

Ep 31: Graham Smith (not that type of republican)

Video available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jCFrU6uM-w>

0:00:06.720,0:00:11.840

[Emma Park] You're listening to the National Secular Society podcast hosted by Emma Park.

0:00:44.360,0:00:47.360

Republic is a member-based pressure group which calls for the abolition of

0:00:11.840,0:00:15.679

Queen Elizabeth ii is now the longest reigning monarch in British history

0:00:47.360,0:00:49.760

the monarchy and the substitution of an elected head

0:00:15.679,0:00:19.760

and one of the most popular. But what will happen when she eventually dies?

0:00:49.760,0:00:52.399

of state, as well as for an elected House of Lords.

0:00:19.760,0:00:23.359

Will Prince Charles simply succeed to the hereditary throne

0:00:52.399,0:00:55.440

Graham and I will be discussing how close the links are between the monarchy

0:00:23.359,0:00:27.279

and carry on the same old tradition? Will he kneel to be anointed by the

0:00:55.440,0:00:58.719

and the established church, why we should care, and whether

0:00:27.280,0:00:29.600

Archbishop of Canterbury in Westminster Abbey?

0:00:58.720,0:01:04.600

secularists need to be republicans.

0:00:29.720,0:00:34.900

And will he assume the title of Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England?

0:01:06.080,0:01:09.840

So I'm joined now by Graham Smith of Republic.

0:00:34.920,0:00:36.640

Will Britain's political establishment

0:01:09.840,0:01:14.080

Graham, just starting with the most obvious question in a way,

0:00:36.640,0:00:41.120

continue to be anglican, monarchical and, in general, stuck in the 19th century?

0:01:14.080,0:01:18.320

should the abolition of the monarchy be an issue that supporters of secularism

0:00:41.120,0:00:44.300

I'm joined today by Graham Smith, CEO of Republic,

0:01:18.320,0:01:24.560

are concerned about?

[Graham Smith] Yes. absolutely. I would say

0:01:24.560,0:01:26.560

that everybody should be concerned about it.

0:01:26.560,0:01:30.000

The monarchy is a quasi-religious institution,

0:01:30.079,0:01:33.520

it's very much bound up with the

0:01:33.520,0:01:38.000

established church, the Queen, of course,
is the head of the Church of England,

0:01:38.000,0:01:43.820

and the family, even if we on paper separated
out

0:01:43.820,0:01:47.240

the Crown from the Church, I think the family
itself

0:01:47.240,0:01:51.260

is very much part of the
Protestant Christian tradition.

0:01:51.260,0:01:53.920

You're only ever going to get

0:01:53.920,0:01:57.360

that same family in that position.

0:01:57.360,0:02:00.560

To underline this, if you look at the oath

0:02:00.560,0:02:06.240

that the Queen took, back in 1953,
when she did her coronation,

0:02:06.240,0:02:13.360

it's an awful lot about god,
not so much about democracy

0:02:13.360,0:02:16.400

and modern values.

0:02:16.400,0:02:20.400

She is asked by the archbishop:
Will you do your utmost

0:02:20.400,0:02:24.959

to maintain the Laws of God and
the True Profession of the Gospel?

0:02:24.959,0:02:29.360

So, in a modern age i think that

0:02:29.360,0:02:33.920

all religions should be equal, there
should be a freedom of faith and

0:02:33.920,0:02:37.680

an equality of belief, and you can't
really do that if you've got a head of

0:02:37.680,0:02:40.480

state who is absolutely wedded to one
religion.

0:02:40.480,0:02:43.599

[EP] Absolutely, and not just freedom of faith
but

0:02:43.599,0:02:46.720

freedom not to be religious, of
course, would be part of that.

0:02:46.720,0:02:51.120

Well, I'm not surprised that
when Queen Elizabeth swore her oaths it

0:02:51.120,0:02:54.640

didn't sound very democratic, after all
the monarchy is a very old-fashioned

0:02:54.640,0:03:00.080

institution, isn't it?
You said the family is part

0:03:00.080,0:03:02.400

of the church tradition, what are

0:03:02.400,0:03:05.760

the specific ways in which
the monarchy is close to the

0:03:05.760,0:03:09.120

established Church? Obviously the

Queen is head of both, she's Defender of

0:03:09.120,0:03:12.319

the Faith, the anglican faith, but are there

0:03:12.319,0:03:15.200

other links?

[GS] If you just look at the

0:03:15.200,0:03:17.680

official society, you might call it,

0:03:17.680,0:03:20.879

any kind of events, particularly around

0:03:20.879,0:03:25.280

things like the Remembrance Day, and other similar sorts of

0:03:25.280,0:03:28.959

civic society events, you're always going to get royals,

0:03:28.959,0:03:32.000

archbishops ,bishops, vicars.

0:03:32.000,0:03:35.920

It's all part of the same framework , of an

0:03:35.920,0:03:39.780

old-fashioned, white, middle-class, Christian society.

0:03:39.780,0:03:43.560

[EP] Is it middle-class or is it aristocratic really?

0:03:43.560,0:03:46.400

[GS] I'm thinking of Middle England

0:03:46.400,0:03:50.159

culture that is very much steeped in royalty and

0:03:50.160,0:03:55.400

religion. They all go to church, they all go to these big ceremonies,

0:03:55.400,0:03:58.560

they all talk about their faith.

When Prince Charles talks about

0:03:58.560,0:04:02.640

his faith, it's not just his faith but

0:04:02.640,0:04:06.480

also obviously he wants to broaden that out to all faiths,

0:04:06.480,0:04:09.360

but not to people that don't have faith.

0:04:09.360,0:04:12.879

I just think that it exudes

0:04:12.880,0:04:20.280

this religious flavor, if you like.

[EP] Let's talk a bit about that,

0:04:20.280,0:04:22.880

the class system, because I

0:04:22.880,0:04:25.600

think this is quite an interesting point that we still

0:04:25.600,0:04:29.360

are quite class bound in Britain, unlike in other countries,

0:04:29.360,0:04:34.320

and the monarchy supports that.

Do you think the people

0:04:34.320,0:04:37.520

who support the monarchy are different from

0:04:37.520,0:04:42.880

the people who politically keeps the monarchy

0:04:42.880,0:04:46.479

going in this country?

