

# England Without a King

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## Running the Country

**Oliver Cromwell** had been an MP before the civil war and during the war he had been the leading general on Parliament's side.

No one knew how to run the country now the king was dead, there were arguments between MPs, and between MPs and the army.

Both parliament and the MPs knew a strong leader was needed to hold the country together and Oliver Cromwell was made ruler for life, but was given the title Protector instead of King.



## War

As a result of the civil war, Britain had a well trained and experienced Army. Cromwell used this to attack the Spanish empire. While he failed to capture Spain's American colonies they did manage to capture the island of Jamaica.

However the war meant that people had to keep paying for a large army, so taxes were very high, even higher than when Charles I had been king.

## The Death of Cromwell

When Oliver Cromwell died in September 1658, his son Richard took over as protector. However he did not really want the job, and people did not respect him like they had his father.

## Living in England

Many of the supporters of Parliament were very strong Protestants (called **Puritans**). They passed strict laws to make sure people lived very plain lives.

The rules said that people could not sing or dance on a Sunday, the only thing people were meant to do was go to church. The puritans also closed down some theatres and public houses and in some places they even banned Christmas! However not all their rules were followed.



## Questions

1. Who was chosen to be the Protector?
2. Why was a Protector needed?  
*Ext A. Why do you think Oliver Cromwell refused to be called king?*
3. What were some of the things the Puritans did not like people doing?
4. Look at the cartoon, what do you think it is about?
5. Who do you think is the man in the middle?

*Ext B. Explain why the puritans would have supported the attack on Spain.*

6. Imagine you are one of the MPs who had complained about King Charles in 1640, what you feel in 1656? Use the 3 categories (money, power and religion) to explain your answer.