**The English Bill of Rights**

The English Bill of Rights 1688 is an Act of the Parliament of England passed in 1689. It was a restatement of the Declaration of Right presented by Parliament to William and Mary in March 1689, inviting them to become joint sovereigns of England.

The English Bill of Rights lays down limits on the powers and sets out the rights of Parliament and rules for freedom of speech in Parliament, the requirement to regular elections to Parliament and the right to petition the monarch without fear of retribution. It reestablished the liberty of people to have arms for their defense.

These ideas about rights reflected those of the political thinker John Locke and they quickly became popular in England. It also sets certain constitutional requirements of the Crown to seek the consent of the people, as represented in Parliament.

The Bill of Rights is still in effect. It is one of the main constitutional laws governing the succession to the throne of the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth realms.

In the United Kingdom, the Bill of Rights is further accompanied by the Magna Carta, and the Petition of Right. The Bill of Rights was one of the inspirations for the United States Bill of Rights.

The Bill of Rights laid out certain basic rights for (at the time) all Englishmen. The Act set out that there should be:

* no royal interference with the law.

Though the sovereign remains the fount of justice, he or she cannot unilaterally establish new courts or act as a judge.

* no taxation by Royal Prerogative.

The agreement of the parliament became necessary for the implementation of any new taxes

* freedom to petition the monarch without fear of retribution
* no standing army maintained during a peacetime without consent of parliament
* no royal interference in the freedom of the people to have arms for their own defense
* the freedom of speech and debates or proceedings in Parliament ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament
* no excessive bail or "cruel and unusual" punishments may be imposed

Please answer the following questions after you do the reading:

1. When this law was passed, who were the rulers of England?

2. What did the English Bill of Rights do to the power of the Royal government?

3. Which philosopher was important in the development of the rights offered here?

4. How does this document prevent royal interference with the law?

5. What are the rules regarding taxation?

6. How does this document protection petition (complaining)?

7. Under what circumstances can the country have a standing army?

8. What does the document say about the ability to possess guns?

9. What guarantees are made about bail?