

Cool Observation of Mass Hysteria. Craig Murray

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Global Research, September 19, 2022

[Craig Murray](#) 16 September 2022

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [History](#)

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When the so-called “Leader of the opposition” opposes protest against a new unelected head of state, out of respect for the previous unelected head of state, you know you live under totalitarianism.

Except almost all dictatorships do at least have the form of an election. Indeed, some of the worst dictators in modern history have been genuinely elected, an unfortunate fact we generally prefer to elide.

Over a week of mob hysteria in the UK helps us to understand how.

The psychological phenomenon of societal emotional spasm is fairly well studied but still not necessarily fully explained. How we get to a stage where, in 2022, newspapers are seriously promoting as miraculous clouds that “look like the Queen”, double rainbows or meteors, is a difficult question.

What is not in the doubt is the tendency of deluded mobs to turn on those who do not join in – and the capacity of the unscrupulous to exploit that power.

Attempts to intimidate people out of protesting against the monarchy appear broadly to have succeeded. We saw some hideous attacks on free speech over the last week, including people arrested for holding up placards, for peacefully expressing vocal dissent, or even for carrying eggs or blank pieces of paper.

A number of figures have stood up to come out arguing for freedom of speech – Andrew Marr, Martin Bell, John Sweeney, David Davis, Joanna Cherry, Michael Russell. These are all figures who broadly represent a liberal consensus in society that seems to have gone. As I know all but one of them, I hope they will forgive me for saying they tend to be slightly passé.

Nobody in power, in Westminster or in Scotland, has asserted the importance of freedom of speech, while opposition leader Keir Starmer has done the opposite, emphasising “respect” for authority as more important than freedom of speech, a position taken by anti-democrats everywhere.

There are two arguments used against freedom of speech at present:

1) We should honour the dead, and respect the sanctity of the mourning period.

I do not in general dismiss the value of all societal convention, and I have a certain sympathy for this approach. However, the difficulty is that the accession of a new monarch happens at the moment of death of the old monarch. The latter cannot be used to stifle all protest at the former.

The Establishment quite deliberately conflates the two in order to prevent protest. We have the extraordinary and macabre spectacle of the corpse of the late Queen being carted around the country and her coffin put on public display.

If people really cared for her, I would have thought it much more respectful to bury her, but the monarchist hysteria has to be dialed up past 11 for the longest possible period, and the excuse for suppressing dissent has to be maintained.

Young Rory, who was viciously, physically attacked for heckling sexual abuser Prince Andrew at the Edinburgh procession and then arrested, handcuffed and charged, was widely condemned by the media for disturbing a funeral. But it was not a funeral. That funeral is still not until Monday, when this farce finally ends.

The correct word for what we have witnessed so far is not a funeral but a series of bizarre obsequies. The state is demanding that all citizens be obsequious.

There is a reason that word has such negative connotations, and if the UK had educated journalists rather than state stenographers they might explore it.

So much has been entirely irrational. One moment that stuck in my mind was criticism of Liz Truss for failing to curtsy to the coffin of the Queen when it arrived at RAF Northolt. This was described as “grotesque” – as though curtsying to a corpse were not itself an image straight out of Edgar Allan Poe.

The concomitant of stretching out the period before poor Elizabeth is finally put to rest, is to use that period to maximum political advantage for the introduction of the new King, while his mother’s aura still shines.

We have the deliberate confusion of the two processes. Both the man in Oxford who merely asked “who elected him?”, and the woman in Edinburgh who held the sign saying “Fuck imperialism, abolish the monarchy”, were at the specific proclamation of the accession of

King Charles III - events separate to the obsequies. Yet both were condemned for lack of respect for a dead Queen.

We also have the extraordinary spectacle of Charles, immediately after the death of his mother, abandoning his mourning and bottling his grief while shuttling furiously around Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales for entirely political events.

This did not have to happen. This is absolutely not a tradition. Nothing remotely like it has ever happened before.

There was no reason whatsoever why Charles had to visit the Scottish parliament, the Welsh senedd or the assembly in the north of Ireland, now. This could have waited until after the funeral. He could even have had a week of rest and reflection after the funeral before embarking on a tour of the nations.