Why hasn't it been abolished already, unlike say

0:04:46.480,0:04:52.000
in France, or in most European countries?
[GS] Well, big changes like that in the past

0:04:52.000,0:04:54.000
have usually come about because of

0:04:54.000,0:04:58.240
significant upheavals.
But it is quite possible to

0:04:58.240,0:05:00.560
abolish the monarchy in this country
without

0:05:00.560,0:05:04.720
war or revolution or whatever.
There's a number of reasons why

0:05:04.720,0:05:08.720
it hasn't happened.
Part of that is inertia and part of

0:05:08.720,0:05:13.199
it is that the politicians of all colors and

0:05:13.199,0:05:17.199
persuasions, once they're in power,
they don't want to

0:05:17.199,0:05:20.479
take it on, but also they enjoy the power
that the Crown gives them, so

0:05:20.479,0:05:24.960
it's not a boat they want to rock.
They get an awful lot of

0:05:24.960,0:05:29.039
power from the Crown,
so why would they jeopardize all that

0:05:29.039,0:05:30.800
and possibly cause themselves all

0:05:30.800,0:05:36.600
the political headaches.
I also think that over the last 70 years

0:05:36.600,0:05:39.680
deference and interest in monarchy as

0:05:39.680,0:05:45.360
an idea, as with religion, has declined sharply.

0:05:45.360,0:05:48.960
But we have had the same queen on the
throne throughout that period, and i

0:05:48.960,0:05:55.039
think she has sort of
held it together, and

0:05:55.039,0:05:58.800
maintained support for the monarchy
despite that decline in

0:05:58.800,0:06:03.120
those attitudes. I think once she's
gone, that's then going to be a

0:06:03.120,0:06:07.680
game changer, and we'll start to see
public opinion shift and the

0:06:07.680,0:06:09.600
attitudes towards the monarchy catch up
with

0:06:09.600,0:06:17.280
attitudes on everything else.
[EP] The Church of England obviously has

0:06:17.280,0:06:23.199
its own position of power in our constitution,
because it's the established church.

0:06:23.199,0:06:26.880
How closely is the position of the
Church of England bound up with the

0:06:26.880,0:06:28.800
position of the monarchy?
If the monarchy were

0:06:28.800,0:06:31.759

abolished would the Church of England have to be disestablished?

0:06:31.759,0:06:35.600

[GS] Well, there's no "have to" about any of this.

We can design our constitution

0:06:35.600,0:06:39.440

any way we wish. But i think that it would be inevitable and it's certainly

0:06:39.440,0:06:43.680

our position that what we want is a republic in which

0:06:43.680,0:06:48.240

there is no established church.

Now we are, if i can use the phrase, a broad

0:06:48.240,0:06:52.000

church ourselves. We have religious and non-religious people in

0:06:52.000,0:06:55.520

our membership and for us this is not a criticism of

0:06:55.520,0:06:58.160

religion or faith. It is saying that we should all

0:06:58.160,0:07:02.080

be free and equal and there should be equality in belief

0:07:02.080,0:07:07.120

as well as political equality. I think that it's very

0:07:07.120,0:07:12.880

difficult to have equality of any kind, or to really maximize that

0:07:12.880,0:07:17.120

equality, if I can put it like that, if you've got these big archaic

0:07:17.120,0:07:20.240

institutions of the Church of England and the monarchy

0:07:20.240,0:07:27.520

still embedded in our constitution.

So in terms of the sort of institutional

0:07:27.520,0:07:33.759

element of it, i think that an elected head of state would not be

0:07:33.759,0:07:36.880

able to be a head of the church. That would be a

0:07:36.880,0:07:40.639

nonsense, because obviously that would cause problems for people to want to

0:07:40.639,0:07:42.960

stand, but also the House of Lords would be

0:07:42.960,0:07:48.560

swept aside and fully elected in the future, which means there'll

0:07:48.560,0:07:50.639

be no room for the bishops, and that would

0:07:50.639,0:07:55.599

essentially end all formal links [EP] Because, I guess, that would

0:07:55.599,0:07:58.080

be a matter of just abolishing the religious privilege

0:07:58.080,0:08:02.080

which is associated with the House of Lords, which is tied back to the

0:08:02.080,0:08:05.599

authority of the monarchy .

[GS]Yeah, it's all tied in together.

0:08:05.599,0:08:10.080
It's a long time ago when Tony Blair was

0:08:10.080,0:08:13.360
going through this slightly farcical
process of trying to get

0:08:13.360,0:08:17.520
the Commons to vote on a different
makeup of the House of Lords,

0:08:17.520,0:08:21.759
certain percentages being elected. There
was a Tory MP, I forget who it was,

0:08:21.759,0:08:24.000
who argued against getting rid of the

0:08:24.000,0:08:28.800
hereditaries because it would
leave the queen exposed as the last

0:08:28.800,0:08:33.120
hereditary official in the in the constitution,

0:08:33.120,0:08:36.479
which is an odd argument, but I think

0:08:36.479,0:08:40.320
that that is part of the issue with

0:08:40.320,0:08:44.800
all these archaic institutions.
They sort of prop

0:08:44.800,0:08:48.720
each other up, and if you start taking
away one, then others start to feel

0:08:48.720,0:08:52.560
threatened and exposed. So
they sort of have this symbiotic

0:08:52.560,0:08:54.399
relationship: if you get rid of the
monarchy the

0:08:54.399,0:08:59.040

the church will almost certainly be gone
as an established church,

0:08:59.040,0:09:02.800
probably before the monarchy goes.
And if you disestablish the

0:09:02.800,0:09:06.800
Church, I think that's going to
leave the monarchy looking more

0:09:06.800,0:09:10.880
exposed as well. So I think that
for secularists who are keen

0:09:10.880,0:09:16.160
to have a secular state,
these two things need to be

0:09:16.160,0:09:19.200
challenged together, because I don't
think you're going to get

0:09:19.200,0:09:22.480
resistance against a secular state

0:09:22.480,0:09:26.000
whilst we've got the monarchy.
[EP] Absolutely.

0:09:26.000,0:09:30.320
If the monarchy is hardly a
democratic institution, the same could be

0:09:30.320,0:09:33.680
said for the Church of England,
that's not very democratic.

0:09:33.680,0:09:38.160
[GS] Well indeed.
Years ago I wrote, actually

0:09:38.160,0:09:41.519
this must be going back about 20 years,
just for the fun of it, I wrote to the

0:09:41.519,0:09:44.160
Archbishop of Canterbury and asked him

to justify why he

0:09:44.160,0:09:47.200

thinks he should have a seat in our parliament. And it was a very

0:09:47.200,0:09:50.000

snotty reply saying this is how

0:09:50.000,0:09:53.920

Britain is run.

