pay others to steal works of art have acquired public assets at knockdown prices. The deregulating 'Big Bang' of 1986 was the doing of City men and their enablers in Parliament.

## 11. The 'special relationship' with the US has been a good thing

The Norman-English empire has always been a prominent political and cultural influence on the United States. That influence has been baleful to the extent that it involved the near-extinction of the native population, the buying and selling of slaves and the use of slave labour for personal enrichment, more than two centuries of military adventurism and the denial of equality of opportunity and outcome. American monarchists have had their own warrior kings and turned 'defence of the Realm' into 'national security' to achieve antidemocratic ends.

The US has been a baleful influence on the United Kingdom to the extent that it has agreed with and has backed traditional royalist enthusiasms, including the zealous development, manufacture and use of weaponry.

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<sup>10</sup> Gascoigne p 547

## 12. Poverty, crime and war are inevitable

Poverty and crime (like the Irish “famine” of 1845-7) are not due to actual scarcity but to policy. Aristocrats and quasi-aristocrats find it convenient that Bagehot’s “lower orders” may be dim, brutish and criminal to confirm their argument that given the same privileges, the disadvantaged would be as bad as they are.

War, in which elites can consolidate and increase their wealth, also binds a people into allegiance. A soldier wants to believe that his seeing and perhaps doing bad things have been for a good cause. Concepts like ‘serving our country by protecting it from terrorists’ is a rationalisation which tends to carry the day in the press.

### CLARIFICATIONS

- i) Nobody living created the Norman-English empire.
- ii) Royal charters are not the only ‘licences’ detrimental to the common good. The claim that nothing done in the name of the Crown can be wrong also protects and encourages wrongdoing.
- iii) Although there is much to be concerned about at present, the present monarchy has not been implicated anything on the scale of the misnamed Irish Famine, the South African concentration camps, the Zulu massacres or the mass starvations in India. The indications are that the royal family values as well as needs the respect of the people.
- iv) Monarchy can coexist with good governance. Of the most equal societies cited by Wilkinson and Pickett, the most equal is Japan, followed by Sweden, Denmark and Finland with the last being the only republic.
- v) It would be wrong then to read this research as an attack on the royal family or even the monarchy’s political front men. It is critical of the advantage seekers who use corporate status behind the scenes to enrich themselves at the expense of others.
- vi) Even so, the first consideration is to decrease inequality by ensuring that everyone gains something of value: increased personal security.

### A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT

A monarchy released from dependence upon the wealthy few is free to appeal to the people for its support. It could do so by a number of measures which would increase the health and well-being of all, with no one’s happiness noticeably diminished and almost everyone’s happiness enhanced. The royal family has won the affection of many for a number of reasons. Now they are free to win the affection of us all.

