



WOOLF, MAYOR

COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL

24th September 2014
MEMBERS PRESENT

ALDERMEN

Sir Michael David Bear BSc (Eng) MBA
Peter Estlin
Jeffrey Richard Evans
John Garbutt
Sir Roger Gifford
David Andrew Graves

Timothy Russell Hailes JP
Gordon Warwick Haines
Peter Hewitt, FCSI, FRSA
Sir David Howard Bt MA DSc
Vincent Thomas Keaveny
Professor Michael Raymond Mainelli FCCA
FCSI FBCS

Julian Henry Malins QC
William Anthony Bowater Russell
Sir David Hugh Wootton
Alan Colin Drake Yarrow

COMMONERS

Randall Keith Anderson
John Alfred Barker, OBE, Deputy
Douglas Barrow, Deputy
John Bennett Deputy (Chief
Commoner)
Nicholas Michael Bensted-Smith,
JP
Mark Boleat
Roger Arthur Holden Chadwick
Nigel Kenneth Challis, MA, FCA,
FCSI(Hon)
John Douglas Chapman, Deputy
Karina Dostalova
The Revd Dr Martin Raymond
Dudley
Peter Gerard Dunphy
Emma Edhem

Kevin Malcolm Everett DSc
William Barrie Fraser, OBE,
Deputy
Stuart John Fraser, CBE
Marianne Bernadette Fredericks
Lucy Frew
George Marr Flemington Gillon
Brian Nicholas Harris
Christopher Michael Hayward
Tom Hoffman
Ann Holmes
Michael Hudson
Wendy Hyde
Jamie Ingham Clark
Clare James MA

Alastair John Naisbitt King, MSc,
Deputy
Oliver Arthur Wynlayne Lodge,
TD, BSc
Edward Lord, OBE, JP
Professor John Stuart Penton
Lumley
Jeremy Mayhew MA, MBA
Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Andrew Stratton McMurtrie
Wendy Mead
Robert Allan Merrett
Hugh Fenton Morris
Sylvia Doreen Moys
Ann Marjorie Francescia
Pembroke
Judith Lindsay Pleasance,
MA(Hons)
James Henry George Pollard,
Deputy

Gerald Albert George Pulman JP,
Deputy
Chris Punter
Richard David Regan, OBE,
Deputy
Elizabeth Rogula
John George Stewart Scott, JP,
BA(Hons), FRPSL
Dr Giles Robert Evelyn Shilson,
Deputy
Jeremy Lewis Simons, MSc
Graeme Martyn Smith
Angela Mary Starling
Patrick Thomas Streeter
John Tomlinson, Deputy
James Richard Tumbridge
Mark Raymond Peter Henry
Delano Wheatley

Resolved Unanimously – That in accordance with the resolution of the Court of Common Council on 1st May last, the Honorary Freedom of the City of London be presented to Sir Tim Berners-Lee Order of Merit, Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, the inventor of the World Wide Web, in honour of his contribution to the information revolution and the transformative effect the web has had on the World.

The Court proceeded to confer the Freedom upon Sir Tim Berners-Lee with all due ceremony.

Resolved Unanimously – That the Address of the Chamberlain and the reply of Sir

Tim Berners-Lee be entered on the journal of this Court and printed in the minutes of the proceedings sent to every Member

The Chamberlain delivered an Address to Sir Tim Berners-Lee as follows:-

“On behalf of the Lord Mayor and City of London Corporation, I am delighted to welcome our Guests to Guildhall.

And it is a particular pleasure to welcome our new Honorary Freeman of the City, Sir Tim Berners-Lee.

Perhaps I may say welcome back to Guildhall as we were fortunate enough to be able to host you and the other inaugural winners of the Queen Elizabeth Prize for Engineering here at Guildhall last year.

That Prize is given to individuals responsible for ground breaking innovation that has been of global benefit to humanity. That level of world achievement is exactly what the Honorary Freedom of the City is intended to celebrate, and the City is delighted to have had this opportunity to confer it at this ceremony.

There are very few previous instances of Honorary Freedoms to mark technical innovation and achievement. The first two were the Astronomer Royal, George Airey, and Sir Henry Bessemer, the inventor who gave industry cheap steel by the revolutionary production process which bears his name.

Today's accolade pays tribute to your own personal achievement and to your role as an Ambassador for the Sector in which you are so influential. A Sector which has a critical role to play in building tomorrow's world. We need to harness the excitement, energy and expertise of generations yet to come if we are to meet the challenges, and seize the opportunities, of the future.

I hope that many young people will be inspired by your academic and professional journey, Sir Tim. A journey which started not far from here - in South West London. Following a Physics degree from Queen's Oxford, you rolled up your sleeves and got stuck in as a software engineer, first in Dorset and then at CERN. An experience which spurred you on to develop hypertext, hone a prototype system known as ENQUIRE, and then transform hypertext into the internet. After developing the first browser, the first website went live at the CERN headquarters in August 1991 and the world wide web was born.

Sir Tim – we recognize that as a leader, innovator and very instigator of your field, you continue to play a pivotal advisory role.

