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GD-00147
713634
EVAL_LV1



Code épreuve : 75GB

Nombre de pages : 5

Session : 2023

Épreuve de : Anglais

Consignes

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III - thème

After having walked down London's cheerful streets on the Queen's coronation day, psychologists Michael Young and Edward Shils stated that the event was "a big act of national awe". It completely made sense as a "collective experience and not an individual one"; they wrote, it unified thousands of families in a group momentum, which reminded of the celebration of the victory over the Nazi Germany. The air was soaked with human warmth, even robbers had stopped working and a spirit of brotherhood that would have disgusted "those booby people of our time with a nationalist bias, all the more so those with a radical or liberal background and tendency", was spreading.

In this day and age, despite the increase of inequalities in the United Kingdom, its monarchy seems to maintain its level of popularity. About two thirds of Britons back its existence. Only 22% of them wish its removal, the most critical being the Scottish persons. Surprising paradox: in hard times, the royal family seems to be used ^{either} as a scapegoat or as something one can look up to to feel better. During the royal weddings of the past decade, there was always a man claiming that the nation's spirit needed to be lifted.

"Inoxydable Monarchie Britannique", Le Monde diplomatique,

Décembre 2020.

I - Résumé analytique comparatif

Both articles at hand deal with the end of the Elizabethan age, Neal Ascherson focuses on the symbolic of Queen Elizabeth II's reign, while Maya Jaganoff analyzes the evolution of the British Empire in which the Queen played a significant part.

Both columnists acknowledge how important she was for the British Empire.

She gave a sense of unity to this broad Empire she was the monarch of (doc 1), for her it was a "family". And not only did she unify the people, but also the countries as her face was on every coin and stamp (doc 2).

Moreover, she was an anchor during the troubled times. Her long reign was a symbol of stability for the Empire (doc 2). She would remind people of Britain's heyday, that is to say the Elizabethan Age (doc 1) and the victory over fascism (doc 2). As such, she embodied a traditionalist facade against all dangers. And she also managed to reconcile and put away the history of colonization (doc 2). Thanks to her, Commonwealth's leaders pledged to accept Prince Charles as the new head (doc 2). That is why both articles mourn her, for decades she was an anchor in the tide of change. And her dedication and sense of duty were unquestionable. She knew she was a monarch first, that is why she used Andrew's privileges and resolve the matter of Camilla's titles (doc 2).

Nevertheless, both columnists see that her reign was not

perfect, Tazanoff is truly critical of some of her works, as is Ascherson but in a less significant manner.

Ascherson wishes she would have not show that much of her personality, had she not, the Crown would still have gone above the individual wearing it. Meanwhile Tazanoff wishes she would have done more concerning the Empire. What used to be "the Empire where the sun never sets" is no longer dominant nor an united Empire. She was there during the downfall.

In a nutshell, both columnists admit she gave a sense of unity and stability during her decades of reign. However, she was not as mythical and ideal as she is showed to be. Tazanoff strongly disagrees with numerous of her actions and Ascherson too - although he is more enthusiastic about her - sees through the act.

370 words.

II - Essai argumenté

In the wake of Queen Elizabeth II's death and the coronation of Prince Charles, it does not come as a surprise that the relevance and usefulness of the monarchy is being questioned. Will the British monarchy manage to prevail over the numerous challenges of our day and age? Or will the sun finally set in for the British monarchy?

Undoubtedly, there are several challenges of different type that the monarchy must face.

In the social and economic sphere the rise of inequalities made people frown upon the monarchy's privileges, such as their exemption from laws concerning their real estates and incomes (see 1). How can one stand to see their luxurious

lifestyle while the country is facing a 10% inflation? No wonder ^{why} more and more people are advocating against this elitism and social reproduction. Meritocracy is a core value for the youngsters that may be why 35% of them wanted to keep the monarchy (doc 4). Furthermore they cost £67 million per year to the Britons although the Queen's estimated wealth was of £650 million. Had the survival of the monarchy not depend on the Empire's budget, I believe no one would have questioned it.

In the geopolitical sphere, the British monarchy's influence is on the wane. As a result to the Brexit, separation grows steadily in Scotland and Ireland. Indeed, they both mostly voted to remain in the European Union. Therefore they are not that fond of the British monarchy and the more separation grows, the less they are eager to sustain a monarchy, especially a British one (doc 3). They may follow Barbados who paved the way for a British-exit (doc 2).

Although those are alarming issues for the British monarchy, I would say that compared to all the scandals they are facing, they mean little to nothing. Indeed an explosion is harsher than a contedation. In the light of the "Megxit", the British monarchy is accused of being racist and is criticized for its treatment of non-royalty persons. Had they not been born on the "right" family, they would have the same struggles and status as we do. And not only ^{is} the monarchy criticized, the monarch is too, all the more so harshly due to his divorce to the beloved Lady Diana (doc 5). As a result the British monarchy is scrutinized, is it the last straw to their existence?

I would not be so sure about it, as it is not all gloom and doom, I believe those could be the "creative destruction" (Schumpeter) that would force Charles to change the course of history. He is a modernizer, he could embody the watershed Britons hoped for.

Besides, had the British monarchy not face similar setbacks before? Several economic crisis, wars, scandals of divorces or abdication were prevailed over by the monarchy, why would it be any different?

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Consequently, as far as I am concerned, maintaining the British monarchy is not a pipe dream but rather an obligation as they unify all nations (doc 3). No matter how terrible are the challenges I think they have what it takes to prevail over it. It all boils down to their ability to adapt to their time. Maybe by listening more to the people as they did with Lord Altrincham, they will reinvent themselves.

535 words

NE RIEN ÉCRIRE DANS CE CADRE



