



DEMOCRACY

Have we always had it?

DEMOCRACY

❖ 1000 years ago what kings said became law!

King Arthur (who we are not sure really existed) was seen as a **good king**, where his knights sat at a round table and were seen as nearly equal. **Other kings were seen as greedy.**

❖ Thankfully, we live by a different set of rules today – a democratic society where laws are decided on collectively through representation in the Houses of Parliament.

❖ But how did we get there?

THE DAYS OF KINGS

❖ **King John**, King Richard's brother (seen as a good king) was a bad king. Have you heard of *Robin Hood*? Well this is the king of that age.

❖ He would say- "I don't have enough money- raise the taxes". The Nobles would raise the taxes and be blamed by their people.

❖ The Nobles were upset and thought this was not fair. King John was not more important than the barons was he?

MAGNA CARTA

- ❖ **The Magna Carta was signed 800 years ago on 19th June 1215.**
- ❖ This meant that the king had to follow the law, not make it. If he wanted to change a law he had to talk to the Noblemen.
- ❖ This was the start of what we call the House of Lords. The law of the land was discussed by the King and the Nobels.
- ❖ It also gave the right of trial by jury to everyone.

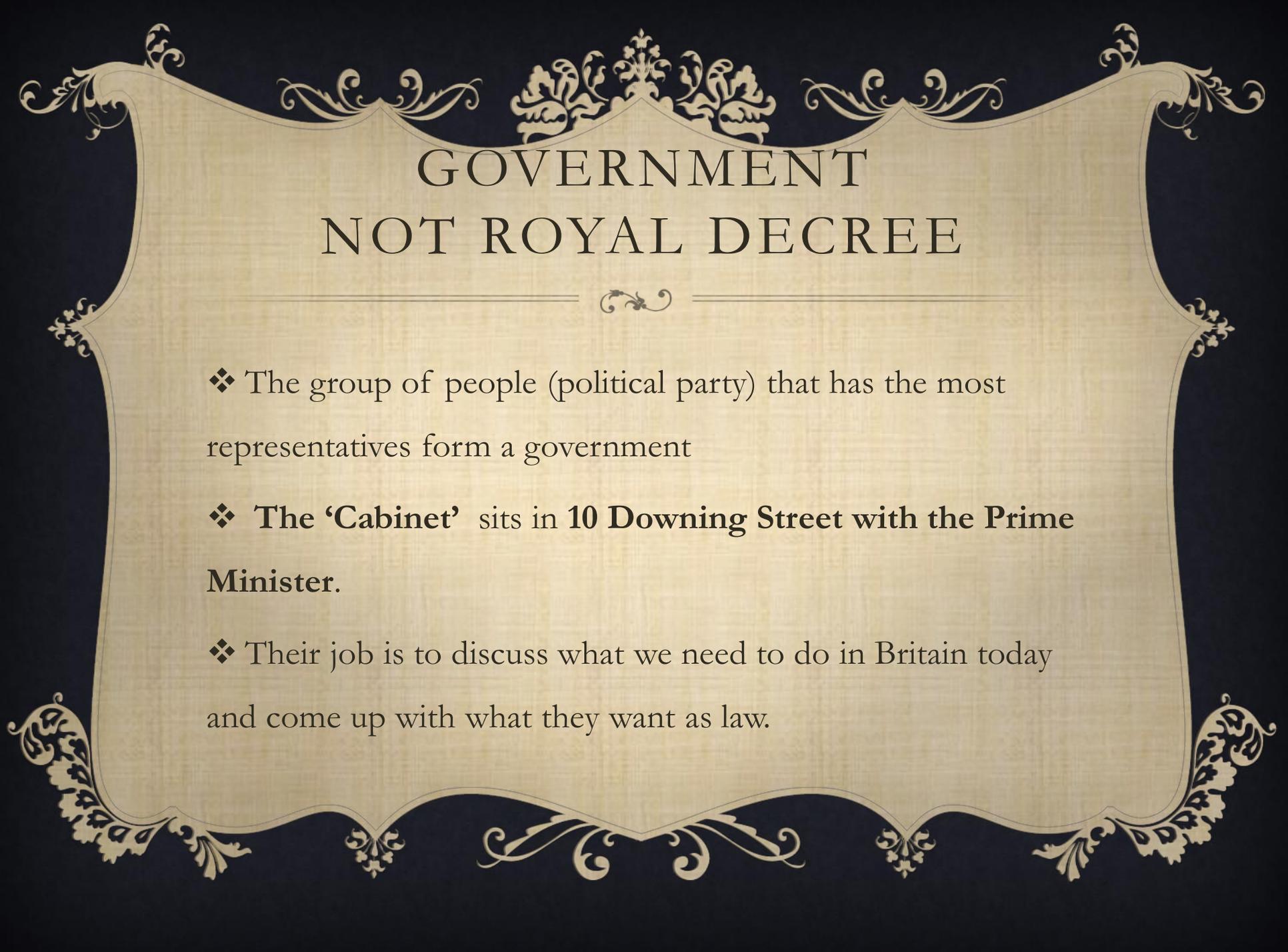
THE FIRST PARLIAMENT

❖ **Then came 1265, Simon De Montfort's Parliament**

❖ It was the first instance of a parliament in which representatives from towns and the shires were summoned together to discuss matters of national concern.