[EP] This is the way it is, basically.

0:09:53.920,0:09:57.040

[GS] Yeah, I think it's awful.

0:09:57.040,0:10:01.200

A while back I had an Australian friend

0:10:01.200,0:10:05.120

visiting, and we went for a bit of a wander around London, had a bit of spare

0:10:05.120,0:10:08.640

time, so he went into Parliament. He'd never been into our Parliament

0:10:08.640,0:10:11.200

I've been into the Australian Parliament as

0:10:11.200,0:10:17.839

a fully democratic right. We went into the Commons and watched

0:10:17.839,0:10:21.200

that for a few minutes, then we went across to the Lords and sat in the

0:10:21.200,0:10:24.399

public gallery, and on the screen it said that they were debating the role of

0:10:24.399,0:10:27.040

women in society, and we we sat down and looked down into the

0:10:27.040,0:10:31.040

chamber and there was a bishop in all these religious clothes, I

0:10:31.040,0:10:34.720

can't remember what are they called now, he's standing on his feet talking about

0:10:34.720,0:10:37.440

the role of women in society, and this is before they allowed women to be

0:10:37.440,0:10:42.560

bishops. And it was kind of embarrassing that an Australian

0:10:42.560,0:10:45.920

would just never conceive that you would have bishops just

0:10:45.920,0:10:49.279

automatically placed in the senate, and yet we just treat it as if it's

0:10:49.279,0:10:52.959

perfectly normal. It's really crazy.

0:10:52.959,0:10:55.519

[EP] What about the coronation? That's

0:10:55.519,0:10:57.760

full of religious symbolism, isn't it?

0:10:57.760,0:11:02.079

The Queen is almost anointed as a representative of god.

0:11:02.079,0:11:05.760

[GS] Yeah. The monarchy is a quasi religious institution. If you go back

0:11:05.760,0:11:10.880

to its inception, back

0:11:10.880,0:11:14.480

around the time of Charlemagne, and before that,

0:11:14.480,0:11:18.480
kings cottoned on to this idea, as Christianity spread,

0:11:18.480,0:11:21.360
that it would be good for them
if they said: well, actually

0:11:21.360,0:11:24.800
I'm not just here because I'm
the most powerful guy around, I'm also

0:11:24.800,0:11:28.520
here because god wants me to be,
and if you challenge me, you challenge god.

0:11:28.520,0:11:31.760
That literally puts the fear of god
into people and keeps people

0:11:31.760,0:11:35.440
in place. And it's it's been like that ever since.
[EP] To be fair, we've got

0:11:35.440,0:11:40.000
a slightly weird compromise in England
because we

0:11:40.000,0:11:43.519
fought a civil war
against a king who asserted his divine

0:11:43.519,0:11:46.160
right and beheaded him,
and then came back to a sort of more

0:11:46.160,0:11:49.760
moderate system a bit later.
[GS] Indeed, yeah. It's clearly, obviously

0:11:49.760,0:11:53.200
changed over the years, but the Queen
clearly believes

0:11:53.200,0:11:56.399
in the divine right. She
doesn't believe that she's got the

0:11:56.399,0:11:59.600
divine right to rule as an absolute monarch,
but she

0:11:59.600,0:12:04.480
sees it as a sort of a religious position,

0:12:04.480,0:12:08.000
and she takes her oath to god
seriously, which is why

0:12:08.000,0:12:11.680
she's never going to abdicate.
[EP] Well, she's she's pretty old now.

0:12:11.680,0:12:15.519
But what about Prince Charles?
What's his view about religion

0:12:15.519,0:12:19.279
that so far can be gathered?
Has he made any

0:12:19.279,0:12:23.600
particular statements of interest?
[GS] Prince Charles is pretty eccentric

0:12:23.600,0:12:28.160
at the best times. He's clearly
part of the same tradition. He's clearly

0:12:28.160,0:12:31.680
in tune with the Church of England and
has very close relationships

0:12:31.680,0:12:33.680
with the bishops and so on. But he has

0:12:33.680,0:12:37.360
made various statements about wanting to
be defender of all faiths,

0:12:37.360,0:12:43.519
and he has built various relationships with
other

0:12:43.519,0:12:46.320
faith leaders.

He has a particular interest in
0:12:46.320,0:12:52.480
mysticism and eastern faiths. But he's
0:12:52.480,0:12:56.240
spoken out, as he often does, on all sorts
of issues on
0:12:56.240,0:13:00.720
defending the rights of Christians in
places like the Middle East, which is
0:13:00.720,0:13:05.360
absolutely the right thing to
do if you're not the heir of the throne.
0:13:05.360,0:13:09.200
But he doesn't necessarily wade into
0:13:09.200,0:13:13.120
the rights of other faiths, but he has spoken
out,
0:13:13.120,0:13:16.000
or more to the point, he hasn't spoken
0:13:16.000,0:13:20.240
out on secular rights of people.
He talks
0:13:20.240,0:13:22.480
about human rights in terms of religious
0:13:22.480,0:13:24.480
oppression, and that's an
important thing to do
0:13:24.480,0:13:27.600
and say, but he is quite
particular about what he
0:13:27.600,0:13:31.760
will speak up on. He has often
criticized China over
0:13:31.760,0:13:36.560
human rights abuses in Tibet, although

again he hasn't really, as far as I'm aware,
0:13:36.560,0:13:39.680
he hasn't criticized China for
human rights abuses in the rest of China.
0:13:39.680,0:13:45.360
So, he's quite picky.
[EP] Is it difficult for the
0:13:45.360,0:13:50.160
monarchy, really? Because
whoever is the monarch, on the one
0:13:50.160,0:13:52.720
hand they're meant to be
the representative of the established
0:13:52.720,0:13:56.460
church, but on the other hand in a way
they're supposed to be neutral, aren't they?
0:13:56.460,0:13:58.880
Is the monarch, him/herself
0:13:58.880,0:14:02.980
able to really have freedom of religion
in our current constitution?
0:14:02.980,0:14:05.600
[GS] Well this is part of the problem,
that they don't have freedom of
0:14:05.600,0:14:10.079
religion. They are
supposed to be neutral politically, but
0:14:10.079,0:14:14.240
they're supposed to be
Protestant Christian in terms of
0:14:14.240,0:14:17.279
their belief.
We still have a ban, which is absolutely
0:14:17.279,0:14:22.880
outrageous, on the monarch being Catholic,
so

0:14:22.880,0:14:26.720
if Harry decided that he was
going to convert to Catholicism, he would

0:14:26.720,0:14:31.700
then be removed immediately,
by default, from the line of succession.

