

King Richard II Decision – Council of 1382

Following a great tragedy as we have suffered from the Black Death, we have heard many requests for changes in our society's political, economic, and religious traditions. All sides have presented interesting cases and given us a great deal to consider. Here is my decision.

Religion:

- Whereas the criticisms of the Pope and the Catholic church have evidence of corruption and sometimes selfish ambition;
- Whereas the Pope wants to appoint positions of authority in the churches to nobles in order to gain their loyalty and patronage (taxes);
- Whereas the Papacy is in turmoil by having moved the Papal court to France, whom is our enemy of war;
- Whereas the Pope and the Catholic church remain a stabilizing moral authority overall of Christendom;

Be it so enacted that:

1. When appointing qualified individuals to positions within the Catholic Church in England, those candidates favored by the English Crown and nobility should be favored.
2. England will limit the church's authority in deciding legal cases.
3. However, in recognition of the supremacy of the Roman Catholic church, I, King Richard II, will quell disagreement with or attempts to break away from the universal church.

Economics:

- Whereas the 100 Years war is costing the English treasury a great deal of money and France must be defeated;
- Whereas over 1/3 of our population has been lost to the Black Death, including nobility;
- Whereas the traditional practice of peasants owing life-long allegiance to a master to work the land and pay fees to him is no longer enforceable or desirable, in many cases because the nobles themselves are dead, the land was never productive, and peasants move away to find work elsewhere;
- Whereas peasants and merchants are causing disruption by demanding higher wages and prices for their services;
- Whereas the merchants are becoming more powerful in our towns and cities by developing organized guilds who control their products and the prices of those products;

Be it therefore enacted that:

1. Peasant uprisings demanding ownership of land, significant increases in wages, or increased political voice will be put down with my authority.
2. Furthermore, the king and nobility will still grant land titles, but these lands may be rented to peasants who may then rent it to others below them.
3. We will begin to demand more taxes from the merchant classes to supplement traditional income from the land.

Politics:

- Whereas the peasant class is demanding more voice on the issue of taxes and nobles must listen or they will move and work for someone else;
- Whereas the merchant classes are becoming more wealthy through trade and we are asking them to pay more in taxes;
- Whereas this increases the demand of both the merchant and noble classes to have a voice in tax policy;
- Whereas the nobility represent the wise and experienced men of our time;

Be it therefore enacted that:

1. I, King Richard II, will consult the nobility the most, somewhat the merchants, but not the peasants, in tax policies.
2. Parliament's House of Commons will propose legislation for the House of Lords and King to enact.