

reinforces our identity. It is our showcase for the world. Many thousands of visitors flock here every summer. Although Canada is a young country, we are quite unique and our Parliament Buildings and surrounding grounds are consistent with that uniqueness.

• (1730)

I think the symbolism is an important consideration that goes into our living shrine that reflects the life of Canada every day. We should thank our forefathers and mothers for their foresight in developing such a wonderful headquarters for Canadian Government, the heart of Canada, if you like. We must take very seriously the responsibility of preserving the beauty and appropriateness of Parliament Hill and all the monuments and memorials that surround and are inside it.

Today we have a motion put forward by the Hon. Member for Nepean—Carleton (Mr. Tupper) which suggests that the Government should consider the commissioning of a statue of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, to be placed on Parliament Hill in commemoration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of her ascension to the throne.

First, I would like to say unequivocally that, like the statue of Queen Victoria which graces our Hill and who was in office when Canada first gained its independence, certainly Queen Elizabeth II deserves a special place. She is indisputably a part of our Canadian heritage. As the British monarch who was reigning at the time when Canada acquired its own Constitution and severed the last remaining legal link with Great Britain, she has a particular place in our history. She is a person whom we respect and honour as a very hard working public servant who binds our Commonwealth together. She is well respected even by those who may not be traditional monarchists.

We could debate, and perhaps this is a trivial point, whether such a statue should be placed in commemoration of her thirty-fifth year inasmuch as this does not explain that we are doing it for a living monarch, which I believe would be a precedent.

While I honour Queen Elizabeth and agree to honour her with a statue on Parliament Hill, I cannot help but think of all the other many Canadians that it would be so nice to honour in some way. I am sure Canadians across the land would like to see many statues. Let me give two or three examples. The Métis perhaps would like to see a statue of Louis Riel. Many feminists perhaps would like to see one of Nellie McClung. For doctors, it could be Dr. Keon, who used the Jarvik heart and has pioneered heart transplants in Canada. There is no question that we respect and honour our monarch, but there are also many Canadian women parliamentarians whom I would like to mention and whom I would like to find a way of honouring because of the unique tradition and contribution which they have made as Members of Parliament.

I think first of Agnes McPhail, who was elected in 1921 and was the first and only woman Member of Parliament who

Statue of Monarch

gained her seat in the first election after women had the right to vote in Canada. In 1943 she was the first woman on the Canadian delegation to the League of Nations.

Second, we have a bust of the Hon. Ellen Fairclough. You walk by it every day, Mr. Speaker, in the Speaker's Hall. This is appropriate. She achieved distinction as the first woman Cabinet Minister in 1957. She introduced a Bill calling for equal pay for equal work, a very progressive legislator. She created a women's bureau in the Department of Labour. Also I am sure my hon. friend on my right will agree that the Hon. Judy LaMarsh deserves special honour and recognition. She was the only woman in Lester Pearson's Liberal Cabinet. She was an innovative legislator under whose guidance we achieved the Canada Pension Plan and medicare. She established the Royal Commission on the Status of Women which the women of Canada look upon as a milestone in development.

I think those who have been Members in this House for some time will also agree that Grace McInnis from my part of Canada should be honoured. She was not a Cabinet Minister because her Party was not in Government but she was a pioneer woman Member of Parliament. I believe she was at one time the sole woman Member of this House. I can recall talking to her because she was a mentor and is today my mentor. I was amused to learn that this very dignified daughter of J. S. Woodsworth once had to remind Members of this House that perhaps their behaviour deserved the initials M.S.P., which I am sure you may recall, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, we should mention Jeanne Sauvé, the first woman Speaker of this House and now our first woman Governor General. I am sure other Members of the House can think of many others.

It is great to have symbolism and to recognize people who make a unique contribution. It is obvious this list could go on and on, but if we were to erect statues for all of them our lawns would be very crowded. We have a duty to think carefully and to protect the dignity and integrity of Parliament Hill.

I would like to mention a suggestion made by my colleague the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy) when he spoke to this motion. He suggested that perhaps a good way of determining the kinds of statues that should be on Parliament would be to set up a Parliament Hill commission. He proposes that only one of two statues should be erected on Parliament Hill every decade. I feel confident that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth would be a first choice. This does not stop us from honouring outstanding Canadians in other places within our communities, within our Parliament Buildings, in our parks, squares and other appropriate places across Canada. Statues as we see them in Europe enliven and provide valuable additions in harmony with our outdoor living space as well as bringing an historic contribution to us.

We concur with this motion, but I hope the Member might consider the suggestion that there be a special Parliament Hill commission to deal with such matters in the future.