0:14:31.700,0:14:34.000
[EP] What if the monarch decided

0:14:34.000,0:14:36.400
to become another religion?
Would the same thing happen?

0:14:36.400,0:14:39.519
What if they decided to become buddhist?
Would they remain...?

0:14:39.519,0:14:41.120
[GS] They could be buddhist, yeah, but

0:14:41.120,0:14:43.680
it's a specifically anti-Catholic

0:14:43.680,0:14:47.279
measure, which, and this is a law
that now dates back to

0:14:47.279,0:14:50.560
2011, it was reformed by the
Cameron

0:14:50.560,0:14:53.839
coalition government, they specifically

0:14:53.840,0:14:56.720
left that in there, it was debated and
they said no, we're going to leave that

0:14:56.720,0:14:59.680
there now.
Prince George, what is he now?

0:14:59.680,0:15:05.600
Seven, I think.
He is growing up being told that he's

0:15:05.600,0:15:09.120
going to have no choice about what he wants
to do

0:15:09.120,0:15:12.160
as a job, he's got no choice about
things like going into the army,

0:15:12.160,0:15:14.160
regardless what he how he feels about that,

0:15:14.160,0:15:17.680
and he has no choice on religion.
He's being told: sorry but

0:15:17.680,0:15:21.040
you are expected to be king, and that
means you're going to be a

0:15:21.040,0:15:24.240
Protestant Christian, regardless of what
you personally believe. And that

0:15:24.240,0:15:30.000
is not okay. You can't do that to people.
I'm not overflowing with sympathy

0:15:30.000,0:15:33.759
for the royals, but I think for the younger ones
that are growing

0:15:33.759,0:15:36.800
up in it, I think that they ought to be

0:15:36.800,0:15:42.100
free to make their own decisions and free to
believe whatever they want.

0:15:42.100,0:15:44.480
[EP] But i guess that's the whole problem

0:15:44.480,0:15:47.519
with the hereditary monarchy in the
first place, is that it's a job which

0:15:47.519,0:15:50.880
you're appointed to from right from birth, and

0:15:50.880,0:15:55.120
there's nothing you can do about it.
[GS] Yeah, absolutely. The thing is

0:15:55.120,0:16:01.360
the monarchy is unprincipled,
and it's wrong in principle, fundamentally.

0:16:01.360,0:16:04.240
This country believes in democracy and
equality

0:16:04.240,0:16:07.920
and fairness and all these kinds of
things, and the monarchy just stands

0:16:07.920,0:16:13.279
absolutely against those values.
In itself it is

0:16:13.279,0:16:18.079
not an institution that lives up to
the standards we expect of public

0:16:18.079,0:16:20.800
institutions in terms of its secrecy and
so on,

0:16:20.800,0:16:24.580
and, of course, it's lack of equality
within its own ranks,

0:16:24.580,0:16:27.120
the lack of freedom, as i was mentioning
about,

0:16:27.120,0:16:30.800
Prince George's deciding what
he wants to do, but also

0:16:30.800,0:16:35.199
the Crown is the bedrock of our constitution,

0:16:35.199,0:16:39.839
the Church of England, and the
relationship between the Church and the

0:16:39.839,0:16:43.920
Crown, is fundamental to the current
constitution in various ways.

0:16:43.920,0:16:49.519
This is a big sort of monolithic
archaic constitution, and the monarchy

0:16:49.519,0:16:52.720
acts as a huge obstacle to serious reform. And
I've

0:16:52.720,0:16:55.920
often said that reformers
on other issues are missing a trick by

0:16:55.920,0:16:58.959
not going after the Crown,
because the Crown

0:16:58.959,0:17:02.959
is quite central, both directly in the
sense that

0:17:02.959,0:17:06.400
it gives an awful lot of power to the
Prime Minister and his ministers, that

0:17:06.400,0:17:10.959
allows them to control the agenda and
decide what's debated, and to

0:17:10.959,0:17:14.559
make sure there isn't any
serious threat to the constitution,

0:17:14.559,0:17:21.280
and also culturally and
and socially it creates this

0:17:21.280,0:17:24.400
obstacle, because people say "Oh you can't

0:17:24.400,0:17:26.720
have all these sweeping changes
because of the Queen".

0:17:26.720,0:17:31.600

I'm sure that if you stand up
in Parliament and say: We need

0:17:31.600,0:17:35.200
to be a secular state where no religion
is privileged" people will

0:17:35.200,0:17:40.559
raise the Queen as one of the
early objections, saying you can't

0:17:40.559,0:17:44.320
possibly do that, that's an affront to
Her Maj, and

0:17:44.320,0:17:48.080
that's a serious problem.
[EP] Well, do you think that

0:17:48.080,0:17:51.440
there is any prospect that things will
change when

0:17:51.440,0:17:54.960
the Queen eventually dies,
and Prince Charles

0:17:54.960,0:17:59.039
inherits the throne? Is there any
possibility that we might see more

0:17:59.040,0:18:03.620
constitutional reforms, or are we going
to have to wait until William or George?

0:18:03.620,0:18:07.760
[GS] I think the royals are facing
a pretty tough decade.

0:18:07.760,0:18:12.080
They do not have the same level of
support they used to.

0:18:12.080,0:18:15.760
We ran a poll a couple of years ago at
the time of Harry's wedding.

0:18:15.760,0:18:18.880

Two-thirds of the population
weren't interested in the wedding.

0:18:18.880,0:18:21.360
Most people liked the

0:18:21.360,0:18:25.360
Queen and had positive
views of her, but

0:18:25.360,0:18:30.240
people were fairly indifferent to the whole
thing.

0:18:30.240,0:18:33.679
It is the Queen that is sustaining popularity,

0:18:33.679,0:18:37.440
Charles does not carry across that
popularity, William doesn't either.

