

The Paris Peace Conference 1919 Remembered... 100 Years on 18 January to 28 June 2019

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OPEN LETTER

The Speaker,
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA

13 December 2019.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Swearing-In of Members of the House of Commons

I am writing to you before the House meets to elect its Speaker after yesterday's General Election. In any event, I offer my congratulations to whoever is chosen. My purpose in writing is to highlight the seriousness of taking the oath of allegiance, or making a solemn affirmation, to the Crown. By way of example no-one, whatever their view of the monarchy, can doubt that Her Majesty took her Coronation Oath with the utmost seriousness and sincerity and has done so ever since.

Yet Her Majesty was led into unlawfulness, in the advice she received on 27 or 28 August 2019 on the prorogation of Parliament, which cannot be consistent with an oath or affirmation. In whatever form it was taken it obliged Members of Parliament to '... be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, her heirs and successors, *according to law.*' [Emphasis added.] Yet not one MP who spoke in Parliament on 25 September 2019, when the Attorney General answered questions on 'Legal Advice: Prorogation', referred to their oath or solemn affirmation. [See Hansard.]

The swearing-in process that you are expected to initiate on Tuesday 17 December is not a rigmarole, as all right-thinking MPs (new and re-elected) will recognise. Nevertheless, ***I have enclosed an (unbranded) box of corn flakes*** which any MP can choose as his or her 'sacred text' if they do not intend, as a top priority of the new Parliament, to ensure that Her Majesty is not led into unlawfulness again. My Closing Bulletin no. 1 contains a recommendation to achieve this; but if honourable members can do better, all well and good. Any failure, though, to act expeditiously would surely be a breach of all oaths and affirmations made on or after 17th, bringing judgment.

Yours faithfully,

Peter M. Southwood

My Purpose:

To forewarn the public one more time that the world is heading for another Great Power war.

As in 1919, the reason is the failure of political institutions to apply 'an irenic perspective' even-handedly. Post-Cold War, the term was first defined in English charity law on 9 October 1998, drawing on a United States case of 1917, and affirmed by the Court of Appeal on 28 June 2000.

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