As Director of the World Wide Web Consortium, your oversight of the continued development of the internet keeps a steady hand on the tiller as it transforms lives in ways that no one could have ever considered.

Next year, the City of London will be marking the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta - foundation for global constitutions (and not least the City's own), commerce and communities. It is the anchor for the Rule of Law, which will be recognised

here next year, at the Global Law Summit.

In a few decades, rather than many centuries, the internet has also transformed the international development of human rights, how democracy functions in young and established democracies alike, and the meaning and realization of liberty. I know, Sir Tim, that the application of the principles of Magna Carta to the web and its users now and in the future is a matter of particular concern to you. This is reflected in your call for the rights of users across the world to be enshrined in a Digital Magna Carta.

The arrival of the internet has made the City a very different place – speeding up communications and trade, and revolutionising business, ensuring that the City remains the leading global financial centre. And the revolution has taken place for each individual – not just the wider business and society. Shopping, socializing, dating, booking holidays, hunting for jobs, and catching up with news are now all “online activities”! It makes me wonder what there’s left to do in person!

As I have said, an Honorary Freedom is granted in very special circumstances - to a person whose life and work has had a transformational effect nationally and internationally. As someone who has transformed the way in which we all live our lives, there can be no doubt that those special circumstances are satisfied.

On behalf of everyone here today, and of all those following this ceremony, or will learn of it, through the very medium you have had such a fundamental part in developing over the past 25 years, it is my honour to pay tribute to you, Sir Tim Berners-Lee.

Thank you.”

Reply by Sir Tim Berners-Lee Order of Merit, Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, the inventor of the World Wide Web,

“Wow! This is quite an honour. To step in the footsteps of Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela is very humbling. I have met Desmond Tutu, but alas was too late to meet Nelson Mandela, but we did have the privilege of looking at one of the many cells where he was imprisoned for a long time. It’s been a battle sometimes keeping the web open, but I’m very glad that my colleagues have not, at least yet, had to go to jail for it. To follow here in their footsteps is a tremendous privilege.

This award for me is special in a particular way. As Paul Simon said at the concert that he and Art Garfunkel had in Central Park, New York, “It’s great to do a home town gig”. This is my home town gig, so for me it’s very special to be honoured in London. It’s great to be back here in the Guildhall where we were for the QE Prize, which was another very special event.

It’s good to celebrate London. London is doing well. In fact, we can celebrate London’s role in the Information Technology business, as we have also at some events here organized by WCIT, The Worshipful Company of Information Technologists. For example, according to recent research by Oxford Economics,

London's digital tech sector is expected to create an additional £12bn of economic activity and 46,000 new jobs in the capital over the next decade. And the tech and information sector in London, the South East of England, including Oxford and Cambridge, they say is growing faster than that of California.

Now's the time for London to celebrate its success in IT, its success in world leadership in general, especially in finance. But it's also the time to take some steps to ensure that the commerce, ensure that all the good things that we get from the financial sector and from IT, continue. It turns out that as well as having a tradition of the early development of commerce and trade, in fact London's history of innovation is closely tied to a history of tradition of free speech and privacy, and toleration of dissent. For example, indeed, take in the 13th Century the Magna Carta's insistence on London's ancient liberties; in the 17th Century the non-conformists; and in the 20th Century the anti-colonial activists.

The 17th Century was interesting in London for its coffee houses. The coffee houses which Charles II tried to suppress as places where the disaffected meet and spread scandalous reports concerning the conduct of His Majesty and his Ministers.

The public, however, flocked to them because they were a place where you could have a good discussion no matter what your political views were. The coffee house was a place where you could go no matter what your social status, it had a sense of openness to it. According to one French visitor, coffee houses were where you have the right to read all the papers for and against the government, and that these were the seat of English liberty.

They actually fostered new businesses as well. I gather that Lloyd's of London has its origins in a coffee house run by Edward Lloyd. So coffee houses: communication; openness; fostering of commerce. Today, yes, the web has become the hothouse for economic, political and social innovation in London and further afield as well. Now the focus on openness turns to the web. And now it turns out that coffee houses seem to be somehow again, in a lot of countries, the place where a lot of people get onto the internet now. So somehow coffee and openness in communication seem to have been inseparable!

Now London can be, and can take its place, as leader in establishing openness, establishing rights. Yes, I call for a digital Magna Carta. This is reasonable. Going back to the 13th Century, we have the history of Magna Carta. In fact, also about the same time as the Magna Carta was starting, I gather that a bunch of cities from Lübeck to London got together more or less through the merchants, or were corralled by the merchants, to all agree that trade was being threatened by piracy, that basically the high seas were not safe, and so long as pirates could steal in one country and then find refuge in another, there would be little incentive for international commerce.

So what become the Hanseatic League was formed to set up some basic rules to say: We're going to make this transnational open space one in which there are some basic rules, so that you know that if you participate, if you start to trade, if you start to move things between different cities, then you will be supported and be able to rely on the fact that your ships should get there without being attacked, for example. The Hanseatic League also has been pointed out as another thing which in history is an example of having to lay down a few rules about how things are

done. The Magna Carta is a more famous example, when the barons decided that between them and the King there needed to be a few rules, there needed to be some delineation of powers, limitations of powers on one side and granting of rights on the other side.

