

logo

Published on open Democracy News Analysis (<http://www.opendemocracy.net>)

Can libertarians and nationalists make common cause?

By Philip Hosking,

Created 2008-07-23 18:01

Philip Hosking (Cornwall, [The Cornish Democrat](#) [1]): As a response to the article by David of Britology Watch -[What are we fighting for? Libertarians and nationalists must make common cause](#) [1]- just some thoughts.

There is much to tempt in your post; a bill of rights, federal government and electoral reform for instance. An England (and Cornwall) wide solution does also need to be found leaving the direction of future reform in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Crown protectorates in the hands of their respective populations. Would the creation of an English parliament guarantee any of these vital developments or as has been suggested merely fossilize power once more in a centralized establishment? Are you suggesting those who pursue constitutional, electoral and civil rights reform should join the Campaign for an English Parliament (CEP) as a means to achieve their goals or are you suggesting something more subtle?

As has been pointed out an English parliament in itself does not guarantee any of the above and much less the dispersal of power away from Westminster. Libertarians who wish to see effective decision making ability devolved down to our communities are unlikely to take up your offer, and as a Cornishman I've yet to hear why an English parliament would be good for me or Cornwall. On the other hand as someone who appreciates the idea of national self determination I would not wish to deny the people of England the choice of an all England body if that is what they wanted.

The only thing that unites the people you wish to see working together is their desire for change; problems start to arise when we discuss what changes to make. If wholesale support for the CEP or English nationalism is highly unlikely then where next for cooperation?

Perhaps we need unity to obtain real reform and this can be obtained by coalescing around what we agree on namely the pressing need for change. We must work together to ensure all options/outcomes are placed on the table before the public leaving them fully informed and with the democratic choice in their hands. This calls to mind the [Citizens' Convention](#) [2] as proposed by Unlock Democracy. Can we envisage a grand constitutional convention regrouping all those who want reform in order to bring about such engagement with the public? Surely no one is suggesting constitutional reform be pushed on to the public without due consultation so can we all push in the same direction to ensure this consultation? The various groups disagree on much but one thing that should unite all is the desire for an informed and empowered public to be given the right to decide.

Libertarians and nationalists making common cause? Yes but I doubt this will happen inside the Campaign for an English Parliament or English nationalism. It'll take something bigger.

Source URL:

<http://www.opendemocracy.net/blog/ourkingdom-theme/philip-hosking/2008/07/23/can-libertarians-and-nationalists-make-common-cause>

Links:

[1] <http://thecornishdemocrat.blogspot.com/>

[2] http://www.unlockdemocracy.org.uk/?page_id=953