

I also want to say a few words about Royal Assent. I have already referred to the British law passed in 1967. There is nothing new about this. Senator Flynn spoke about this years ago. Senator Frith has also spoken a lot about it. Senator Godfrey and others have studied the matter in depth. We only have to continue in their footsteps.

Coming back to the matter of protocol, I spoke briefly the other day of the privilege I had of greeting Her Majesty the Queen to this place.

[English]

I want to report to you that welcoming the Queen to Parliament was a great experience. The Queen radiates dignity, grace and intelligence. What she has to do, she goes about in a quiet but sure way. For instance, when she left the porch under the Peace Tower to enter Parliament, she made a remark to me in French—in French always—that it seemed to her that that was the first time she had entered the rotunda. Then, as I indicated the way to the elevator, passing by the left side arch at the top of the stairs, she turned to me and said: "I believe we should go by the centre arch", which, of course, was the proper way, and which, I must say, I had been told by the protocol office of the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

At that time she repressed, or she permitted a faint smile and I thought I saw a twinkle in her eye, but always she kept strict composure and perfect decorum. I suppose it is this that one calls "Majesty".

When the Queen and the Duke came down from the Memorial Chamber, it was my honour, as Speaker of the Senate, to escort them to the table to sign the book of the Speaker of the Senate, first the Queen, and then the Duke. She was amused to see a little red dot in the place where she was to sign, so she queried me about that. I told her that we had prepared two inscriptions on the page in Gothic characters, one in French and one in English, and in order to be sure that her signature would be exactly in between, we inserted the red dot. I told her that we wanted equality between the French language and the English language. The Queen saw the point right away. She thought that that was very ingenious.

The Duke was interested in the colours of the two books. He asked, in perfect French, why there was a red book and a green book. He also asked why the red book was thicker than the green one. I simply told him that the green book was a sign of hope for the members of the House of Commons that they will join us in the Red Chamber one day, and if the red book was thicker, it was because we are senators for longer periods than they are Members of the House of Commons—like the lords—which made good sense to him, he being one of the Royal Lords.

Through all of this the Queen did not lose her sense of direction and did not forget the timing of the program. I wished then to have a conversation with them, which I did to some extent with the Duke, so much so that many people who watched the news broadcast asked me what the Duke and I were talking about in such an animated way. I must confess

[Senator Riel.]

that I do not remember at all. I remember only his perfect French.

I want to conclude this part of my speech on the visit of the Queen by saying, let nobody say that he is not filled with a certain emotion when he meets so much dignity, intelligence and presence in one person, the Queen.

[Translation]

I would like to say a few words about the Pope's visit. But in this case, as the folks back home would say, I did not get a formal invitation. I did not welcome him to Parliament either. I only met him at Government House along with other Canadian parliamentarians. I was introduced to him very briefly. I felt as though I had always known him.

Personally, I am full of admiration for the Holy Father who must assume huge responsibilities, as the leader of hundreds of millions of believers who, in these difficult times, are somewhat scattered and split up. Who would not want to help the present pope with his plans and dreams of kindness, brotherhood and universal happiness?

But what a strong-willed man! From his native Poland to the throne of St. Peter, life has not always been easy for him, as evidenced by the story of his life. He is kindness incarnate, while remaining absolutely firm. St. Peter's ship demands from its helmsman outstanding qualities. One has the distinct feeling that the present pope has them all.

[English]

• (1510)

Returning to what I said about the use of the red chamber for commercial film making and use of the Senate by non-senators, my staff contacted, in addition to officials of the House of Lords and the United States Senate, the Clerk of the Ontario Legislature. I personally spoke and exchanged correspondence with the Speaker of the Quebec National Assembly. Insofar as their respective houses were concerned, they were supportive of my stand. We also contacted the Clerk of the Senate of the French Republic. His answer was that for permission to be granted for a commercial film to be made in the French Senate the scenario would have to adhere rigorously to history. Permission has not been given. One thing that is certain is that neither the House of Lords, the American Senate, the French Senate, nor the Quebec or Ontario Assemblies have lent their chamber for the making of commercial films. They have also not let their chambers be used for mock parliaments or for debates of the Chamber of Commerce.

Hon. Andrew Thompson: May I ask the former Speaker a question? As I recall, the Ontario Legislature had an association of youth parliamentarians. Is that what he referred to as a mock parliament?

Senator Riel: Are you asking about Ontario?

Senator Thompson: I understood you to say that the Ontario Legislature was never used for a mock parliament.

Senator Riel: That is what I understood from your question.

Senator Thompson: I would question that, but I could be wrong.