

We should have the right to say no to monarchy

Published: January 13, 2026, 9:10 am

I share this unusually long quote from [the Guardian](#) because of its significance:

Official warning letters have been sent to anti-monarchs planning peaceful protests at King Charles III's coronation saying that new criminal offences to prevent disruption have been rushed into law.

Using tactics described by lawyers as "intimidatory", the Home Office's Police Powers Unit wrote to the campaign group Republic saying new powers had been brought forward to prevent "disruption at major sporting and cultural events".

The new law, given royal assent by Charles on Tuesday, means that from Wednesday:

- Protesters who block roads, airports and railways could face 12 months behind bars.*
- Anyone locking on to others, objects or buildings could go to prison for six months and face an unlimited fine.*
- Police will be able to head off disruption by stopping and searching protesters if they suspect they are setting out to cause chaos.*

"I would be grateful if you could publicise and forward this letter to your members who are likely to be affected by these legislative changes," says the Home Office letter, which lists the creation of a number of new criminal offences under the government's much criticised public order bill.

Four questions.

First, was it just coincidence that these powers happened to come into force just days before the coronation?

Second, how is a constitutional monarchy consistent with the banning of protests about its legitimacy?

Third, why is blocking roads in support of the coronation acceptable but it is not permitted to do so to protest about it? Isn't there some considerable hypocrisy in that?

Fourth, do they really think arresting protestors this weekend would improve the standing of the monarchy?

Democracy is under threat everywhere. That is most certainly true here in the UK. These measures are a sure sign of that.

And for full disclosure, I should add that I have supported Republic, precisely because I do not believe in the eugenic exercise of power without accountability. I am not sure why any democrat would.