

The Coronation.

The Coronation is based on ancient ceremony from a time when monarchs had executive power as head of government. Our service also reflects the complex relationship with the Christian Church that emerged as the established Church of England from the Reformation.

Last century coronations evolved into grand spectacles, to create a holiday mood for the public and to engage people in the change of Head of State. The great show became a celebration of our country, a projection of our country to the rest of the world, and a search for what unites us. Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition sit down together, smile on the proceedings and affirm God save the King. In return the monarch promises to serve us all and to stay above political controversy.

I trust today's event will proceed faultlessly and be enjoyed by all who participate, in person or at home. In a free society we are all at liberty to have our own views on both the individual monarch and the institution of monarchy. We can join in and enjoy or do something else today. For our country's sake it is good if all goes well, foreign guests are welcomed, and diplomacy advanced in the margins of the varied programme. The new King will use his influence both to accept his role as Head of the Anglican Church and his interest in including all the faiths in the service.