

The US establishment swoons over the royal birth

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The American news and entertainment media went into a frenzy Monday on reports that Kate Middleton, wife of Britain's Prince William and Duchess of Cambridge, had gone into labor and later in the day gave birth to a baby boy, the third in line to the British throne.

The anticipatory morning headlines—"Royal baby expected soon; Duchess Kate in labor," "10 royal baby traditions to know," "Royal baby wait almost over," "Tri-State, World Anxiously Await Word Of Royal Birth"—gave way to jubilant ones in the afternoon—"Royal baby born in London," "Royal Arrival: It's A Boy!," "Prince William and Kate celebrate birth of first baby," "The Royal baby has arrived," etc.

CNN breathlessly told its viewers: "The royal bundle of joy [is] about to arrive... Prince William is under strict instructions to telephone the queen as soon as the birth will happen... He will make that call on a specially encrypted phone." Two US television networks, ABC and NBC, broke into regular programming to announce the birth.

President Barack Obama took time from his schedule to "congratulate the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on the joyous occasion of the birth of their first child... Given the special relationship between us, the American people are pleased to join with the people of the United Kingdom as they celebrate the birth of the young prince."

Obama should speak for himself. From all indications, hardly anyone in the US cares very much about the royal birth. According to Pew Research, "by and large, most Americans say they do not follow news of the British royal family." Why in the world should they?

In December 2012, a quarter of those polled by Pew said they were following the news that the royal couple was expecting a child, which was all over the television and tabloid press. Among those 18-24, only 16 percent expressed interest. The most intrigued were Americans 55 and older. One suspects that if the survey results were

organized along income lines, the youngest and least affluent layers of the US population would express minimal concern with the British royal family...if not open hostility.

In that sense, the media's insistence on the significance of the event, in the face of the public's general lack of interest, is an expression of the social, political and moral divide in American life.

As always, the media coverage involves a great deal of fakery and manipulation. It is unlikely that even the numbskulls who deliver the news to the US population are genuinely made "excited" and "giddy" by a new addition to the crowd of unamiable parasites who sit atop and live at the expense of the British people.

The Crown Estate (the royal property portfolio), one of the largest property owners in Britain, had holdings estimated at £7.3 billion [\$US11.2 billion] in 2011. *Forbes* in 2010 calculated Queen Elizabeth's wealth to be approximately \$450 million.

It is hard to imagine a more useless bunch than the British royal family, from whom the odor of fascism, with which they were infatuated in the 1930s, cannot be eliminated.

No doubt the insatiable need for empty, mind-numbing items to fill up time and space, especially at a "slow time" in the news calendar, accounts for some of the media's disgraceful antics, but there is more than mere empty-headedness at work here.

For one thing, the television networks, cable channels and print media have more reason than ever to try to distract public attention and push into the background highly disturbing stories, from Edward Snowden's revelations about the government's antidemocratic conspiracies, its support for dictatorship in Egypt and plans for a new war against Syria, to the bankruptcy of Detroit and devastation of its population.

Beyond that, the more substantial media outlets, such as

the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, pointed to the importance of a new royal heir in stabilizing and legitimizing an institution that has fallen into disrepute in recent decades, through a series of scandals and disgraces.

The *Times* noted Monday, “William and Catherine’s baby is not just the essence of monarchy, which is always about succession. The birth will also confirm the stability of a throne that looked so wobbly when Diana, Princess of Wales, William’s mother, died 16 years ago.

“Who would have predicted that a generation after that fatal car crash everything in the royal garden would be rosy?”

Noting that the infant boy was expected to follow Prince Charles and Prince William to the throne, the *Post* commented:

“No one can tell what political and personal changes the intervening years will bring, but the baby can be expected to become the head of state of 16 countries, including Britain, Australia and Canada, and possibly the head of the Commonwealth, which covers 54 nations.

“The child will also eventually become Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

“The baby represents a living link to Britain’s imperial history—the infant is the great-great-great-great-grandchild of Queen Victoria, who ruled at the peak of British power.”

The British monarchy, for all its tattered and deteriorated condition, still represents a pillar of global social reaction, around which the establishment (in the English-speaking nations in particular) attempts to rally the most backward and malleable social layers. It is not a matter of indifference to the ruling elites in Europe, North America and Australia what becomes of the British throne.

Of course, forgotten in all the relentless US media coverage of the monarchy’s goings-on is the fact that the American people were obliged to take up arms and violently oppose Britain’s rulers some 240 years ago and establish a republic. This is not a small matter, nor is the media’s oversight accidental.

The American Revolution was a world-historical event, which struck a blow against the aristocratic principle and the inherited prerogatives of wealth and privilege. Of course, in the modern era, as the dominant imperialist power, the “republican” US has played an even more reactionary and predatory a role than the UK with its monarchy. However, at least until recently the ruling elite in America felt obliged to pay lip service to the ideals of 1776, the Declaration of Independence and the “self-

evident truth” that all men were “created equal.”

The growth of vast social inequality, the existence in the US of a financial aristocracy, *in fact* if not in name, have made even that nominal adherence to democracy untenable. Official conduct and communication are now catching up to reality and that finds its way into the language and behavior of the ruling class’s propagandists on television and in the press.

The super-wealthy elite in America lives and expects to be treated like royalty. The handful at the top of society, enjoying unimaginable riches, considers the population at large to be riffraff, whose needs and opinions don’t count, whose lives amount to nothing.

Far from identifying with the traditions of the American Revolution and Civil War, they feel a greater and greater affinity for the British nobility and Southern slavocracy. This, of course, extends to their means of rule, which represent a repudiation of democracy in favor of authoritarianism, police-state methods, secret courts, plots against the population and so on.

It is the envy and fascination that the financiers and corporate thieves who run America, along with their political and media agents, instinctively feel for the British royal family, whose privileges are enshrined in law and tradition, that helps account for the current frenzy about the royal birth.

If the billionaires who run the US could install a hereditary nobility to ensure their wealth and power, they would do so without hesitation. A new “1776” will involve a revolt against this corporate-financial aristocracy on the program of social equality and socialism.



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