0:18:37.440,0:18:42.000
Harry and Megan are going to be a
thorn in their PR

0:18:42.000,0:18:49.200
side for a very long time to come.
And Charles is

0:18:49.200,0:18:53.200
going to be a challenge for a lot of
people, not only him being king, but

0:18:53.200,0:18:56.160
also just watching a succession.
Most of us

0:18:56.160,0:18:58.799
were not around the last time
we had a succession and in

0:18:58.799,0:19:03.280
this modern age of
24/7 media and social media, the idea

0:19:03.280,0:19:07.360
that we just sit back and let this
guy just become king

0:19:07.360,0:19:12.580

without a debate and discussion,
that's not going to happen.

0:19:12.580,0:19:15.280

It's going to be a very large debate.
[EP] That's very

0:19:15.280,0:19:17.520

interesting that you say that, because one

0:19:17.520,0:19:21.520

argument, or one attitude that
some people might take is simply

0:19:21.520,0:19:24.180

"Well, yes, the C of E is very old-fashioned,

0:19:24.180,0:19:27.360

the monarchy is very old-fashioned,
they have this weird ceremony where

0:19:27.360,0:19:31.120

the monarch is anointed by the
bishop on behalf of god,

0:19:31.120,0:19:34.240

but it doesn't really affect my everyday life.

0:19:34.240,0:19:37.360

Let's just leave it because it doesn't really
matter".

What would your response

0:19:37.360,0:19:40.400

to that be?

[GS] Well, there are a number of things

0:19:40.400,0:19:44.880

to say to that. In terms of
the monarchy, firstly, not everything has

0:19:44.880,0:19:47.840

to affect your everyday life.

It is unprincipled and we should take

0:19:47.840,0:19:51.039

our values and principles seriously.

If we want this country to be

0:19:51.039,0:19:54.000

genuinely democratic, and I think a lot
of people have a problem with the lack

0:19:54.000,0:19:57.280

of democracy in this country,
then we really have to make sure our

0:19:57.280,0:20:01.919

institutions reflect that and
are celebrating and

0:20:01.919,0:20:06.559

enshrining democracy, not
standing against it. The monarchy

0:20:06.559,0:20:09.919

itself is falling far short of all the
standards that we expect of any other

0:20:09.919,0:20:14.240

institution, whether it's a police force or

0:20:14.240,0:20:17.760

an NHS trust or whatever.

If they were

0:20:17.760,0:20:21.679

secretive, they were spending their
public money on themselves,

0:20:21.679,0:20:25.039

if they were doing any of the things
that the royals do,

0:20:25.039,0:20:28.480

there'd be calls for reform,
investigation, and all the rest of it.

0:20:28.480,0:20:33.440

But the thing is, the quality
of our government and Parliament, and the

0:20:33.440,0:20:38.000

decisions they're make, and how well they govern and make

0:20:38.000,0:20:40.799

legislation, is clearly going to be impacted by the

0:20:40.799,0:20:45.600

constitution, and the constitution is really poor

0:20:45.600,0:20:50.880

on all fronts. It's absolutely dire.

The House of Lords has

0:20:50.880,0:20:55.280

no checks and balances really, against the power of

0:20:55.280,0:20:57.200

the government. This is why people were

0:20:57.200,0:21:02.400

somewhat shocked and surprised all the fights in

0:21:02.400,0:21:04.720

in the last Parliament, because all of a

0:21:04.720,0:21:07.360

sudden we had a very contentious issue being fought

0:21:07.360,0:21:11.919

with a government without a majority. So all of a sudden Parliament had some

0:21:11.919,0:21:15.919

power but usually...

[EP] And Boris Johnson

0:21:15.919,0:21:18.000

threatened to use the royal prerogative to

0:21:18.000,0:21:23.280

prorogue Parliament for a little bit...

[GS] So, in short, if you want to get better

0:21:23.280,0:21:27.679

government and better politics and better politicians, then

0:21:27.679,0:21:31.120

you need to have constitutional reform, and part of that is getting rid of the

0:21:31.120,0:21:35.440

Crown, and properly distributing power, and

0:21:35.440,0:21:38.720

making sure that there are proper checks and balances and proper representation

0:21:38.720,0:21:43.600

in both houses.

And also

0:21:43.600,0:21:47.280

not having this sort of layer of royalty and

0:21:47.280,0:21:50.480

secrets, which has access to government ministers and government

0:21:50.480,0:21:52.480

papers, and might be bending the year of the Prime

0:21:52.480,0:21:55.200

Minister every week about certain issues.

0:21:55.200,0:21:59.440

It just all comes as one big package. We need to get rid

0:21:59.440,0:22:01.679

of a whole lot of our constitution and

0:22:01.679,0:22:03.919

replace it with stuff that's better, whether it's,

0:22:03.919,0:22:07.200

I don't know, some people want a different electoral system,

0:22:07.200,0:22:11.039
we want to replace the House of Lords,
and we also need a head of state

0:22:11.039,0:22:14.000
that's going to do something
useful, because this is

0:22:14.000,0:22:19.840
an important role to play. The other
heads of states play. So

0:22:19.840,0:22:23.600
if we have a conversation which is
clearly defined, and that means that some

0:22:23.600,0:22:26.400
legislation may be deemed to be
unconstitutional,

0:22:26.400,0:22:30.720
but that's a very hard thing to do
in this country, because the constitution

0:22:30.720,0:22:32.960
is so flexible and the power of
parliament is

0:22:32.960,0:22:37.440
all powerful.
[EP] Would you prefer an approach to a
constitution

0:22:37.440,0:22:43.600
be to have a head of state
who was completely

0:22:43.600,0:22:46.880
separated from religion?
[GS] Yeah.

0:22:46.880,0:22:50.159
They're religious and fine.
But they wouldn't be

0:22:50.159,0:22:54.000
officially attached to any kind of

church or religion.

0:22:54.000,0:22:57.919
What they do privately is up to them.
But they should have a constitutional

0:22:57.919,0:23:00.240
role which is independent of the
government. The Queen is not

0:23:00.240,0:23:02.240
independent of the government, and this
is part of the problem.

0:23:02.240,0:23:05.520
People say she's neutral.
She's not,

0:23:05.520,0:23:08.000
She's there to do what the Prime
Minister tells her to do, which is what

0:23:08.000,0:23:10.799
she did last year with the
prorogation of Parliament.

