

Editorial

An end to kings, queens, and oligarchs

The British monarchy is doomed; that is undeniable. But the real question is, how much of the world will they bring down with them?

We are in the grip of an extraordinary crisis, with implications far beyond the impending financial collapse. Under the circumstances, the kind of financial and monetary power which London has exerted is coming to an end, and with it, the reign of the mighty Windsors, whether or not they continue to parade their dirty family laundry in public.

Britain's George III was positively demonic in his hatred of the new American republic. No doubt, the revolutionary leader Tom Paine had a vision of mad George before his mind's eye when he wrote his pamphlet *Common Sense* against the institution of monarchy, but his words were far more profound than an attack merely on a particular, demented monarch. He wrote: "For all men being originally equal, no one by birth could have a right to set his own family in perpetual preference to all others forever, and though himself might deserve some degree of honors of his contemporaries, yet his descendants might be far too unworthy to inherit them. . . . One of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings is that nature disapproves of it. Otherwise, she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule."

The British monarchy is not important in itself, nor is it really English; it is merely representative of a European oligarchy in which they play a leading role, whose days are also numbered. Nor is it the case that the British oligarchs are necessarily loyal to their monarch. It is the institution of the monarchy to which they are committed. On this point, Lord William Rees-Mogg, a spokesman for the monarchy, is quite clear, in his counterposition of the principle of monarchy to that of republicanism.

In his Nov. 30 column in the *London Times*, entitled "The Best and the Brightest, Monarchs and Presidents Show that Elites Are Bred, Not Born," he laid out his thesis quite explicitly. It should be noted that this was published while President Clinton was in Great Britain. Rees-Mogg's thesis is that leadership qualities

are "genetically determined," such that what he calls a "cognitive elite" will rule the world in the coming millennium. Most bizarre, he identifies the superior gene pool of the upcoming global elite, with the Plantagenet rulers of Britain in times past.

It seems that just as Rees-Mogg is jumping ship on the Windsors, he has also ditched his recent protégé, U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich. The British lord cites the fact that Sir Colin Powell also shares this Plantagenet "blood" through a 19th-century governor of Jamaica. To make his ludicrous point, this oligarch attempts a comparison between 18 kings of England—from William the Conqueror in 1066 to Richard III in 1485—to the 18 American Presidents of this century. He asserts that these bloodthirsty monarchs were superior to Presidents such as Franklin Delano Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, and William Clinton.

One day earlier, on Nov. 29, President Clinton addressed the British Houses of Commons and Lords. With a certain irony, the American President addressed the same point as Rees-Mogg, but from the opposite point of view. After citing the "extraordinary relationship that unites" the two nations, he cited some past history of the real conflict between the British monarchy and the American republic.

"It is perhaps all the more remarkable," President Clinton noted, referring to the War of 1812, no doubt tongue-in-cheek but nevertheless right on the mark, "because of our history; first, the war we waged for our independence, and then, barely three decades later, another war we waged in which your able forces laid siege to our capital. Indeed, the White House still bears the burn marks of that earlier stage in our relationship. And now, whenever we have even the most minor disagreements, I walk out on the Truman Balcony and I look at those burn marks, just to remind myself that I dare not let this relationship get out of hand again [laughter]."

Let us once and for all put an end to the rule of kings, queens, and oligarchs of all kinds! Let us fulfill the promise of the American Revolution, for all the peoples of this Earth!