

EIR Commentary

Way Ahead Group scrambles to bail out the Windsors

by Scott Thompson

Over the weekend of September 14-15, the families of Prince Philip and Prince Charles met at the behest of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at Balmoral Castle, Scotland, for the twice-yearly gathering of the Way Ahead Group, or WAG, as it is sometimes called. According to a spokesman for Queen Elizabeth, the WAG had been meeting in secret for decades, and it ranks above the Privy Council in matters pertaining to the survivability of the British royal family, the House of Windsor. Already, various changes approved by the WAG have gone into effect.

For example, during 1992, which Queen Elizabeth referred to as an *Annus Horribilis*, when the royal family was being pilloried in public because of the separation of the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Queen decided, after a WAG meeting, to sign a Memorandum of Understanding making herself and her heirs liable to all forms of taxation. The “voluntary” move was aimed at preempting a growing effort among City of London financiers and politicians to legislate a tax against the royals. Another WAG decision, now in the works, would pare down the number of royals who are on the Civil List—a roster of people who receive a salary paid by the taxpayers, for doing nothing, otherwise known as welfare for the royals. This decision was forced by growing popular dissatisfaction over the size to which the Civil List has grown.

Will the monarchy survive?

The essence of the latest WAG “reforms” is to “downsize” the monarchy, in order to save the institution from possible elimination. Every time there is significant popular grumbling that threatens the survivability of the monarchy, the WAG

comes up with a concession that will appear to put the monarchy in a kind, benevolent light, while holding onto fundamental powers.

This point was made by former peer, Anthony Wedgwood Benn, MP (a longtime leader of the Labour Party), who told *EIR*:

“While the precise agenda of the meetings under way at Balmoral Castle may be unknown, you can be sure that their purpose is not to give away power, but to consolidate power. The reforms that the Crown offers are phony attempts to make it seem that the Windsors are lessening their role, whereas the truth is that the proposals are to strengthen the position of the royal family, at a time of increased public criticism. The strategy is to defuse criticism by giving the impression of modernizing, when actually what the Queen is doing is consolidating. By sacking a few minor royals and discussing these other proposals, the Crown is being strengthened.”

In its own way, members of the Monarchist League agree. One spokesman told *EIR*:

“The British royal family must adapt to changing times. This question of the disestablishment of the state and the Church of England is being debated not only by the British royal family, but also at Lambeth Palace by circles around the Archbishop of Canterbury. People say that the British royal family might become ‘bicycle monarchs.’ But, I can assure you, the monarchs of Europe have great influence and power. Even in Norway, they preside over cabinet meetings.”

Monarchist Baron Blake added: “I do not know exactly what is happening. But, some of the changes will require major legislation, as they deal with overturning major acts of Parliament.”

Perhaps this explains why Prime Minister John Major was at Balmoral Castle to participate in part of the WAG meeting.

Way ahead of the curve

Various sources report that the following items were on the agenda of the WAG meeting:

1. *Changing the rules of primogeniture.* A female would have primogeniture in order of her birth, thus moving Princess Anne in front of Prince Andrew in line of succession. The only reason HM Queen Elizabeth II became Queen, is that she had no brothers.

2. *Permitting marriage to a Catholic.* Ever since the Act of Settlement of 1701, a British monarch has been obliged to marry a Protestant. Reversing this would open the possibility of the Anglican Church establishing inroads into the Vatican. Negotiations between the Anglican Church and the Vatican broke down in recent years, over the Anglican Church's liberal stance toward homosexuals and decision to allow ordination of women.

3. *Eliminating the Civil List.* One possible step is to remove minor royals, who are an irritant to the taxpaying public, from the Civil List. Another possibility is that since the Queen amassed a personal fortune of £3 billion tax-free before 1992, she could finance a reduced monarchy on her own.

What to do about the Prince of Wales

According to Anthony Wedgwood Benn and other sources, one of the purposes of the WAG meeting was to try to straighten out some of the kinks in the mind of Prince Charles.

It is because of Prince Charles that there is a significant movement within the Church of England to disestablish itself from the state, so that the monarch is no longer governor of the Church. This is true not only because Charles committed adultery, divorced his wife and the mother of his children, and now may marry a twice-divorced woman with whom he carried on an affair, but because, even by Church of England standards, Prince Charles is viewed as somewhat of a heretic. For example, he wants to change the title given Henry VIII by the pope, shortly before Henry broke from Rome, of "Defender of the Faith," to "Defender of the Faiths," including especially those faiths most oriented toward Gaia (the Mother Earth cult).

After his session with the WAG at Balmoral Castle, the Prince of Wales showed himself even loonier than before.

On Sept. 19, Prince Charles chose the 50th anniversary of the Soil Association, which is the governing body of Britain's "organic farming" movement, to give his first speech since his divorce from Princess Diana. He spread a lot of manure. For example, he said that farmers must not be scapegoated for the dreadful policies of successive governments to produce as much food as possible, as inexpensively as possible:

"The prevailing mood . . . has been that man can dominate nature and win, that human beings are not only at the top of

the food chain, but that manipulation and domination of the natural world is somehow our destiny, even our duty. That, I think, is where things have gone wrong."

As for genetic engineering of plants to boost productivity and extend shelf life, the loony Prince concluded:

"Apart from certain medical applications, what actual right do we have to experiment, Frankenstein-like, with the very stuff of life? We live in an age of rights—it seems to me that it is about time our Creator had some rights too."

Such paganism from the presumed successor of Queen Elizabeth II does little to help the Windsors, at a moment when the fate of the English monarchy is in serious question.

It is the poverty of mind, if not outright insanity, of Prince Charles that gives added desperation to recent meetings of the WAG. If the House of Windsor survives the global economic collapse, there is growing sentiment that the Queen should bypass Prince Charles in favor of the succession of his eldest son, Prince William. Prince Charles almost makes the Duke of Windsor (formerly the pro-Hitler King Edward VIII, who abdicated in 1936), when he was Prince of Wales, seem like a pillar of rectitude.

Deeper implications

Apart from the tabloid-orchestrated public anger and disgust with the "Merry" Windsors, there is a growing factional split within the powerful Club of the Isles apparatus, the collection of 3-5,000 British and continental European oligarchical financiers, senior intelligence officials, industrialists, and members of princely families, over the future direction of Europe, and its role in the world. For decades, the British faction of the Club, led by Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip, have been *primus inter pares* for the entire group; however, in recent years, with the collapse of the Barings Bank, the near blowout of Lloyd's of London, and the mergers of some of the down-and-out London financial houses with wealthier Dutch and German partners (e.g., ING Bank of the Netherlands' bailout of Barings, and Deutsche Bank's merger with Morgan Grenfell), there has been an internal power shift within the Club.

Among the most pressing underlying issues in this ongoing power struggle, is the looming collapse of the international financial and banking system, and what to do about it. Within the City of London faction of the Club of the Isles, there is a great deal of in-fighting, as well, which directly overlaps the struggle over the future of the monarchy. The issue of Britain's participation in the European Union's Maastricht Treaty, related directly to the looming financial catastrophe, is the most public issue, among those otherwise being fought out behind the scenes by these oligarchical circles.

So, the battle over the future of the House of Windsor is not a question of pomp and circumstance; rather, it is one of the central questions on the agenda of the Club of the Isles on the eve of the new millennium.