

Statue of Monarch

times we have let traditions in our country slide. Too many times we have erased or removed them. The Queen has adapted her role of a constitutional monarch to suit the needs of the Commonwealth citizens she serves so capably. Constantly she and her royal family remain in the public eye, but, while accessible, she retains the aura of dignity and statesmanship that her office must uphold.

Of the Queen's interest and commitment to serve Canada and its people, it is absolute. In 1957, she was the first reigning monarch to open Parliament in Ottawa. No previous monarch has been in Canada so often or in so many parts of it. No previous monarch has had anything like her knowledge of our country and its affairs.

As early as 1951, when we knew her as Princess Elizabeth, her attachment to Canada was clearly stated:

From the moment when I first set foot on Canadian soil the feeling of strangeness went, for I knew myself to be not only amongst friends, but amongst fellow countrymen.

Her feelings strengthened when as Queen in 1957, in the first solo television broadcast of her life, she said:

Industry and commerce may bring wealth to a country but the character of a nation is formed by other factors. Race, language, religion, culture and tradition all have some contributions to make, and when I think of the diversity of these factors in Canada today and the achievements that have grown from their union, I feel proud and happy to be Queen of such a nation.

We are proud to have her as the Queen of our nation. She has proven over and over again how valuable her counsel and her experience can be. She has done much not only to foster unity within the Commonwealth family but in her role as our Queen to assist in assuaging and bringing together the diverse factors and elements within Canada.

In her address to the Quebec Legislature in 1964, she recognized the turmoil which the Province of Quebec was undergoing. She stated in French:

A dynamic state should not fear to assess its political philosophy.

Clearly to my mind that statement relieved a great deal of pressure.

To cite another example, it was Her Majesty who did as much as anyone by touring our Canadian North in 1970, thereby attracting the recognition of our claim and sovereignty to the world.

On Canada's ninety-second birthday, in a broadcast from Government House she said:

If I helped you to feel proud of being Canadian, if I have reminded you of the strength which comes from unity and if I have helped to draw your attention to the bright vision of the years ahead, I shall feel well satisfied because I believe with all conviction that this country can look to a glorious future.

How often have Canadians made her Christmas broadcasts a major part of that very special day? Her comments she can make to us as a part-time player and observer and to remind and encourage us to remain steadfast to our Canadian ideals and Canadian values.

I have mentioned her desire to be accessible to those whom she serves. She is no doubt the consummate public servant. She has made her walkabouts a very special feature of her Canadian tours whenever she visits our country. She has set the standard for her family, equally willing and popular in their own right, to follow in her lead.

Moreover, she is as well the patron of various associations such as the Canadian Red Cross Society and many others too numerous to list. In this way I believe she has attempted and succeeded in instilling a link with Canadians, to show that the Crown is not merely an abstract symbol of our unity but a personal and living bond between her and her subjects.

Outside her immediate obligations to Canada, she has been a statesman acting for Canadian interests at the international level. As head of the Commonwealth, her position is a vital link with other nations within the Commonwealth family. She takes on this responsibility seriously, for she realizes the importance of human relationships in world affairs and how membership in the Commonwealth has a subtle influence on the relationship between its leaders.

How often has she been relied on to act as the mediator between conflicting schools of thought? How often, with skill and diplomacy, has she been able to resolve differences or to allow time for a breathing space for such controversies to be aired?

Unlike the changing faces of government, she remains constant. For 35 years, because of her interest and dedication to international affairs, she has become a repository of unique knowledge, advice, and encouragement to all who seek her confidence.

When I speak of our Queen, Queen Elizabeth II, I speak of a strong, courageous, and charming individual who has delighted and honoured Canadians by her love and attention to our needs. We are indeed fortunate to have her as our Queen.

Therefore I would encourage the House to give its unanimous approval to the motion of my colleague.

Mr. Lawrence I. O'Neil (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, I should like to congratulate the Hon. Member for Nepean—Carleton (Mr. Tupper) for moving this important motion and for giving Members of Parliament an opportunity to speak on an issue which is close to the hearts of all of us, to the hearts of all Canadians.

We live in a country which is known as a constitutional monarchy. We live in a country which has as its head of state, Queen Elizabeth II. She has been Queen for more than three decades and has led the Commonwealth through many difficult periods and has led Canada through very difficult times.

● (1450)

My understanding of a constitutional monarchy is a country in which democratic principles, including freedom of speech