

The death of Queen Elizabeth II: Reactionary grief

Sunday 11 September 2022, by [HANNAH Simon](#) (Date first published: 9 September 2022).

The death of Queen Elizabeth II, writes Simon Hannah, led to an inevitable orgy of reaction.

The public response is completely dominated and dictated by pro-monarchists and right-wing nationalists who demand complete silence on any critical comments or views about the British political system.

Even [Republic](#), the most prominent campaign group to scrap the monarchy, issued a statement saying now isn't the time to talk about politics.

Republic

@RepublicStaff

8 sept.

We are saddened to hear the news of the Queen's death and we wish to express our condolences to the royal family.

Republic

@RepublicStaff

There will be plenty of time to debate the monarchy's future. For now, we must respect the family's personal loss and allow them and others to mourn the loss of a mother, grandmother and great grandmother.

8:01 PM · 8 sept. 2022

Twitter

The allegedly "apolitical" nature of the modern monarchy is used as a shield to prevent criticism of the bloody violent history of the British state in which the monarch played a key role. Black and ethnic minority academics and public figures have been hounded off social media by King and Country mobs of deranged Sun reading fanatics.

The most insidious effect of the death of Queen Elizabeth II is the moves by the establishment to shut down not only critical thought but also any opposition to the ruling class agenda. The “nation coming together” takes precedence over the needs of working people who cannot be fed or pay their bills with national mourning.

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As she lay dying BBC news reporter Clive Myrie says the Energy Bills Price Crisis is “of course insignificant now given the gravity of the situation we seem to be experiencing with Her Majesty”.

Seriously? Because the energy companies haven’t dropped their prices in honour of the death of her majesty.

The TUC postponed its annual conference out of respect for national mourning. Curious because the capitalist system continues to function and exploit people every day.

The RMT and CWU called off their strikes and published social media posts about their sympathy for the Queen’s death. Yet their members will still struggle over the autumn with low wages and high prices.

Football games were cancelled. Public social activities are postponed. But no bank holiday was announced. Work you proles! Work harder for the national good! Wipe those tears and get back to your job. No strikes. No complaints. Exactly as Liz Truss wants.

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The belief no doubt is that the mass of public opinion is in favour of the monarchy and that the ‘grief’ of the nation is very real, that it would be insensitive to do anything that might interrupt that grief.

But even if this grief is real and millions of people are genuinely mourning the passing of the British head of state – who died of natural causes at the age of 96 after living a life of unimaginable luxury – this congealed personal grief cannot be allowed to be used for reactionary means.

What is being demanded is a public showing of subservient deference to the institution of the monarchy, but it is dressed up as decorum and respect for a family in grief. This is a family whose lives and luxuries and utterly bound up with the wealth and power of the British state – their personal loss is now being used as a weapon against anything progressive or fun or meaningful for the millions of us struggling through life.

It is time for a society without the ostentatious privilege of a tiny minority of the elite wealthy and their backers who decide our fates.

We must be brave and stand up for what is right.

Simon Hannah

P.S.

- Anti*Capitalist Resistance. 09 Sep 2022:

- <https://anticapitalistresistance.org/reactionary-grief/>

- Simon Hannah is a socialist, a union activist, and the author of A Party with Socialists in it: a history of the Labour Left, Can't Pay, Won't Pay: the fight to stop the poll tax, and System Crash: an activist guide to making revolution.