Now, when you look at the internet we need to do the same thing. When you look at the world connected by the internet, people differ in who they are most worried about when it comes to delineation of powers. For example, one of the things that we like to do is to go to an Internet Service Provider to say, "You have a role in the world that is to connect people. When you connect people you will provide connectivity. Just as we've enjoyed from the postal service, you provide it without discrimination, because just like we used to require of the postal service, we recognise that this is a fundamental part of the infrastructure, this is how the country is connected". You can't have a country, if you don't have a communication system.

We gave the postal service some certain rights and also certain constraints that they should apply to everybody. That the same value of stamp will get your letter to anywhere in the country, is a wonderful sort of rule. Similarly, we're going to take the same sort of principles and now we need to apply it to the internet. If I get connectivity, if I've paid for a certain bandwidth and I connect to the internet, and you connect and you've paid for the same bandwidth, then we ought to be able to communicate at that bandwidth. And if the internet service providers on the route between us fear that I'm contacting one of their commercial competitors, that's too bad because that's my right to do, and keeping the markets open though a neutral medium is really very important.

Next year marks the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta. Although the folks who are planning to celebrate it first of all were upset when we were jumping up and down about digital Magna Carta's a year early. In fact, I think we can all come to a good arrangement about the how the needs for a digital Magna Carta can be discussed this year – we're picking this year because it's the 25th anniversary of the web – as a project, and the momentum gained from that will then be used to institute values globally and regulations and best practices locally.

The relationship between global and local is important. Yes, the web is a global thing. Yes, the principle of net neutrality is a global concept, and there are global concepts that we must produce. I'd like us to see lots of global non-localised very high level documents produced about that. If you like, that's where I think of as Phase I. Phase II is then once we've had a good open public discussion about what those principles are, then we all have to go back to our jurisdictions. We have to go back to our countries – for whatever country means – I guess you folks in the City of London, you have to go back to your little country here in your square mile, and you may have to enact some rules. You can do it for your particular square mile, because everybody who has a different jurisdiction has to approach the way they actually implement these principles differently.

In the USA free speech or freedom of the press is granted by an amendment to the Constitution which starts 'Congress shall make no law...'. That doesn't work for us, we don't have a Congress. So in general, the moment you try to instantiate these things then you need to do it locally. So we should be part of leading the global

push for these principles. We should then be part of the local way in which we make sure that they are implemented locally. We need to protect the right not to be discriminated against and connected to whoever you want. We need to protect the right to run any new application over the net without having to negotiate with any authority.

By the way, 25 years ago that's what I did, I just wrote a programme on my computer, connected the computer up to the network, gave other people copies of these programmes, web servers and web browsers, and these programmes could talk to each other across the Internet. I didn't have to get permission from anybody to introduce new protocol. I didn't have to get permission from anybody to introduce new features. Because the way the Internet works is all the innovation happens at the edge. It's a wonderful system. It is really important to protect that system.

Obviously it's been much discussed recently, we need to protect the right not to be spied on. Or if we're spied on, for the information that's gathered to be held as though it is very dangerous, as though it is dynamite, to be treated extremely carefully, and to be operated on and to be used only within some form of new very much more accountable structure which we need to put together. We need the right not to be censored. Something we tend to take for granted in this country, although some people object to the form of censorship which is provided by your typical British Telecom system which suggests that you filter out inappropriate material. Those boundaries are the things which we can discuss, and they will be part of the discussion.

But certainly also we need to push back against countries that censor opposing political views – and there are a lot of those. We have to be careful as well, that when the country removes the censorship they don't just replace it with monitoring, because it's in a way more insidious when an oppressive government monitors your use of the prohibited resource and then quietly finds out who all your friends are by watching the internet and then puts you all in jail at once. So censorship and spying are intimately linked.

These things are important. Just as democracy thrives on the independence of the press, so it thrives on the independence of the internet as a medium. We teach our kids when they are small about the independence of the press, and journalism as being just as important for today's society. We will teach our children in the future about how the independence of the internet as a medium is as important.

The UK has already shown leadership in a lot of ways, not least with open government data, which I was happy to get involved in a few years ago, we had a big push, we have a lot of data online. And I would point out the merits of the Open Data Institute, which is unique and world-leading and just up the road in Shoreditch, leading the world in open data. We've led locally by what we've done. We need to lead the global movement. We need to do it for the state of the world, and we need to do it for the state of London.

We need make this a space where the internet is decreed to be an open neutral medium. We need to make sure that London is a place where businesses will feel happy and safe moving to, where businesses who work here will be able to trust that their data that they store on discs around the city is not going to be abused by government, and where users of those companies can also therefore trust the

companies to do the right thing and safeguard their data. Yes, it's about citizen and consumer rights, but also very importantly it's about a good platform for business. We need it for business, we need it for commerce, we need it for education, we need it for democracy. We need it now for an awful lot of different aspects of life. So we need it so that the web can serve humanity and so that humanity can survive.

Let it start here.

Thank you."

meeting commenced at 12.30pm and ended at 12.50pm.

BARRADELL.