There was a deliberate decision to hold these political events in Edinburgh, Belfast and Cardiff, aimed at strengthening the monarchy and union, while the corpse was still metaphorically warm, in order to maximise the political bounce for the monarchy from Elizabeth's death.

Part of this calculation was that, if Charles' first visit as King was after the funeral, there would be political protest at the accession in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, possibly quite substantial.

There is absolutely no modern precedent for a royal tour between the death and the funeral of the previous monarch. It is, when you think about it, disrespectful.

Edinburgh is explicable in terms of Elizabeth dying in Scotland, but Belfast and Cardiff?

Which tells us that "King Charles III" would have still taken advantage of the mourning period to make his power consolidation visit to Edinburgh, no matter where his mother had died.

There is nothing more cynical. We are whipped up to observe emotional mourning, while those who you would expect truly to be in mourning are engaged in cold, political calculation.

One of the darkly amusing things about the last few days was to witness all of the deluded monarchists on social media excusing Charles' extraordinary tantrum in Northern Ireland about a pen, on the grounds that he must be exhausted making this tour when his mother had just died.

But the answer of course is that he did not have instantly to dash to Northern Ireland at all, leaving behind the rites for his mother. He was doing so for political gain.

It is a capricious God who supports a royal family so much he makes clouds in their image and celebrates them in rainbows and comets, yet makes pens leak on them "every stinking time."

2) Protest May Cause a Breach of the Peace

This is a truly sinister argument. What it amounts to is this:

The mob is encouraged to beat up dissidents, so the expression of dissent is illegal.

It is quite literal fascism, the exertion of violent force by thugs in the street to quell dissent, with the state backing the thugs and criminalising the dissidents. That is precisely how all fascist regimes operate.

It is now being used shamelessly. None of the thugs who attacked Rory in Edinburgh has been charged. Rory has been charged with a breach of the peace.

If a breach of the peace is an action likely to provoke disorder, then the persons to be charged should be those who decided to put on display in positions of great honour a man who avoided a trial on sex trafficking by payment of £12 million pounds.

One sign of how emboldened the dregs of society are by this period of mob rule, is the quite extraordinary number of people on social media actively defending Prince Andrew, something that was extremely rare before the death of the Queen.

On twitter, it is interesting how many of those defending Andrew show [the characteristics](#) I identified of British government troll units. These are very low follower numbers for an account claiming to have been in existence at least ten years, and a timeline consisting entirely of retweets.

The rehabilitation of Andrew is another of the political purposes to which Elizabeth's death is being put, to which we are not allowed to object on grounds of "decorum" and "respect".

Now I would not personally have done what Rory did, in the presence of a coffin. But that is a question of etiquette, taste and demeanour, not of the criminal law.

Anybody who had been paying attention ought not be surprised that the Scottish prosecutorial service is happily channeling this fascism and people are coming up for trial for breach of the peace, including the young woman who did nothing but hold up a placard at the outdoor, public proclamation ceremony.

On Sunday, Police Scotland have banned Yestival, an annual Independence rally in George Square, Glasgow, on the grounds that the Queen's funeral is on the next day, 400 miles away.

The organisers have quietly rescheduled the event, but I shall turn up anyway to bear witness to my beliefs, because I object to being told I may not express my political opinions. I don't expect there will be more than a dozen of us and nothing in particular is organised to happen - no stage and no microphones. Unless the mere fact of my existence is held by the fascists to be a breach of the peace, I am not sure how it would be illegal. But they may find a way. This is Scotland 2022.

In the long term I am not downhearted. Propaganda works, and I have no doubt whatsoever that monarchism and even unionism will get a measurable opinion poll boost from the current shenanigans.

But it will not be true that the replacement of a popular monarch by an unpopular one will,

in the medium term, strengthen the monarchy. Public and press access will be stifled to suppress awareness of Charles' appalling high-handedness and temper and the way he [treats staff](#)

But you can't make this man popular, and his Queen Consort will be a constant reminder of how he treated his unfortunate first wife.

As for the mob hysteria, I am of the generation that was sent to church every Sunday of my childhood. I recall the sermon every Palm Sunday pointing out that the same rapturous crowd that hailed Jesus into Jerusalem, called for his death five days later.

All the great religions contain a lot of good sense within their mysticism.

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