DEMOCRACY TODAY

- ❖ After many changes we still have, in Britain, the Houses of Parliament in London.
- ❖ It is in the Palace of Westminster.
- ❖ It works slightly differently now, but still has a king or queen, their house of Lords and 'our' House of Commons.
- ❖ We elect people who we think will represent us well called MP's or Members of Parliament

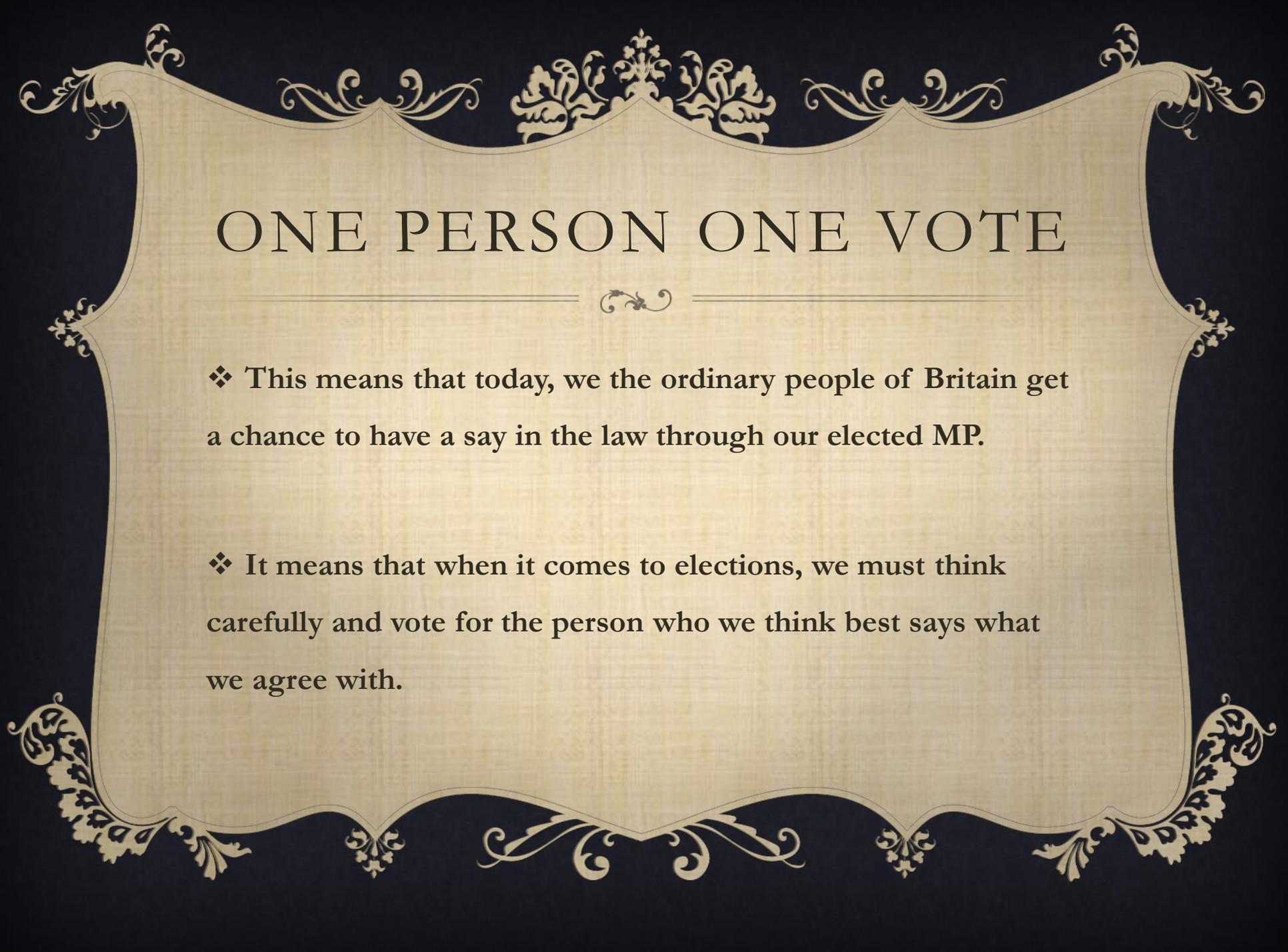


GOVERNMENT NOT ROYAL DECREE

- ❖ The group of people (political party) that has the most representatives form a government
- ❖ **The ‘Cabinet’ sits in 10 Downing Street with the Prime Minister.**
- ❖ Their job is to discuss what we need to do in Britain today and come up with what they want as law.

HOW LAWS ARE MADE

- ❖ They then go to the **House of Commons** to say what they want.
- ❖ It is discussed, changed or agreed by voting.
- ❖ This gets written down as a 'Bill of Parliament' and is sent to the **House of Lords** to discuss, make changes and so on.
- ❖ When it is finally decided that it is a good idea, it is presented to the **Queen who has to agree it**, and she makes it law through **Royal Ascent** – in other words, she has to say 'I agree'.

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ONE PERSON ONE VOTE

❖ This means that today, we the ordinary people of Britain get a chance to have a say in the law through our elected MP.

❖ It means that when it comes to elections, we must think carefully and vote for the person who we think best says what we agree with.