0:23:10.799,0:23:14.559
Now people said "Oh, she had to do it
because that's the rule". But

0:23:14.559,0:23:18.000
what they're saying is: our constitution
says the head of state has

0:23:18.000,0:23:19.919
to do something which is
unconstitutional

0:23:19.919,0:23:23.840
when she's told to do it, which is madness.
[EP] It's a contradiction

0:23:23.840,0:23:27.360
In terms of the Church of England and
the bishops still being in the House of

0:23:27.360,0:23:33.120
Lords. of course, is your sense that

there is sort of an imbalance,
0:23:33.120,0:23:36.159
as sort of an excessive influence of religion
0:23:36.159,0:23:39.600
on the House of Lords or on politics in
general in our current system?
0:23:39.600,0:23:44.400
[GS] Well, I don't know the extent to
which the influence has an impact on the
0:23:44.400,0:23:48.000
overall legislation. The Government
0:23:48.000,0:23:50.880
tends to get what it wants but you've got
0:23:50.880,0:23:55.200
25 or 26 bishops, they can go in there
0:23:55.200,0:23:58.960
and debate any issue they like from a very
0:23:58.960,0:24:04.080
particular point of view, particularly on
social issues, usually a conservative
0:24:04.080,0:24:09.120
(small c conservative)
point of view.
0:24:09.120,0:24:13.679
No other religion gets that kind
of privilege.
0:24:13.679,0:24:16.960
Certainly in the past it's been the case
that they've spoken out against things
0:24:16.960,0:24:21.760
like LGBT rights, abortion,
0:24:21.760,0:24:25.279
stem cell research - all these sorts of
things. I just think

0:24:25.279,0:24:27.840
that even if it has a small amount of
0:24:27.840,0:24:31.279
influence, that's wrong. I just think
it's abhorrent, really, that we have
0:24:31.279,0:24:35.120
a situation where we just put bishops
of the church into our Parliament.
0:24:35.120,0:24:37.600
No one should be in Parliament unless
they've been elected, but
0:24:37.600,0:24:41.200
to single out one church and say
"Right, okay, your
0:24:41.200,0:24:43.520
top 26 bishops can sit in our
Parliament" I just think that's
0:24:43.520,0:24:46.880
absolutely appalling.
[EP] Let's just look at other European
0:24:46.880,0:24:49.520
countries which still have a monarchy,
0:24:49.520,0:24:54.520
there are a few: the Netherlands, Denmark...
0:24:54.520,0:24:57.919
What's the situation there?
Does the monarch still have a religious role to
play in
0:24:57.919,0:25:01.200
those countries?
[GS] One of them, Sweden,
0:25:01.200,0:25:04.640
disestablished but kept the monarchy.
0:25:04.640,0:25:07.919
It didn't really change a lot.
It's still very much

0:25:07.919,0:25:13.120
a quasi-religious institution
that is very much connected

0:25:13.120,0:25:17.520
to the church.
They still have a strong relationship

0:25:17.520,0:25:21.360
with the church. They don't have

0:25:21.360,0:25:24.799
established churches in the way that we do.

0:25:24.799,0:25:28.159
I forget which ones are established
and which aren't, but they

0:25:28.159,0:25:30.559
don't have bishops in parliament and so on.

0:25:30.559,0:25:33.760
[EP] Yeah. I think Iran is the only
other country in the world which has

0:25:33.760,0:25:36.640
clerics in its Parliament.
[GS] Yes, indeed.

0:25:36.640,0:25:40.320
The House of Lords is one of two
parliamentary houses with

0:25:40.320,0:25:43.760
clerics, and it's the second largest
(in the world), second only

0:25:43.760,0:25:46.720
to the Chinese National People's Congress.

0:25:46.720,0:25:50.960
So it's not exactly up there in the top

0:25:50.960,0:25:54.400
ranks of democratic chambers.

0:25:54.400,0:25:58.320

The European monarchies are
very similar to ours. There's this idea

0:25:58.320,0:26:01.279
that maybe we can have a bicycling monarchy

0:26:01.279,0:26:06.000
like the Netherlands, but
that's a myth. They are

0:26:06.000,0:26:09.220
more or less the same as ours.
They're pretty awful,

0:26:09.220,0:26:13.039
they're secretive, they misuse public money
and they have this

0:26:13.039,0:26:17.039
very strong connection with Christian faith.

0:26:17.039,0:26:20.640
[EP] You say a "quasi-religious institution",

0:26:20.640,0:26:24.320
How exactly do you understand that?

[GS] Well, it's religious in the sense that it

0:26:24.320,0:26:27.520
is based on this idea of divine right.

0:26:27.520,0:26:31.679
In modern society people
get their jobs because of

0:26:31.679,0:26:36.000
merit or because of popular mandate,
apart from the monarch.

0:26:36.000,0:26:38.799
The only logic is that you have to

0:26:38.799,0:26:43.760
believe that there is some
inherent value that person has,

0:26:43.760,0:26:47.279
simply because of the family they're

born into, and the position they hold.

0:26:47.279,0:26:51.760

Certainly the mythology of the monarchy is that

0:26:51.760,0:26:56.880

that comes from god, and that's what the Queen certainly believes and

0:26:56.880,0:27:01.200

previous monarchs certainly believed. All the trappings, all the belief,

0:27:01.200,0:27:04.799

even the need to make that leap of faith is

0:27:04.800,0:27:07.700

there as well. There's plenty of religious people in Republic, as i said.

0:27:07.700,0:27:09.740

You can be religious and republican.

0:27:09.740,0:27:13.520

You can be an atheist and support the monarchy. But there is a

0:27:13.520,0:27:20.240

similarity in the way in which the two, religion and monarchy, function.

0:27:20.240,0:27:23.919

[EP] How would you define that similarity?
[GS] Just in terms of that

0:27:23.919,0:27:30.480

need for faith rather than evidence, and that willing to believe

0:27:30.480,0:27:34.320

which if it's your own personal faith, that's fine, that's absolutely

0:27:34.320,0:27:38.640

no problem at all to me. But if it's an institution which is bound up in our

0:27:38.640,0:27:41.919

constitution, then that's not okay. Another thing: I've

0:27:41.919,0:27:46.799

spoken to plenty of religious people who are quite annoyed by the monarchy for

0:27:46.799,0:27:50.480

two reasons. Firstly they don't really see it as living up to the ideals of

0:27:50.480,0:27:54.960

their faith.

