

Statue of Monarch

I think as well of the Union Jacks, which tend to fly in backyards throughout the area, people paying recognition to what they knew of the past. I remember during the great flag debate hearing people refer to the new flag as Pearson's pennant. It is not that they had anything against the new flag, but they did not want to give up a link with the past which they cherished—the Union Jack which was part and parcel of the Red Ensign.

I was guilty in the sense that I was most reluctant to see the White Ensign being given up by the Royal Canadian Navy, a flag for which I had such respect. Having said that, I must say that now no one is prouder of our Canadian flag, the Maple Leaf, than myself as I see it flying on public buildings and as I see young people travelling throughout the world with the Maple Leaf patch on their knapsacks, jackets, or whatever.

Parliamentarians are very much aware of the role of the monarch in our system of Government. The Parliament of Canada consists of the House of Commons, the Senate, and the sovereign, represented in Canada of course by the Governor General. We are one of 17 countries which acknowledge the Queen as sovereign, the Crown Commonwealth, as well as Queen of the Commonwealth in general. She is head of the Canadian state. While her powers may be exercised by her representatives, the Governor General and each provincial Lieutenant-Governor, she has the right to be consulted, the right to advise, and the right to warn.

It is sometimes too difficult to think of our monarch as a public servant, given what we tend to think of certain public servants from time to time. A public servant, yes, but a bureaucrat, no. She is a servant who has earned the respect and esteem of not only the leaders and subjects of the Crown Commonwealth and the leaders and people of the Commonwealth but of other nations great and small throughout the world. Indeed that makes Her Majesty more than just a symbol, more than just a figurehead in the family of nations.

Given what constitutes the Parliament of Canada—the Senate, the House of Commons, and the sovereign—at this juncture I would like to present my views on the Upper House. In so doing I believe that I can tie in the fears of many Canadians in respect of loss of identity and loss of culture to the very motion before us respecting the commissioning of a statue of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

I should like to say forthwith that I am in favour of an appointed Senate, recognizing all the faults inherent therein and recognizing that changes must be introduced to make this body more meaningful and perhaps more effective. The problem lies not with what the Fathers of Confederation in their thoughtful manner intended for this institution, the body of sober second thought, but with what in too many cases has been permitted to become a retirement home for too many ineffectuals, a retirement home for too many former politicians, a club where partisan politics is played, planned, and connived not for the betterment of Canada or Canadians at large but solely for party purposes.

One study which I read indicated that something close to 99 per cent of all Canadians indicated that they would not run for nor seek public office at any level of government—federal, provincial, or municipal. If that is true, surely we must ask ourselves if the country is being best served by men and women who make up that 1 per cent. I suggest not, and I would think that most Canadians would agree.

This brings me to the appointed Senate. That body would give those Canadians making up 99 per cent of the population who have great qualifications, knowledge, experience, and ability, an opportunity to be selected not for political affiliation but to serve Canada and Canadians in a thoughtful manner. Of course other changes would be absolutely necessary, but I will not go into them at this time.

I would suggest that we never have an elected Senate. To be elected is to have a constituency. To have a constituency could in great measure negate their ability to carry out their duties in a non-partisan manner, which brings me full circle to why I mentioned the Senate in the context of this motion. To my mind, to introduce two elected bodies to our system of government is to lead us down the road to becoming a republic and to being more like the American system of government, each vying for additional power, certainly one attempting to usurp the power and the authority of the other. We could very gradually slip away from our government roots—the British parliamentary system, the mother of all Parliaments.

We want to be proud of our system of government, of our historical link, and of our bond with the monarch. We do so by cherishing our traditions of 120 years as a country and by building that same sense of pride in our children. Who epitomizes in a single personage more greatness in our form of government than Her Majesty the Queen of Canada?

I endorse and support the motion of the Hon. Member for Nepean—Carleton (Mr. Tupper). I encourage Hon. Members on all sides of the House to do likewise.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased for the opportunity to speak to the motion before us today. It is a proposal to erect a statue of Queen Elizabeth II on Parliament Hill.

Probably many of us share the same kind of feelings which I recall very vividly when I first arrived on Parliament Hill in 1979. I stood at the foot of the sidewalk beside the Centennial Flame and then walked past the flame looking up at the Peace Tower and at our Parliament Buildings. I was surrounded by beauty and by many symbols of our national traditions.

I think most Canadians feel very emotional when they see pictures of the Parliament Buildings and the hill on which they stand. We fondly call it "The Hill" because the Parliament Buildings are indeed loved by Canadians. They are steeped in our history. Canadians on vacation bring their children here to celebrate being Canadians. They come from all parts of Canada—East, West, North, and along our borders. This is a place which ties us all together. Therefore, Parliament Hill