

The significance of Mr Mountbatten-Windsor

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The significance of the charlatan previously known as Prince Andrew being stripped of all his royal titles and being thrown off the Windsor estate yesterday should not be understated.

The point is this: if someone who was born the son of a monarch can be stripped of all his titles, even though it was said that to remove that of prince was impossible because it was his by birthright, then what is made clear? It is that all the charade and flummery of the so-called royal family, and all the conventions of monarchy, are just made up.

There is nothing natural about them. There is no superiority associated with them. All of the ridiculous pageantry is just a game created to imply the right to privilege, not just for the selected few directly involved in this farce, but for all those in the hierarchies of power whose supposed rights to privilege stem from the hoax of royalty.

In fact, there are no such rights. Those involved are just people. They can be stripped of their titles and wealth. They are then left named as we all are (although in this case with made-up surnames) to indicate that they are no more, or less, than others when the pretence is stripped away.

What is more, if it can be stripped from one, it can be stripped from others. The game of deference, in which it has been demanded that we all take part, could end in that case.

The royals, the lords, the ladies, the knights and dames, and all those who hold status in orders of the empire could just be addressed as the equals of all others, as they are.

The process of extraction by deference, which, like all similar processes, seeks to secure an unearned rent to favour a few at cost to many, would be over.

The eugenicism, with the message deep within it that some are by right better than others, with those others being required by implication to acknowledge their inferiority on a regular basis, would be revealed.

Why does that matter, and why is the divesting of a person once second in line to the throne of his titles of significance? Simply because it makes clear that change is possible.

Only two weeks ago, we were told he could not be stripped of the title 'prince'. It was claimed to be his by birthright, and now apparently it is not. The falsehoods have, as a result, been revealed. There is no birthright at all. There is just a pernicious hierarchy of power intent on exploitation, revealing its willingness to be ruthless in pursuit of that goal when it thinks the pitchforks might be out.

In doing so, it reveals that the instinct to preserve its privilege is also all that matters to it. This, after all, has always been the business of 'the firm'.

And now the myth of the firm is shattered; its goodwill has been destroyed. The desirability of conferring honours on those unsuited to enjoy them as they have abused their positions is being questioned. Even the finances are open to review and doubt.

The truth is, the purpose of this entity has gone. Without the mystique, there is nothing left, and that aura departed some time ago. Just give it a little time for the rest of the edifice to crumble, as it surely will.

The significance of all this is, however, deeper than that. We live in a country beset with issues because of the power structures of privilege embedded within it. Even the supposed United Kingdom takes its name from the monstrous idea that one person could rule over all. That is no longer true.

But in that case, none of the other assumptions of entitlement need hold true either.

Power does not mean unaccountability.

Wealth does not provide the right to be taxed lightly.

Prejudice cannot be ignored because it is embedded in supposedly immutable customs.

If we are all just commoners, and myths are ignored, the veil of ignorance is lifted, and justice, [in the sense described by John Rawls](#), can be created so that privilege is first of all given to those with least, so that they have a chance, and not to those with most, so that they might have more.

Ultimately, it is this inversion of priorities that the stripping of the titles from Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor makes possible. If he is now just a commoner, like the rest of us, everyone not only can be, but is just that, despite the games some will still play to pretend otherwise, and that game is almost over.

Royalty is no better than the rest now. And moreover, what it has is not inherited, or birthright, or superior. It is just a deceit intended to fool us, at cost to those considered

by the privileged to be common, which in their value system is the ultimate term of abuse, and which everyone reading this will no doubt be in their view.

But the day of the commoner has come. One of the supposed royals has been cast as such. So now, with the veil lifted, we need to rebuild anew, knowing that all that was claimed impossible can be done after all. And that knowledge matters.