I think they have a problem with

0:27:54.960,0:27:58.159

their faith being bound up with the state. And then

0:27:58.160,0:28:00.000

there are religious people, obviously the Christian

0:28:00.000,0:28:03.120

Church of England people that want disestablishment of the Church for the same

0:28:03.120,0:28:07.039

reason, they don't think that their church and their faith

0:28:07.039,0:28:13.120

should be sullied by this

0:28:13.120,0:28:17.440

relationship with the state.
[EP] Very strange. So

0:28:17.440,0:28:22.080

wanting the monarchy to continue, you have to

0:28:22.080,0:28:24.640

believe in the monarch as an act of faith, in the way that you

0:28:24.640,0:28:27.840

believe in a god. But perhaps it's easier to believe in a god that's

0:28:27.840,0:28:30.880
invisible than in the monarch that is visible,

0:28:30.880,0:28:34.880
whose flaws you can easily see.
[GS] Religious faith is a personal thing and

0:28:34.880,0:28:37.679
if you're not pushing it on other people or

0:28:37.679,0:28:42.080
insisting your religion
defines rules and laws, then fine.

0:28:42.080,0:28:46.080
That's not a problem.
But if you're saying that you believe that

0:28:46.080,0:28:48.880
Charles is the best person that we could
possibly come up with to be head of

0:28:48.880,0:28:52.320
state, and that they ought to
carry on doing all this, then

0:28:52.320,0:28:55.120
that is a problem.

0:28:55.279,0:28:58.159
The other thing I was going to say is,

0:28:58.159,0:29:07.200
and this point has been made to me by
Christians particularly, and Quakers as well,

0:29:07.200,0:29:10.240
it's that there's this idea in

0:29:10.240,0:29:13.760
the Christian tradition that
there is only one king

0:29:13.760,0:29:17.760
and you worship god, and

there's no one between you and god.

0:29:17.760,0:29:22.799
And it's wrong for people, men
and women, to put themselves between you

0:29:22.799,0:29:28.640
and god, and say:
I am your king. I speak for you.

0:29:28.640,0:29:34.000
That is, for some Christians, a problem.
Obviously a lot of other

0:29:34.000,0:29:38.240
Christians accept the authority
of the church or pope or

0:29:38.240,0:29:42.000
archbishop or whatever.
So there is this interesting

0:29:42.000,0:29:45.360
conflict saying "Well, hang on a minute.
You can't be my monarch because

0:29:45.360,0:29:51.440
my king is is god."
[EP] Yeah, absolutely. Just as it's perfectly
feasible

0:29:51.440,0:29:56.500
to be religious and secular ,
so you can also be religious and republican.

0:29:56.500,0:30:02.000
If you're an Anglican it's difficult.
Finally, just one last question,

0:30:02.000,0:30:06.460
Graham, what can organizations like
Republic and the NSS learn from each other,

0:30:06.460,0:30:09.279
in terms of campaigns and the way to

0:30:09.279,0:30:14.320
push forward with constitutional reform?

[GS] I think that there are similarities in

0:30:14.320,0:30:16.720

the sense that, I think you said before, that

0:30:16.720,0:30:19.760

some people find it difficult to see
what it's going to do for them

0:30:19.760,0:30:22.960

as it were. I think that there is
a need to be

0:30:22.960,0:30:28.820

bold and uncompromising in the message.
I think there is a challenge

0:30:28.820,0:30:32.040

to make it relevant to people.

0:30:32.040,0:30:37.679

Certainly our two organizations
are both facing

0:30:37.680,0:30:41.660

deeply entrenched privileged institutions
who will fight tooth and nail

0:30:41.660,0:30:44.320

to defend that privileged position that they
own.

0:30:44.320,0:30:50.920

So I think there's a lot of similarity.
Fundamentally our messages are very similar,

0:30:50.920,0:30:56.760

which is that it's about equality as citizens.
We're talking about political equality

0:30:56.760,0:30:59.760

and equality in the constitution, and

0:30:59.760,0:31:04.720

you're talking about equality of belief and so
on.

0:31:04.720,0:31:08.440

It all comes largely from
the same tradition .

0:31:08.440,0:31:12.080

I'm sure there's plenty that we can

0:31:12.080,0:31:17.440

learn from each other. I think that it
is a challenge to take these issues

0:31:17.440,0:31:19.760

and connect them to people's everyday
lives, but I think that

0:31:19.760,0:31:27.120

for both of us there is a strong case
to be made that achieving our aims would

0:31:27.120,0:31:30.960

make Britain a better place, a fairer place,
and a better governed place.

0:31:30.960,0:31:37.300

[EP] Graham Smith, thank you very much.
[GS] Thank you

0:31:40.800,0:31:45.200

[EP] I'm joined now by the NSS's
Alastair Lichten for a little comment

0:31:45.200,0:31:51.600

on Graham's interview.
Alastair, what are your reactions to

0:31:51.600,0:31:55.360

Graham's thoughts about and
Graham's position on the monarchy?

0:31:55.360,0:32:01.400

Do you agree with him?

[Alastair Lichten] Yes, on a personal level,
definitely.

0:32:01.400,0:32:03.760

The point I think Graham makes is it's

0:32:03.760,0:32:11.400

very difficult to imagine a truly

secular democracy with a monarchy.

0:32:11.400,0:32:14.159
Now, in a theoretical sense, I think

0:32:14.159,0:32:18.080
you could theoretically disentangle those, just as you could

0:32:18.080,0:32:22.480
theoretically remove just the bishops bench from

0:32:22.480,0:32:27.360
the House of Lords, for example.
But I think, in a realistic sense, if we

0:32:27.360,0:32:31.380
wanted to transform to a secular democracy,

0:32:31.380,0:32:38.260
a proper secular democracy in the UK, that such vestiges of theocracy,

0:32:38.260,0:32:42.540
of the idea of the divine rights of kings and the divine right of bishops,

0:32:42.540,0:32:45.360
it's very difficult to see how that would fit in.

0:32:45.360,0:32:47.600
[EP] It just seems as though the monarchy,

0:32:47.600,0:32:51.039
as Graham was saying, is so inherently tied up

0:32:51.039,0:32:54.399
with the religious tradition, and all of the symbolism of the monarchy is so

0:32:54.399,0:32:57.120
religious, it's very hard to see how that could be

0:32:57.120,0:33:00.720
disentangled and keep the

monarchy still in one piece.

0:33:00.720,0:33:04.000
[AL] The National Secular Society has a very long

0:33:04.000,0:33:08.080
tradition of republicanism.
All of the founding members of

0:33:08.080,0:33:12.159
the National Secular Society were republicans. Charles Bradlaugh wrote

0:33:12.160,0:33:16.180
the scathing impeachment of the House of Brunswick,

0:33:16.180,0:33:18.420
and there has always been that long tradition.

