

## **The monarchy: for or against**

**Read the following four extracts taken from different websites.**

1. During the last century and a half, the world has experienced fundamental changes, both political and social. Britain, too, has changed, with democracy and universal suffrage largely replacing an aristocratic and hereditary system. More recently, some powers have been devolved to Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and London. However, despite all these changes our constitution remains a family affair, a system in which the 'crown' is sovereign and the Windsor family reign supreme. As citizens we should be sovereign, not the crown nor parliament. In a democracy we should be choosing our next Head of State, not leaving it to the genetic lottery of the Windsor family.

Britain still retains a political culture centred on "Her Majesty's Government" - not ours, but hers, a powerful reminder in days gone by of where our place was in the system. The idea of royal "ownership" continues to pervade this culture and to reinforce the idea that the system is not our own. Despite the extravagant costs of monarchy, and the increasingly erratic behaviour of the royals, our arguments are concerned with democracy, the principle that this is our country and we should choose our heads of state.

<http://www.republic.org.uk/policy/index.htm>

### **2. CANADIAN MONARCHIST ONLINE**

Constitutional monarchy alone is capable of integrating the executive, legislative and judicial functions of government. The Crown's authority lends a universal legitimacy to the many particular decisions made by and at different levels of government. Constitutional monarchy allows the celebration of public social events, such as the marking of collective anniversaries and the bestowal of honours, to be free of the taint of partisan politics. In a world of rapid social change, where there is a price to be paid for uncertainty, be that price only economic, constitutional monarchy provides continuity, especially at time of political transition. As well, the Monarchy gives Canada a distinctive political system at a time of strong North American Continental trade, social and cultural influences.

<http://pages.interlog.com/~rakhshan/parg.html>

### **3. Royal accounts are all spin by Peter Tatchell**

The Queen's spin doctors were working overtime this week to put a "value for money" gloss on the royal finances. When Elizabeth II's accounts for 2005-2006 were revealed yesterday, her courtiers proudly boasted that the royal family costs the public a mere £37.4m a year, or 62p per person - a bargain, they claimed. What nonsense. This is PR manipulation worthy of the dark manoeuvrings of Alastair Campbell.

The palace is guilty of misleading the public. Even if it was true that the monarchy costs only £37m a year, this is 20 times the cost of the elected Irish president and nearly four times the cost of the president of Germany. It is not good value for money at all.

The real cost of the monarchy is more like £150m a year when you factor in security costs, grants, unpaid tax and the cost to local councils of royal visits. The expenditure on royal security alone was reported by the Times in 2004 to amount to nearly £100m annually.

If we had a low-cost, purely ceremonial president like the Irish, the surplus money could be spent on more worthwhile causes, such as funding treatments for NHS patients who are currently being denied vital drugs for arthritis and breast cancer because of budget deficits and cost-cutting.

[http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/peter\\_tatchell/2007/06/royal\\_accounts\\_are\\_all\\_spin.html](http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/peter_tatchell/2007/06/royal_accounts_are_all_spin.html)

#### **4. 'Reform, yes. But go slowly' By Michael Jacobs**

General Secretary of the Fabian Society

Friday, 26 April, 2002, 12:11 GMT 13:11 UK

Ancient British institutions have always reformed to survive, and the monarchy is no exception. There are too many indefensible aspects of the current arrangements. Without change these will lead to public disaffection whenever the popularity of the individual royals declines - as we saw during the Diana years.

So the monarchical reform programme seeks to reduce the number of members of the royal family on the Civil List, paid for by taxpayers.

It looks to renegotiate the amount of tax paid by the royal family, and the anomalous planning and other laws attaching to Crown property. It proposes the repeal of the rules giving males precedence over females and which disbar Catholics. Many of these reforms are already being canvassed by the Palace.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1953038.stm>

**Using the arguments above, write a paragraph summarizing the arguments for and against, and showing the relationships between the arguments, and giving your own view. Try to use at least three of the arguments given. If you like, include a short introductory and concluding paragraph. Use in text quotation eg**

***Jacobs (2002) states that British institutions have always had to change if they want to stay alive***

***Tatchell (2007) claims that the monarchy costs around £150m a year.***

***According to Republic.org.uk website.....***