0:33:18.420,0:33:20.640
There are republican clubs which are

0:33:20.640,0:33:24.240
part of the reformist movement out of which secularist

0:33:24.240,0:33:29.120
organizations also developed, and eventually the National Secular Society.

0:33:29.120,0:33:32.559
The National Secular Society at the moment doesn't take a position on the monarchy.

0:33:32.559,0:33:34.799
We believe there should be a secular

0:33:34.799,0:33:39.039
head of state.
Now, you could say it's very difficult,

0:33:39.039,0:33:41.200
again, as the case that Graham has made, it's

0:33:41.200,0:33:45.919
very difficult to imagine a proper

secular head of state who is also
0:33:45.919,0:33:52.720
a hereditary monarch, but that's not
an absolute thing. You could have a
0:33:52.720,0:33:55.440
theoretical version of the monarchy which
was
0:33:55.440,0:34:00.080
consistent with that.
As i said, similar to the House of Lords,
0:34:00.080,0:34:02.559
the National Secular Society
doesn't take a position on
0:34:02.559,0:34:04.320
whether or not the House of Lords
should be an
0:34:04.320,0:34:07.519
entirely elected chamber.
We think it should be
0:34:07.519,0:34:11.280
a secular chamber and you
shouldn't have people appointed
0:34:11.280,0:34:14.639
simply based on their religious authority.
0:34:14.639,0:34:18.240
However, though we don't take a position,
0:34:18.240,0:34:21.280
I think it'd be quite reasonable to look
at that and say
0:34:21.280,0:34:26.159
it's difficult to imagine getting rid
of the bishops bench without just
0:34:26.159,0:34:31.119
moving to a proper elected system.
[EP] Absolutely. When did the change

0:34:31.119,0:34:36.639
happen in the National Secular Society,
from being so firmly republican to
0:34:36.639,0:34:39.919
adopting a neutral stance on the monarchy
and
0:34:39.919,0:34:43.359
on the House of Lords?
[AL] If you look back
0:34:43.359,0:34:47.359
through the National Secular Society's
history, because we've always been
0:34:47.359,0:34:58.160
a very progressive, reformist organization,
we've often supported causes which
nowadays
0:34:58.160,0:35:01.280
are so widely supported that they're not seen
0:35:01.280,0:35:05.520
as necessary secularist causes, for example
0:35:05.520,0:35:08.880
abolition of the death penalty, votes for
women.
These are not necessarily seen as
0:35:08.880,0:35:13.920
secularist causes nowadays because
it's a measure of how far
0:35:13.920,0:35:18.880
things have moved on.
It's important the NSS
0:35:18.880,0:35:23.680
doesn't get drawn into issues which
are not directly related to secularism.
0:35:23.680,0:35:30.160
It's also, in the time it was founded,
that very deep relationship between

0:35:30.160,0:35:35.680
the establishment without the established church,

0:35:35.680,0:35:37.680
the established social order,

0:35:37.680,0:35:41.040
the established monarchy, and the hostility that that

0:35:41.040,0:35:48.560
entangled web of establishment has to progressive and reform movements.

0:35:48.560,0:35:52.160
It made it you know inevitable that an organization

0:35:52.160,0:35:56.160
that was setting out to challenge one form of that establishment, would be

0:35:56.160,0:36:00.000
drawn into challenging other forms of that.

0:36:00.000,0:36:04.000
[EP] One other point to come out of Graham's interview is

0:36:04.000,0:36:08.720
the idea that with the bishops in the House of Lords, the Church of England

0:36:08.720,0:36:12.800
and the monarchy, because they seem to be so old-fashioned, do you think there's

0:36:12.800,0:36:16.079
a sense in which just the very fact that we still have

0:36:16.079,0:36:20.320
these checks on democracy in Britain, does

0:36:20.320,0:36:24.960
it compromise, do you think, the quality of our democracy overall?

0:36:24.960,0:36:28.560
[AL] Definitely the deference that comes with

0:36:28.560,0:36:32.560
an established order, whatever the established order is, the idea that

0:36:32.560,0:36:36.000
there is an institution that can't be challenged,

0:36:36.000,0:36:39.359
and I'm sure the Republic encounter a

0:36:39.359,0:36:42.079
similar thing. At the NSS we sometimes just encounter this

0:36:42.079,0:36:45.599
almost incomprehension from people:

0:36:45.599,0:36:48.163
How can you question?
How dare you?

0:36:48.163,0:36:53.760
Are you allowed?
How can you possibly question the established church?

0:36:53.760,0:36:57.920
No word of a lie, someone has told me that if we disestablish the Church of England

0:36:57.920,0:37:00.860
who would be the established church?

0:37:00.860,0:37:05.040
You can not have that sort of establishment. That's perfectly possible. And if you

0:37:05.040,0:37:08.079
look around the world at most secular democracies,

0:37:08.079,0:37:12.240
they don't.

[EP] Absolutely. Just a final question,
0:37:12.240,0:37:15.200
Alastair, we've been talking a lot about the

0:37:15.200,0:37:18.920
association of secularism and the Republic,

0:37:20.380,0:37:23.280
The NSS doesn't take a position on this,
but do you think,

0:37:23.280,0:37:27.440
ultimately, Graham is right to say that

0:37:27.440,0:37:30.880
secularists should really be in favor of
abolishing the monarchy?

0:37:30.880,0:37:33.840
[AL] I think I'll need to take an agnostic
position on that one.

0:37:33.880,0:37:37.840
[EP] Okay. Fair enough.
[AL] But you may read into my agnosticism
what you wish

0:37:37.840,0:37:43.440
[EP] Fair enough! Alistair, thank you.
[AL] Cheers.

0:37:47.040,0:37:51.720
[EP] That was episode 31 of the National
Secular Society podcast hosted by Emma Park.

0:37:51.720,0:37:54.720
My guest speaker was Graham Smith of
Republic.

0:37:54.720,0:37:59.080
If you would like to help us challenge unfair
religious privilege and support freedom of and
from

0:37:59.080,0:38:02.480
religion in Britain today, why not
become a member of the NSS?

0:38:02.480,0:38:07.359
Full details are on our website at
secularism.org.uk/podcast

0:38:07.359,0:38:10.880
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